

Philosophical Foundation of Reasonableness in Mencius's Argumentative Discourse: Based on the use of dissociation

YAN LINQIONG

*Department of Philosophy /Institute of Logic and Cognition, Sun
Yat-sen University
School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University
yanlq3@mail2.sysu.edu.cn*

XIONG MINGHUI

*Department of Philosophy /Institute of Logic and Cognition, Sun
Yat-sen University Guangzhou China
Institute of Reasoning, Argumentation and Communication,
Southwestern University of Finance and Economics Chengdu China
hssxmh@mail.sysu.edu.cn*

Mencius was known as "being fond of argumentation". The philosophical foundation of reasonableness in Mencius's argumentative discourse is analysed by resorting to the pragma-dialectical model of critical discussion where dissociation appears with different argumentative functions. The analysis reveals that reasonableness is originated in goodness in human nature, which is embodied as humaneness and righteousness respectively, and which is reflected in holding to the Mean that is based on principle and allows for expediency.

KEYWORDS: Reasonableness, Mencius, Argumentative discourse, Dissociation, Humaneness, Righteousness, Holding to the Mean

1. INTRODUCTION

Mencius (372 BC - 289 BC), the "second sage" after Confucius in the school of Confucianism, was one of the reputed public intellectuals of "Hundred Schools of Thought" in the Warring States period of ancient China. He was known as "being fond of argumentation" in his times, as was recorded in Book 3B9 (See in this paper all the quotes of Mencius's

discourse in APPENDIX) of his work *Mencius*. In response, Mencius gave his reasons for argumentation. The numerous researches on the work *Mencius* also conclude that Mencius is well recognized as being good at argumentation, too. Then a question must have come to our minds: Since Mencius was known as being fond of and good at argumentation, and he seemingly had noble reasons for argumentation, what is the philosophical foundation of reasonableness in his argumentative discourse?

To elaborate the philosophical foundation of reasonableness in Mencius's argumentative discourse, examples with the argumentative technique of dissociation will be analyzed with the use of the theoretical model of critical discussion in pragma-dialectics, especially the four discussion stages at which dissociation may appear, namely, the confrontation stage (establishing the standpoint and the difference of opinion), the opening stage (clarifying the parties concerned and common grounds), the argumentation stage (putting forward argumentation and critical responses) and the concluding stage (getting a result of the discussion) (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992, p. 35). Section 2 will probe into the moral metaphysical foundation of reasonableness through analyzing examples of dissociation in Mencius's argumentative discourse on human nature. Following the moral metaphysical foundation of reasonableness, Section 3 will discuss examples of dissociation which may lay bare the embodiments of the metaphysical foundation, namely, humaneness and righteousness, a combination of Confucian virtue ethic and Confucian deontic ethic. Section 4 will further analyze examples of dissociation to see how Mencius put humaneness and righteousness into practice in terms of Confucian practical ethic. Section 5 will conclude the paper.

2. REASONABLENESS ORIGINATED IN CONFUCIAN MORAL METAPHYSICS – HUMAN NATURE BEING GOOD

In Mencius's times, an era of "Hundred Schools of Thought", discussion about human nature was not just heated but also indispensable, for different views about human nature led directly to different claims about moral and political life. The term "nature" or "human nature" has been acknowledged to be one of the key terms in the "common discourse" in the Warring States period (Schwartz 1985, p. 174). More specifically, views on human nature constitute the philosophical bases of the different academic schools. In Book 6A6 of the work *Mencius*, Gongduzi quoted four different views about human nature. Mencius was the first Confucian who proposed that human nature is good in Book 3A1 and argued for it with quite a few passages in the work *Mencius*. According to Mencius, human nature being good should be more precisely elaborated as

inclination to goodness that is inherent in human nature, which is also the metaphysical ground of Confucian ethics (Xiao 2004, pp. 234-235; Yang 2017, p. 87). Such metaphysically philosophical foundation of reasonableness can be expounded in the following examples using dissociation.

Dissociation is an argumentative technique used to separate an original concept into two new ones, whose prototype is considered to be the philosophical pair of “appearance-reality”, with Term I representing the “appearance” level and Term II the “reality” level, while “Term I corresponds to the apparent, to what occurs in the first instance, to what is actual, immediate, and known directly”, and “Term II provides a criterion, a norm which allows us to distinguish those aspects of term I which are of value from those which are not” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, pp. 415-416). Agnes van Rees (2009) systematically analyzed and evaluated the use of dissociation at the four discussion stages in the pragma-dialectical model of critical discussion, whose work can thus set as an example for the analysis of dissociation in Mencius’s argumentative discourse.

