

It is with deep sadness that I received news this morning of the passing of Professor Wang Deyi (or as he preferred, Wang Teh-yi). My wife Cristina and daughter Margaret join in sending our heartfelt condolences to Wang Shimu and their three sons and their families. At the same time, his passing evokes my profound appreciation for his scholarly work and his personal friendship since 1970. In addition to those areas of appreciation, which are shared by many others, I would like to highlight a few of the major differences he made in my life and work.

First, he was the catalyst or driving incentive for me to learn Chinese well enough to engage in scholarly conversations with Chinese scholars, many of whom at that time did not speak English. During that academic year 1970-71, my first year as a Harvard Ph.D. student, I was studying Chinese at IUP, colloquially called the Stanford Center, on NTU's campus; my Chinese language teacher's husband, Shih Chin (Shi Jin) introduced me to his colleague because of my interest in studying Song history. Although many contributed to my learning to speak Chinese, which came particularly slowly to this country bumpkin, it was opportunities to talk with Wang Laoshi that provided the most incentive to learn Chinese to communicate with Chinese scholars.

Second, Wang Laoshi was the one that set me on my career of collaborating with Chinese scholars. In 1970, he was still working on the index to Song dynasty biographical materials, and he asked me to translate his application's proposal into English to send to the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Harvard University. Thereupon, he obtained H-Y funding for the first time to support the compilation process, and we continued successfully to apply and receive funding from 1972 through 1983 for the successive compiling of the indices for Song, Yuan, and Ming periods. My first publication was a notice in the *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies* introducing his Song index. All through those years, he assumed that I merely translated exactly what he had written. Only when I was off in Beijing assisting Professor Deng Guangming's application to the H-Y Institute, and Professor Wang's application failed to gain funding did he realize that I might have done significant work on the proposals, instead of simply translating them. (In actuality, both his proposal and a second year of funding for Professor Deng's project failed probably because the H-Y director at that time wanted to shift funding to its program for visiting scholars from East Asia.) In any event, working with Professor Wang was so personally meaningful that I have continued to prioritize collaborations of various kinds with Chinese scholars. I appreciate Wang Laoshi setting me on that path in my work.

Third, he also contributed to my early research direction. When Ying-shih Yü (Yu Yingshi) Laoshi objected so strongly to my proposed dissertation topic on a comparative study of the mind (*xin*) in the writings of Zhu Xi and Thomas Aquinas, I followed his instructions to read for months in the H-Y Library before thinking about a specific topic, but ended up focusing on the edition of Chen Liang's writings that Wang Laoshi had given me in 1971. When he visited me years later in Arizona, I gave him a copy of my revised book manuscript and asked for his criticisms and corrections; however, since it was in English, he passed it along to Professor James T.C. Liu (Liu Zijian) at Princeton. Thus began fruitful exchanges with Professor Liu not only about my first book but even more so about my second book manuscript.

Fourth, our scholarly exchange also took place in the larger context of sharing time with one another's family in Taipei, Tempe, and Seattle. He even named my son, Tian Liang, due to my interest in Chen Liang and Zhuge Liang.

Respectfully,

Hoyt Cleveland Tillman (Tian Hao)

May 3, 2024 in Tempe, Arizona