

Original Paper

Constructing a Modern Digital Image of Wang Yangming

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Abstract

Wang Yangming (1472–1529), a renowned philosopher, politician, and military strategist of the Ming Dynasty, profoundly influenced Chinese intellectual history with his philosophy of “unity of knowledge and action”. In today’s information age, exploring how digital technologies can modernize the representation of Wang Yangming and make his ideas accessible to contemporary audiences has become a significant endeavor. This paper aims to examine the necessity, methods, and practical applications of constructing Wang Yangming’s modern digital image, with the goal of advancing the dissemination and development of his philosophy in the modern era.

Keywords

Wang Yangming, digital dynamic image, unity of knowledge and action

1. Introduction

Wang Shouren (Chinese: 王守仁, 26 October 1472–1529), courtesy name Bo’an (Chinese: 伯安), art name Yangmingzi (traditional Chinese: 陽明子; simplified Chinese: 阳明子), usually referred to as Wang Yangming (traditional Chinese: 王陽明; simplified Chinese: 王阳明), was a prominent figure in Chinese history, whose philosophy—particularly the teachings of “mind theory” and “unity of knowledge and action”—has had a lasting influence on Chinese and East Asian culture. In the digital era, the challenge lies in how to preserve and innovate the transmission of traditional culture within the new media environment. Digital technologies, such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI), present unprecedented opportunities to express traditional culture in diverse and interactive ways, making it more engaging for modern audiences.

This study explores the necessity, strategies, and implementation of building a modern digital image of Wang Yangming, aiming to ensure the accessibility of his ideas to contemporary audiences. By employing digital means, such as designing virtual representations, developing interactive applications, and integrating his philosophy into online educational platforms, this research provides a framework for

revitalizing his legacy. The structure of this paper is as follows: first, it discusses the relevance of Wang Yangming's ideas with modern people's life; next, it explores the role of digital technologies in niche cultural preservation and promotion; finally, it presents practical applications and recommendations for constructing Wang Yangming's digital persona in a contemporary context.

2. Origin and Relevance of Wang Yangming's Philosophy

2.1 Wang Yangming's Profile

2.1.1 Wang Yangming's Life before Being Exiled

Wang Yangming, originally named Wang Shouren, was born in 1472 in Yuyao, Zhejiang Province, during the Ming Dynasty. His family was of scholarly background, and his father, Wang Hua, was a high-ranking official known for his integrity and scholarship. This upbringing deeply influenced Wang Yangming's intellectual and moral development. From a young age, Wang exhibited an inquisitive nature and a sharp mind. He was not only interested in Confucian classics but also explored diverse disciplines such as military strategy, medicine, and Daoism, setting a strong foundation for his own philosophical achievements.

As a youth, Wang Yangming faced struggles in the traditional civil service examination system, initially failing to achieve success. He famously questioned the effectiveness of rote memorization for moral cultivation, which later became a cornerstone of his philosophy. Despite these challenges, he eventually passed the rigorous exams, earning the prestigious *jinshi* degree in 1499. This marked the beginning of his career in the central government, where he served in roles that allowed him to observe the political and social challenges of the Ming dynasty.

Before his exile to Guizhou, Wang Yangming held official positions in the Ministry of War and the Censorate. He was a principled and outspoken official, which often put him at odds with more powerful factions at court. His defiance of corruption and dedication to justice earned him both admiration and enemies. In one notable instance, Wang's criticism of a powerful eunuch led to his arrest and subsequent exile to the remote region of Longchang in Guizhou in 1506. This period of adversity became a transformative chapter in his life, solidifying the foundations of his "unity of knowledge and action" philosophy.