According to the work *Mencius*, Mencius argued mainly with Gaozi in an explicit manner on human nature, where Mencius argued that human nature is good, while Gaozi held that human nature is neither good nor non-good. For example, in Book 6A3, Gaozi explicitly claimed that that which is inborn is what is meant by “nature”, including human nature, while Mencius disagreed with him by putting as an example “white” as an abstract attribute opposed to the specific “white-colored” things. Book 6A4 further clarifies what Gaozi meant to be that which is inborn - appetite for food and sex.

Referring to Book 4B19, where Mencius pointed out on the one hand that “human beings differ from the birds and beasts (in nature)”, and on the other hand also emphasized that such difference is “slight”. This may imply that Mencius did not deny that the physiological aspect like appetite for food and sex is also part of human nature but in the meantime indicated that it is just not the total of human nature.

Apart from the physiological part, the rest part in human nature that differentiates human beings from birds and beasts is indicated in Book 3A1 and Book 6A6. Book 3A1 mentions for the first time that Mencius held that human nature is good, and in Book 6A6, Gongduzi, one of Mencius’s disciples, quoted the then prevailing views of human nature and asked Mencius straightforwardly what Mencius meant when saying human nature is good. In other words, Mencius dissociated human nature into the physiological part like appetite for food and sex (the “appearance” level) and the moral part of being good that distinguishes from birds and beasts (the “reality” level). So, the dissociation of human

nature here is used at the confrontation stage (**bolded**) of the discussion about human nature.

Mencius's dissociating human nature into the physiological part (the "appearance" level) (Book 6A3, Book 6A4) and the moral part (the "reality" level) (Book 4B19, Book 3A1 and Book 6A6) paves the way for expounding and argumentation on all his philosophical, ethical and political ideas. He especially highlighted the moral part in human nature, that is, the inclination to goodness that is inherent in human nature, which functions as a moral metaphysical source for reasonableness in his argumentative discourse. Such a moral metaphysical conception of reasonableness can explain the origin of humaneness (*Ren*), the core virtue put forward by Confucius, and of righteousness (*Yi*), the core deontic concept that was expanded by Mencius on the basis of the concept humaneness, while humaneness and righteousness are the internal embodiments of the moral goodness in human nature, as is illustrated in Book 4B19 quoted above. In Book 4B19, after pointing out that there is but slight difference between human beings and the birds and beasts, Mencius offered the example of the noble person Shun to show that Shun's noble actions came from his following humaneness and righteousness inherent in him. Here Mencius dissociated "doing humaneness and righteousness" into "following humaneness and righteousness inherent in him" (the "reality" level) and "just performing acts of humaneness and righteousness" (the "appearance" level). This dissociation belongs to the argumentation stage (underlined) of the discussion about human nature.

3. REASONABLENESS EMBODIED AS HUMANENESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS – A COMBINATION OF CONFUCIAN VIRTUE ETHIC AND CONFUCIAN DEONTIC ETHIC

Section 2 elaborates the moral metaphysical source of reasonableness in Confucianism, that is, the inclination to goodness that is inherent in human nature, which was put forward and expounded by Mencius. Such a moral metaphysical perspective on reasonableness in Mencius's argumentative discourse is embodied as humaneness, which includes the feeling of pity and commiseration and the feeling of approving and disapproving, and righteousness, which includes the feeling of shame and dislike and the feeling of respectfulness and reverence (See Book 2A6, Book 6A6 and Book 7A15), a combination of the Confucian virtue ethic and the Confucian deontic ethic. The following examples of dissociation in Mencius's kingcraft politics will be quoted to illustrate this point.

For example, in Book 2A3, according to a king's motives in performing humaneness, Mencius first differentiated a hegemon and a true king by dissociating "the act of performing humaneness" into

pretending to be humane by force (the “appearance” level) and practicing humaneness out of Virtue (the “reality” level). This dissociation functions as setting a common ground between Mencius and his potential audience (including the kings and dukes with whom he talked, like King Hui of Liang, King Xuan of Qi, Duke Wen of Teng and so on) by definition. So, this dissociation belongs to the opening stage (*italicized*) of the discussion about kingcraft.

Mencius further dissociated “people’s submission” into “people’s submission under force” (the “appearance” level) and “people’s submission out of Virtue” (the “reality” level) (Book 2A3). By quoting the example of the seventy disciples all submitting to Confucius and the ode taken from *Book of Songs*¹, we can see that what Mencius wanted to highlight is the “reality” levels in the two dissociations, thus forming his implicit standpoint about kingcraft: when a true king practices humaneness out of Virtue, people will submit to him sincerely. So, this second dissociation belongs to the argumentation stage (underlined).

Book 1B8 is another example with the use of dissociation that centers about humaneness and righteousness and is related with kingcraft. Between King Xuan of Qi and Mencius, after with the common acknowledgements of the previous ministers like Tang and Ji Fa (later King Wu of Zhou) banishing or assaulting the previous kings like King Jie of Xia and King Zhou of Shang, King Xuan of Qi raised the question whether it is allowed for a minister to slay a ruler. The doubt in King Xuan of Qi indicates the difference of opinion between him and Mencius about the issue. In reply, Mencius first explicated by definition the natures of those rulers who offend against humaneness and righteousness, as brigands, outlaws or outcasts. He then dissociated “the act of killing a ruler” into “slaying a ruler” (the “appearance” level) and “punishing an outcast who offended against humaneness and righteousness” (the “reality” level) (Book 1B8). Such a dissociation appears at the argumentation stage (underlined) of the discussion about how to view the act of killing rulers.

Mencius’s argumentation by dissociation in Book 1B8 shows that he treated as reasonable the killing of those rulers who were determined as outcasts, which is the reality level of the dissociation. Such conception of reasonableness is founded on the criteria of whether a ruler goes for or against humaneness and righteousness. So, in this discussion, Mencius’s implicit standpoint is that rulers who offended against humaneness and righteousness deserved to be slayed and overthrown by

¹ *Book of Songs*, also called *Classic of Poetry* or *Odes* (*Shi Jing*), is one of the five Classics of ancient Chinese literature. It is said to have been compiled by Confucius and is the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry.

their ministers. Hence this idea is also part of Mencius's kingcraft politics, only narrated in a negative manner.

Book 1B3 begins with the question posed by King Xuan of Qi to Mencius about the means of dealing with relations with neighboring states. In reply, Mencius emphasized the importance of a king to be humane in such diplomatic affairs, which is also part of Mencius's thought of kingcraft and which seemingly earned King Xuan of Qi's agreement according to his exclamation "How great are these words". Then King Xuan of Qi confessed his failing of being fond of valor, which implies the difference of opinion between him and Mencius about whether a king being fond of valor can be a humane king. Mencius first took the concession of King Xuan of Qi's being fond of valor, but then differentiated the valor of an ordinary man in confronting just one person and the valor of King Wen of Zhou and King Wu of Zhou in confronting evil rules and bringing peace to all the people in the world. So, here Mencius dissociated "valor" into "small valor" in terms of an ordinary man confronting just one person for the sake of his personal benefit (the "appearance" level) and "big valor" in terms of confronting evil rulers for the benefit of all the people in the world (the "reality" level) (Book 1B3). The dissociation here belongs to the argumentation stage (underlined) of the discussion about the standpoint explicitly expressed in the concluding stage (**CAPITALIZED**): that King Xuan of Qi's being fond of valor should bring peace to all the people in the world. Mencius's standpoint in terms of valor indicates he favored the "big valor" at the reality level.

Conversations between King Xuan of Qi and Mencius continued in Book 1B5, where King Xuan of Qi confessed another two failings - being fond of wealth and being fond of women, and Mencius again adopted the argumentative technique of dissociation. In Book 1B5, following King Xuan of Qi's question about whether to demolish the Hall of Light, Mencius once again drew King Xuan of Qi's attention to his thought of kingcraft by connecting the Hall of Light with true kingly government. With the same people-oriented ideas expressed in the dissociation of valor, Mencius dissociated "one's fondness of wealth" into "enjoying one's fondness of wealth by oneself" (the "appearance" level) and "sharing one's fondness of wealth with the people" (the "reality" level), and dissociated "one's being fond of women" into "enjoying one's fondness of women by oneself" (the "appearance" level) and "sharing one's fondness of women with the people" (the "reality" level) (Book 1B5). The two dissociations here belong to the argumentation stages (underlined) of the two discussions about the same topic, namely, how to enforce true kingly government or how to become a true king. The corresponding two standpoints are explicitly stated at the concluding stages (**CAPITALIZED**): that if a king shares his fondness of wealth with the people, he can become a true king, and that if a king shares his fondness of women with

the people, he can become a true king. The explicit standpoints put forward by Mencius indicate again his preference for the “reality” levels of the two dissociations.