2.1.2 How Wang Shouren Became Wang Yangming?

Wang Shouren is commonly referred to by his followers as Mr. Yangming because he once built a retreat in Yangming Cave in Yuyao and adopted for himself the name Yangmingzi. His philosophical teachings became known as the "Yangming School of Mind" (Yangmingism). All these changes should be led by an incident called Enlightenment at Longchang, marking the beginning of Wang Yangming's School of the Mind. In the first year of the Zhengde era (1506 C.E.), Wang Yangming was persecuted by the eunuch Liu Jin and exiled to Guizhou. During his journey, Wang evaded assassins and endured immense psychological and physical hardships before finally arriving at Longchang Post in Xiuwen. In Xiuwen, Wang Yangming experienced a profound realization of the Way of the Sages. He was not only the

Principal Wang who founded Longgang Academy and initiated the tradition of academic lectures in Guizhou academies; he was also the forward-thinking Teacher Wang who pioneered bilingual education in Yi and Chinese, organizing lectures and examinations. Furthermore, he was the Doctor Wang who proposed the educational philosophy of “Setting Goals, Diligent Learning, Self-Reflection, and Encouraging Virtue”. He established academies, delivered lectures, and trained numerous disciples, making significant contributions to the cultural and educational development of Guizhou. How popular was the “Wang-style Tutorial Class” in the local area? The *Guizhou Gazetteer* (《贵州通志》) records the lively scenes of his lectures: “Scholars, moved by admiration, gathered in crowds to listen to the teachings, and residents assembled joyfully to observe, forming a dense crowd.” But why was “Dr. Wang” also so warmly received in ethnic minority regions? The answer lied on the fact that Wang Yangming set aside prejudices against them, a sentiment glimpsed in his essay *On the Humble Pavilion* (《何陋轩记》).

Local villagers, grateful for Wang Yangming’s contributions to education, voluntarily built him a thatched cottage, allowing him to move out of a cave where he had been residing. Touched by their kindness, Wang Yangming wrote *On the Humble Pavilion* to express his appreciation. In this essay, he praised the simplicity, warmth, and helpfulness of the local ethnic minorities, rebutting derogatory claims that they were “crude” or “uncivilized”. Instead, Wang likened them to “unpolished jade” or “untreated wood,” emphasizing their intrinsic purity and potential. He believed their natural virtues were unaffected by external appearances and only awaited refinement by the “tools of culture and tradition” to reveal their full value.

Xiuwen was Wang Yangming’s settlement in Guizhou and the site of his enlightenment. Soon after settling at Longchang Post, Wang moved to a nearby natural cave, where he studied *I Ching* (*Book of Changes*) much like King Wen of Zhou had put his effort. He named this cave “Wànyìwō” (The Nest of Studying the Changes) and penned *Record of the Wanyiwo*. During this time, reflecting on his experiences and thoughts over the years, Wang Yangming had a midnight epiphany: “The Way of the Sages is inherently within oneself; seeking it externally in things is a mistake.” (圣人之道，吾性自足，向之求理于事物者误也。)

2.2 Mind Theory and Psychological Well-being

2.2.1 Mind Theory “心即理”

The concept of “The Mind is Principle” is rooted in the philosophical ideas of the Southern Song philosopher Lu Jiuyuan, who proposed that “The universe is my mind, and my mind is the universe” (宇宙即我心，我心即宇宙). Lu introduced notions such as “there is nothing outside the mind” (心外无物), “no principles outside the mind” (心外无理), and “no affairs outside the mind” (心外无事). These principles form the core of the School of the Mind (心学), which Wang Yangming inherited and significantly developed.

One notable anecdote illustrates this idea: Lu Jiuyuan and his companions encountered a blooming tree during a mountain walk. While admiring the flowers, one companion argued that the flowers existed

independently of human perception and were unaffected by human presence. Lu responded, “When we are not aware of the flowers, they are silent; when we see them, they bloom in our hearts.” This interpretation suggests that the concept of beauty exists only after the mind recognizes it. A baby, for instance, perceives no meaning in flowers due to the absence of such concepts in their mind. This idea extends to understanding the universe: “The universe is my mind, and my mind is the universe.”