4. REASONABLENESS REFLECTED IN HOLDING TO THE MEAN THAT IS BASED ON PRINCIPLE AND ALLOWS FOR EXPEDIENCY - A PERSPECTIVE OF CONFUCIAN PRACTICAL ETHICS

Discussions in Section 3 indicate that Mencius regarded humaneness and righteousness as the guiding principle for his kingcraft politics. In the meantime, Mencius made some concessions in convincing his target audience, like King Xuan of Qi, to adopt his kingcraft claim by holding to the principle of humaneness and righteousness. For example, in Book 1B3 and Book 1B5, Mencius did not deny King Xuan of Qi’s fondness of valor, wealth and women. Instead, Mencius dissociated the said fondness into “fondness of valor, wealth and women by oneself” (the “appearance” level) and “fondness of valor, wealth and women together with the people” (the “reality” level), and encouraged King Xuan of Qi to extend his personal fondness to his people. Such concessions set a common ground between Mencius and King Xuan of Qi for Mencius’s subsequent argumentation on his claim of kingcraft, as is analyzed in Section 3. They also imply that in argumentation for his kingcraft claim that is founded on the principle of humaneness and righteousness, Mencius took the strategy of conciliation - adopting the other party’s arguments for defending one’s own standpoint (van Eemeren 2009, p. 13; 2010, p. 165) by means of expediency, while adopting expediency serves in the end the purpose of holding to the principle of humaneness and righteousness. This idea can be summarized as holding to the Mean that is based on principle and allows for expediency (Ding 2004, p. 192; Xu 2004, pp. 589-590, 593-594), which is the conception of reasonableness reflected in Confucian practical ethics. Examples will be analyzed below to elaborate the reflection of reasonableness in Mencius’s argumentative discourse.

Mencius expressed his preference for holding to the Mean several times in his work *Mencius*, for example, in Book 4B20, Book 7A26, Book 7A41 and Book 7B37.

In Book 4B20, Mencius quoted Tang, King Wen of Zhou, King Wu of Zhou, and the Duke of Zhou, who all “held fast to the Mean”, while these quoted persons are all moral models admired by Mencius and other Confucians. In Book 7B37, When Wan Zhang, one of Mencius’s disciples, asked Mencius why Confucius, being in the state of Chen, was still thinking about the mad scholars of the state of Lu, Mencius pointed out that what Confucius really preferred was those scholars who “followed the middle way”. “Holding fast to the Mean” and “following the middle way” are synonyms, meaning not going to extremes.

However, according to Mencius, one's holding to the Mean does not mean that one can do without holding to the principle. In Book 7A41, Gongsun Chou, another one of Mencius's disciples, acknowledged on the one hand that the Way or Dao that Mencius claimed and tried to promote, namely, the moral idealist principle of humaneness and righteousness, is very much lofty and beautiful, but on the other hand pointed out that it is much too difficult for ordinary people to attain it. So, Gongsun Chou asked his Master Mencius why not make the Way or Dao more easily attained by ordinary people in their daily life, implying that the Way or Dao can be more attainable with expediencies considered. Gongsun Chou's question indicates the difference of opinion between him and Mencius about whether the Way or Dao (the principle) can be compromised to be more attainable for ordinary people. In response, by resorting to examples of the great artisan and the proficient archer Yi, Mencius argued implicitly that the Way or Dao (the principle) should not be compromised to adapt to others (holding to the principle) but instead should be held fast to by positioning oneself "at the center of the Way" (or holding to the mean). So, here Mencius coordinated holding to the principle with holding to the mean.

Although Mencius argued that one should hold to the principle while holding to the mean, he did not neglect the changing circumstances where holding to the principle may confront in practice. In 7A26, Mencius first offered Yangzi's and Mozi's examples of choosing extremes - egoism and impartial care respectively. Then he gave Zimo's example of holding to the Mean. Compared with the two extremes, Mencius took a positive attitude to holding to the Mean, but immediately added that in holding to the Mean exigencies (or expediencies) should be allowed for; otherwise, holding to the Mean would resemble holding to one point (or extreme).