In 1508, during his exile to Longchang, Guizhou, Wang Yangming raised: “The Way of the Sage lies entirely within me; seeking principles in external things is a mistake.” (*Chronological Biography of Wang Yangming*, 《王阳明年谱长编》). This realization emphasized the individual’s inner autonomy, challenging traditional philosophy’s notion of external principles. For Wang, The Mind is Principle meant that the mind and universal principles are inseparable, with principles residing within the mind. The mind reflects the world like a mirror, making our understanding of the universe fundamentally tied to our inner perceptions.

In modern contexts, Wang Yangming’s philosophy provides valuable insights for addressing existential confusion and reestablishing personal harmony. His teachings remind us that true wisdom and strength come from self-awareness and internal reflection, not merely external knowledge or skills. By understanding ourselves and returning to our true nature, we can find direction and meaning in life, avoiding the loss of self in society’s currents.

2.2.2 Psychological Well-being “致良知”

Wang Yangming’s mind theory advocates for self-cultivation and inner harmony, making it particularly relevant in addressing the increasing mental health challenges of modern life. His teachings on self-reflection and self-discipline provide effective strategies for coping with stress and maintaining balance in a fast-paced world. The *Xiang Ancestral Hall* (象祠) was built to commemorate Xiang, the half-brother of the legendary Emperor Shun (虞舜). According to ancient legends, Xiang, encouraged by his mother, attempted multiple times to harm Shun but ultimately failed. Eventually, Xiang was said to have been moved by Shun’s magnanimity and virtue. After becoming emperor, Shun appointed Xiang as the ruler of Youbi Kingdom (有鼻国), located in where is now northern Daoxian County, Hunan Province. Traditionally, Xiang is regarded as a negative figure. During the Tang Dynasty, a magistrate in Daozhou destroyed the local shrine dedicated to him. Paradoxically, shrines honoring Xiang continued to exist in Guizhou, where ethnic minorities revered him as a deity. This contradiction intrigued Wang Yangming and inspired him to write *Xiang Shrine Record* (《象祠记》). In this essay, Wang Yangming introduced a fresh perspective, pondering, “Xiang’s violent nature may have characterized his youth; how can we be certain he was not transformed later by Shun’s virtue?” This unique insight challenges conventional narratives and highlights the essay’s main theme.

Wang emphasized that feudal ethical principles and moral consciousness (良知) are inherent in everyone, even individuals like Xiang. While self-interest can obscure this innate moral sense, exposure to profound virtue can illuminate it. He argued, “There is no one in the world who cannot be transformed.” Wang concluded with a profound observation: “The Tang people destroyed the shrine based on Xiang’s

beginnings; the Miao people honor him based on Xiang's later life." These reflections eloquently summarize the essay's exploration of personality transformation and morality.

2.3 The Contemporary Value of "Unity of Knowledge and Action"

In the fourth year of the Zhengde reign (1509), Wang Yangming was imprisoned for his outspoken criticism of the powerful eunuch Liu Jin. Afterward, he was exiled to Longchang in Guizhou. Amid his hardships, Wang realized that his previous approach to seeking the truth through experiences and observations led to directionally flawed conclusions. Instead, he found it more direct and meaningful to recognize that "my nature is self-sufficient" and to seek understanding from within himself. This marked a shift in his philosophical exploration, where he began focusing on individual subjectivity, emphasizing personal experience, acknowledging differences, and valuing practice. In the following year, Wang Yangming accepted an invitation from Xi Shu, the deputy superintendent of education in Guizhou, to teach at an academy in the provincial capital. This marked the beginning of his systematic elaboration on the concept of "the unity of knowledge and action".

The relationship between "knowledge" (知) and "action" (行) is crucial because their unity suggests that they are inherently distinct. However, Wang Yangming opposed the view of Zhu Xi and his followers, who claimed that knowledge and action were mutually dependent. Wang argued that the connection between them was not simply linear or sequential. He maintained that "knowledge and action cannot be divided into two matters" (*Complete Works of Wang Yangming · Sayings I* 《王阳明全集·语录一》), stressing that these two elements should not be mechanically combined but should instead depend on each other to form a complete, cyclical, and ever-improving structure of understanding. In this structure, "knowledge is the beginning of action, and action is the fulfillment of knowledge". There exists both a causal relationship and a complementary dynamic between knowledge and action. Furthermore, the process of "learning, questioning, thinking, discerning, and acting" was not the entirety of Wang's concept of "the unity of knowledge and action". He believed that "knowledge is the essence of the heart", which drives both consciousness and practice. Therefore, in Wang's view, knowing is itself a form of action, and after knowing, one must act, starting a new cycle of inquiry and practice. In other words, in their natural state, knowledge and action are inseparably connected. In *The Wisdom of Wang Yangming: Instructions for Practical Living* (《传习录》), Wang Yangming used an example to illustrate the relationship between knowledge and action: when a person sees their father, they naturally know they should be filial. This is knowledge (知), and the action of showing filial piety is the expression of that action (行). The two has an integrated, dual-aspect relationship, rather than one diminishing the other.

The principle of "unity of knowledge and action" lies at the heart of Wang Yangming's philosophy, emphasizing the integration of thought and action. In today's complex and rapidly evolving society, this principle offers a moral compass, guiding individuals to align their inner clarity with external behavior amidst the overwhelming flow of information. The principle of "Unity of Knowledge and Action" (zhīxíng héyī) encompasses several key aspects, including "nothing exists outside the mind" (xīnwài wúwù), "the mind is the principle" (xīn jí lǐ), and "attaining innate knowledge" (zhì liángzhī). Wang

Yangming advocated for the integration of insight and practice, asserting that true understanding is only achieved through action and that the purpose of such integration is self-perfection. This philosophy holds a significant place in the history of Chinese thought. By emphasizing the inseparable connection between knowledge and action, Wang's teachings encourage individuals to align their thoughts and behaviors to achieve personal and moral development.

3. Challenges and Opportunities for Niche Culture in the Digital Era

3.1 Challenges in Preserving Traditional Culture

The dissemination of Yangming culture faces numerous challenges in the digital era. Limited resources and fragmented digital consumption hinder comprehensive preservation and promotion efforts, leaving cultural content struggling to adapt to rapidly changing platforms and audience preferences. As a niche culture, Yangming philosophy often competes with more dominant narratives, risking marginalization or oversimplification when reduced to soundbites or flashy visuals.

Moreover, the essence of Yangming's teachings, deeply rooted in introspection and moral practice, can be diluted when tailored for broader digital appeal. This tension between maintaining philosophical depth and ensuring accessibility complicates digital adaptation. The lack of standardized digital platform working rules to unify Yangming culture preservation efforts exacerbates these issues, probably resulting in scattered and inconsistent representations. Although a quite diverse and complete Digital Wang Yangming Resource Base Global Sharing Platform has been built on <https://www.e-yangming.com/index.html>, further discussion is still needed to talk about practical problems of integrating or dividing other related platforms such as Digital Wang Yangming Resource Library, Wang Yangming Special Literature Resource Library, and Yangming Culture Digital Museum on <http://www.ymszbwg.com/>. Too many websites will lead to computationally cost waste while too less is not adequate for information to be on display. There also exists data sparsity. For example, on the 20th of November 2023, the website of Xinhua News on www.xinhuanet.com posted 12 articles (See Graph 1) and one solely but lovely cartoon video about Wang Yangming. From the above to the bottom, they are sequentially titled as Illustrating Yangming's Twelve Realms of Inquiry: "Leaving a Letter in Zhenyuan" 12, "The Ancient Path of the Heart Journey" 4, "Enlightenment at Longchang" 1, all published by Guizhou Channel. It is difficult to find the video one (See Graph 2) unless the reader initiatively searches on the website, otherwise it will not be promoted to users automatically by social media or short video applications such as TikTok, which poses great challenges for spreading Yangming culture.



Graph. 1 Yangming Article Title Samples from Xinhua Website



Graph. 2 Website Screenshot of Illustrating Yangming Cartoon

Additionally, rapid technological advancements and the obsolescence of digital formats challenge the long-term sustainability of preservation projects. The pace of technological advancements requires constant updates to preservation methods. Formats and platforms quickly become obsolete, leading to the potential loss of digital archives if migration strategies are not implemented effectively. Without coordinated strategies and dedicated support, Yangming culture risks being overshadowed or misrepresented in the digital sphere, undermining efforts to keep its profound heritage alive for future generations.

3.2 Opportunities Through Digital Technologies

Digital tools provide exceptional opportunities to preserve and promote traditional culture through immersive and interactive experiences. Technologies such as VR and AR can recreate historical scenarios, offering detailed 3D visualizations of significant sites and artifacts. AI-powered platforms further enhance engagement by simulating philosophical dialogues and personalizing interactions. For example, the v-Corfu Virtual Museum employs VR and AR to digitize Corfu's heritage, enabling users to explore historical landmarks and artifacts in their original context while engaging with stories about the island's cultural evolution (Komianos, Tsipis & Kontopanagou, 2024). This project highlights three key features: recreating historical sites and artifacts, interactive storytelling, and educational outreach. Through immersive technologies, visitors can experience Corfu's architectural, musical, and cultural traditions, gaining a deeper understanding for Venetian and British influences. Though it focuses on collective heritage rather than a specific historical figure, the v-Corfu Museum serves as a model for using immersive technologies to enhance the appreciation and engagement of individual contributions and underserved groups within historical and cultural contexts, making cultural heritage accessible to wider audiences.

3.3 Historical Figures Recreation Cases in the World

Several historical figures have been re-represented in digital form and showcased through multi-modal displays for educational and cultural promotion. Here are two examples:

Created by UneeQ, Digital Einstein is an AI-powered interactive digital human. This project combines conversational AI, facial animation, and voice synthesis to create a realistic interaction experience. It allows users to ask Einstein questions about science, his life, or take quizzes, making complex scientific concepts accessible to a global audience. The initiative (UneeQ, 2021) showcases how digital avatars can blend historical education with engaging, interactive learning experiences, making them particularly valuable for students and lifelong learners.

A project inside China digitized Zhu Xi's cultural legacy using advanced 3D modeling and panoramic video technology. Memorial sites associated with Zhu Xi were scanned by Fan, Chen, and Huang (2022) to create realistic 3D reconstructions, complemented by virtual reality (VR) experiences. This approach not only preserves tangible and intangible heritage but also provides immersive learning opportunities about Zhu Xi's influence on Confucianism and Chinese culture, enhancing tourism and education.

4. Strategies for Constructing Wang Yangming's Digital Persona

4.1 Designing a Visual and Brand Identity

The digital image of Wang Yangming should balance historical authenticity with modern aesthetics. To establish a compelling digital representation of Wang Yangming, a blend of historically accurate features and modern design elements should be employed. Creating a visually distinctive and culturally resonant representation of Wang Yangming can help establish a recognizable brand identity, ensuring his image is both respectful of history and appealing to contemporary audiences. An electronic portrait could be crafted using advanced AI and digital rendering technologies to reconstruct a lifelike image based on historical descriptions, traditional Chinese art, and Ming Dynasty aesthetics. This portrait can then be animated to include subtle expressions, body language, and gestures that align with historical accounts of Wang Yangming's demeanor, making it feel as though he is still alive. The branding should include a consistent visual style featuring culturally significant motifs, such as Ming-era calligraphy or symbolic elements like mountains and rivers of Guizhou, which reflect his philosophical teachings and love for nature. Modern typography and graphic design can complement these traditional elements, ensuring appeal to contemporary audiences.

4.2 Interactive Digital Experiences

By leveraging technologies such as VR and AR, Wang Yangming's virtual persona can interact with audiences in digital spaces. Applications could include immersive environments where players explore his teachings or AI-driven conversational models that simulate discussions with Wang Yangming. Two specific scenarios are explained in the following:

Guizhou, considered a remote wilderness during the Ming Dynasty over 500 years ago, revealed its hidden beauty through Wang Yangming's writings, where he described it as "unparalleled in wonder" (此境奇绝). During his exile in Longchang, Wang visited the Tian Sheng Qiao (天生桥) in Xiuwen County. Named for its natural bridge-like formation, Tian Sheng Qiao is a natural rock structure spanning valleys or rivers. According to legend, it was formed by immortals fusing mountain peaks, earning the alternate name "Immortal Bridge" (仙人桥). Located 12 kilometers northwest of Xiuwen's town center, near Shaoshang Village in Gubao Township, it lies close to the ancient courier route from Longchang Post Station to Liuguang Post Station. Perhaps Wang Yangming viewed this magnificent bridge while traveling along this historic route.

Standing before Tian Sheng Qiao, with its lofty structure piercing the clouds and waterfalls cascading beneath, Wang composed the poem *Crossing Tian Sheng Qiao* (《过天生桥》). In the final couplet, he wrote: "Relocating it to the Yangtze could save dangers; a pity it stands idle amidst the mountains" (移放长江还济险, 可怜虚却万山中). Wang laments that such a miraculous structure is hidden away in an inaccessible wilderness. Reflecting his circumstances, the poem subtly conveys his frustrations over being exiled to a desolate land, unable to fulfill his aspirations to serve the empire, much like the bridge, underutilized in its remote setting.

Today, while Tian Sheng Qiao remains intact as a natural wonder, the ancient courier route has vanished into history. However, digital restoration could allow modern audiences to virtually revisit the past, sharing Wang's perspective and drawing their own conclusions about the "wilderness". Not far from Tian Sheng Qiao, Wang Yangming encountered the tragic deaths of three officials and servants within a single day. Deeply moved, he wrote the elegiac prose *Yilu Wen* (《瘞旅文》), later included in the renowned anthology *The Finest of Ancient Prose* (《古文观止》), which features 222 exemplary Chinese essays. The piece expresses Wang's empathy for the plight of humanity and represents a key experience before his philosophical enlightenment. Through technologies like AR and VR, modern viewers could stand beside Wang Yangming, contemplating his poignant reflections: "Braving frost and dew, clinging to cliffs, traversing mountain peaks, famished and weary, bodies weakened, assaulted by miasmas and consumed by sorrow—how could they not meet their end?"

4.3 Poetic and Verse-Related Environment Building

Lai Xian Cave (《来仙洞》) is a seven-character regulated verse composed by the Ming Dynasty poet Wang Yangming. This poem describes the scenery of Laixian Cave, expressing the author's deep love for the natural beauty of mountains, forests, springs, and rocks. The first part of the poem focuses on the depiction of the landscape, characterized by a fresh and elegant tone. The latter part introduces visitors to the site, subtly interweaving the poet's thoughts and emotions. The poem's portrayal of the scenery is delicate and graceful, while the description of people, though brief, is deeply evocative. The imagery of the poem blends humans seamlessly into the landscape, creating a poetic scene that resembles an ink painting. Another example, *Dawn at Liuguang* (《陆广晓发》), a seven-character regulated verse composed by the Ming Dynasty poet Wang Yangming, is characterized by a joyful and lively tone, vividly portraying the scenery of the Liuguang River in such a way that readers feel as if they are there. Wang Yangming begins by describing the bright clouds and the rain marks left on the ferry's sandy shore, evoking a sense of freshness and splendor around Liuguang River. He then captures the river's winding and mysterious depths, using ancient trees, birds along the post road, and homes nestled against green cliffs to underscore the river's timeless and tranquil beauty. In the final lines, Wang contrasts the Liuguang River with the renowned scenic site of Mount Jiuhua, further emphasizing the river's unique charm and wonder. The poem is delicate and fresh, exemplifying the idea that "there is a painting in the poem and a poem in the painting" (诗中有画，画中有诗).

To create a museum display that immerses visitors in the environments described in Wang Yangming's poetry, physical installations can be enhanced with digital projections and curated sensory elements. The space can be designed to reflect the settings of the poems, such as Lai Xian Cave or the Liuguang River described as above, using sculptural recreations of caves, rivers, and ancient landscapes. Digital projections on walls and ceilings can add dynamic visuals, such as flowing water or shifting clouds, bringing the poetic imagery to life. Complementing this, ambient sounds of nature—chirping birds, rustling leaves, or gentle flowing rivers—can create a multidimensional sensory experience. Interactive kiosks or holograms can display excerpts of the poems, allowing visitors to explore Wang Yangming's

verses in context. By combining physical design with digital enhancement, museums can vividly recreate the essence of his poetic world in a tangible, engaging format.

4.4 Educational and Cultural Promotion Platforms

Mr. Yangming has also in Educational Instructions for the Students of Longchang from *The Complete Works of Wang Wencheng Gong* (《王文成公全书》) encouraged students to advance in four key areas: setting aspirations, diligent study, correcting mistakes, and encouraging virtue. Setting Aspirations and Diligent Study focus on the attitude toward learning. Without setting clear goals, one lacks direction and does not know where to channel their efforts. Without diligence, it is impossible to achieve goals or fulfill one's aspirations. Correcting Mistakes and Encouraging Virtue address the importance of friendships. When one has faults, one should adopt a sincere attitude toward correcting them. When friends have faults, one should gently guide them. Such a supportive circle of friends as described is undoubtedly beneficial for learning and personal growth. Integrating Wang Yangming's philosophy into digital education platforms allows for broader dissemination. Online courses, virtual classrooms, and digital archives of his works can facilitate engagement and understanding among younger generations.

Building Yangming Educational and Cultural Promotion Platforms requires integrating his philosophies into a variety of digital environments to foster engagement and education. A robust online presence can start with the creation of a comprehensive digital library, including Wang Yangming's major works, annotated explanations, and related historical and philosophical texts. This library could support multilingual accessibility, making his ideas available to a global audience. Interactive platforms like virtual classrooms could allow educators to deliver courses structured around Yangming's core principles, such as setting aspirations and diligent study. These could include video lectures, interactive discussions, and personalized learning paths. Virtual mentorship programs could simulate his teachings on correcting mistakes and encouraging virtue, fostering a collaborative learning environment that mirrors his emphasis on supportive friendships. Moreover, gamification could play a crucial role in engaging younger audiences. For instance, educational apps and games inspired by Wang Yangming's life could immerse users in Ming-era challenges and ethical dilemmas, encouraging players to apply his philosophical teachings to solve problems. These platforms could also host cultural events, such as interactive storytelling or debates on his philosophies, providing an immersive historical context. By combining traditional education with innovative technology, these platforms can ensure that Wang Yangming's educational ideals and cultural legacy remain vibrant and accessible to future generations.

5. Technique Realization and Practical Applications

5.1 Realization Techniques

Building a comprehensive digital image of Wang Yangming involves integrating modern technologies with his profound philosophical insights. Current advancements focus on immersive experiences, such as using AR and VR to reconstruct significant moments from his life, like his time at Longchang, offering museum visitors a multi-sensory journey. This allows users to engage visually and interactively

with Yangming's environment, deepening their connection to his teachings. Additionally, interactive platforms, provide real-time engagement with his philosophical concepts through simulated conversations, enhancing accessibility and relatability for modern audiences.

Modern museum design techniques are crucial to creating a compelling digital presence for Wang Yangming. By incorporating 3D projections and holography, museums can create lifelike representations of Wang, offering dynamic storytelling to immerse visitors in his teachings and life events. Interactive and participatory technologies allow users to engage directly with Wang Yangming's philosophies. For example, touchscreens, interactive maps, and gamified experiences could guide visitors through his principles, such as "unity of knowledge and action" helping them explore their practical implications. Thematic zoning within a museum space—dedicating sections to his teachings, writings, and historical contributions—can help structure the visitor's journey while integrating multimedia for a multisensory experience. Sustainability and inclusivity also play a role in modern museum design. Digital archives and virtual tours make the museum accessible to global audiences while preserving resources. Additionally, multilingual content and inclusive technology cater to diverse groups, ensuring Wang Yangming's philosophy resonates with all visitors.

The integration of Wang Yangming's teachings into digital educational platforms will further extend his legacy. These platforms include courses, virtual classrooms, and digital archives of his works, promoting his philosophies. Incorporating these modern techniques with Wang Yangming's cultural legacy can elevate museums into hubs of inspiration and reflection for contemporary society.

5.2 Practical Applications

5.2.1 Built Digital Museums of Wang Yangming's Legacy

As has been stated on the challenges of Niche Culture preservation, two online digital museums of Yangming culture have been built on <https://www.e-yangming.com/index.html> and on <http://www.ymszbwg.com/>. The first website (See Graph 3), titled Digital Wang Yangming Resource Base Global Sharing Platform, focuses on presenting resources related to Wang Yangming's philosophy and legacy. Its main sections include classics, poetry, research, and cultural cultivation, showcasing the depth of Yangming's teachings. It features an interactive Wang Yangming Robot to engage visitors in exploring philosophical concepts. The design combines modern digital tools with traditional Chinese aesthetics, reflecting the theme of unity between history and modernity. Indeed, it offers a search function for users to locate specific works or topics related to Yangming studies.



Graph 3. Digital Wang Yangming Resource Base Global Sharing Platform

The second website (See Graph 4), titled Yangming Culture Digital Museum, appears to showcase Wang Yangming's cultural and philosophical heritage in a visually appealing and accessible manner. It features a digital museum with various sections, including historical documents, paintings, calligraphy, and artifacts related to Wang Yangming's life and teachings. There are displays of his portraits, handwritten manuscripts, and cultural landmarks associated with him. The site also includes sections dedicated to academic research, international studies, and the preservation and dissemination of Wang Yangming's legacy. Indeed, it provides an interactive and dynamic platform to engage with the philosophy of Wang Yangming and its relevance in modern contexts.



Graph 4. Yangming Culture Digital Museum

5.2.2 Future Psychological Support Platforms Based on Mind Theory

It is a promising future development that lies in creating a psychological support platform inspired by Yangming's philosophy. This platform could host interactive courses on self-reflection and emotional balance, fostering mental well-being. Developing a psychological support platform inspired by Wang Yangming's teachings could offer mental health resources, such as interactive courses on self-reflection and balance, promoting well-being in modern society. This is only a scheme for the future development and has not been realized. Using advanced AI, including large language models trained on Yangming's writings, users could simulate conversations with the philosopher to seek guidance on everyday challenges, psychological concerns, making his wisdom accessible as a source of modern support beneficial for individual's personal growth.

6. Conclusion

Five hundred years ago, Wang Yangming was exiled to Guizhou. During his time in Guizhou, he achieved the Enlightenment at Longchang, which elevated his philosophy of Yangmingism or School of the Mind to one of the pinnacles of Confucian thought in China. He founded the Longgang Academy, pioneering the tradition of academy-based teaching in Guizhou, and he also taught at the Guiyang Wenming Academy, where he first expounded on the principle of the "unity of knowledge and action". Of the more than 600 poems Wang Yangming composed in his lifetime, one-sixth were written in Guizhou. Among the three essays of his included in the classical anthology *The Finest of Ancient Prose* (《古文观止》), the two *Yilu Wen* (《瘞旅文》), and *Xiang Shrine Record* (《象祠记》) were written in Guizhou. For these reasons, Guizhou is often referred to as the Holy Land of Wang Yangming's Philosophy. Five hundred years later today, constructing Wang Yangming's modern digital image represents both a continuation of historical tradition and an innovative reinterpretation. Digital technologies provide powerful tools to bridge the gap between traditional culture and contemporary audiences, allowing Wang Yangming's philosophy to reach wider populations and make a greater impact in today's world. Exploring the synergy between technology and culture will remain a crucial direction for further efforts to promote and preserve his intellectual legacy.

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