Mencius's idea of holding to the Mean that is based on principle but allows for expediency can be expounded with examples using the argumentative technique of dissociation. For example, in Book 1A1, which is well known as Mencius's debate on righteousness and profit in Chinese history, Mencius came to the kingdom of Wei to meet its ruler King Hui of Liang. In their first conversation, King Hui of Liang asked Mencius straightforward whether Mencius brought with him some means to profit the kingdom of Wei. From Mencius's rhetorical question "Why must the king speak of profit?", we can see that the difference of opinion between Mencius and King Hui of Liang is whether a king should speak of profit (the confrontation stage, **bolded**). In reply to King Hui of Liang's question, Mencius stated that he had only humaneness and righteousness with him, and then listed by reasoning the consequences of speaking of profit and the consequences of putting profit-pursuing before righteousness pursuit, from the king to his officers till the gentlemen and the common people (the argumentation stage,

underlined). At the end of this conversation, Mencius restated his standpoint that a king should only speak of humaneness and righteousness instead of profit (the concluding stage, CAPITALIZED).

The expressly formulated standpoint in Book 1A1 seems to indicate that Mencius is against a king's pursuit of profit. However, looking more closely at Book 1A1, we may notice that what Mencius really disapproved of is the pursuit of profiting just "our state", "our house" or "myself", which are all privately-cantered. In Book 1B3 and Book 1B5 (quoted in Section 3), Mencius did not deny King Xuan of Qi's personal fondness of valor, wealth and women, but argued that King Xuan of Qi should extend his fondness of valor, wealth and women to all the people in the world. So, from Book 1B3 and Book 1B5, we can see that Mencius approved of the pursuit of profit for the sake of the people. Now connecting Book 1A1 with Book 1B3 and Book 1B5, Mencius dissociated "the pursuit of profit" into "the pursuit of self-centered profit" (the "appearance" level) (Book 1A1, Book 1B3, Book 1B5) and "the pursuit of people-centered profit" (the "reality" level) (Book 1B3, Book 1B5). He also highlighted the importance of holding to the principle of humaneness and righteousness in the pursuit of profit (Book 1A1) but in the meantime acknowledged the necessity of allowing for expediency (Book 1B3 and Book 1B5) (Wang 2018, p. 472). The debate on the relationship between (humaneness and) righteousness and profit is an outstanding reflection of Mencius's idea of holding to the Mean based on the principle of humaneness and righteousness and allowing for expediency, which is also the core of Confucian practical ethics.

Holding to the Mean based on principle and with expediency is also reflected in Mencius's view on the war. For example, in Book 1A6, in answering King Xiang of Liang's consecutive questions about how to settle and unite an empire, Mencius stated his claims (CAPITALIZED) explicitly that an empire can be settled through unity, that a king who is not fond of killing people can unite a settled empire, and that people will return voluntarily to a king who is not fond of killing people. Here Mencius expressed his disapproval of wars because people would be killed and of the kings who were fond of killing people in his time. He also promoted the humaneness-centered kingcraft - humane governance in not being fond of killing people (Chen 2018, pp. 40-41).

In Book 4A14, Mencius first quoted Confucius's negative attitude to the example of Ran Qiu for his enriching a ruler who was not practicing humane governance. Then Mencius associated such lack of humaneness with those men bent on making war. Claiming making wars as "leading the earth to devour human flesh", Mencius stated his opposition to wars so vehemently that he suggested sentencing the severest punishment to those who are skilled in war. Mencius's strong opposition to war is again because people are killed in wars, which is against the principle of

humaneness and righteousness as well as the human-oriented and people-oriented thoughts rooted in the principle (Chen 2018, p. 41).

Book 1A6 and Book 4A14 seem to suggest that Mencius was against wars and against rulers making wars because people would be killed and the principle of humaneness and righteousness was not practiced. However, in Book 1A5, when King Hui of Liang asked Mencius how to make revenge for those who had died for the kingdom of Wei in wars with the kingdoms of Qi, Qin and Chu, Mencius suggested that if King Hui of Liang practice humane governance and pursue profit for his people, then he could easily defeat those other rulers who did not practice humane governance and did not pursue profit for their people. This implies that Mencius approved of the wars made by the humane rulers and for the sake of the people's profit.

Book 1B11 further confirmed Mencius's positive attitude to wars made by rulers like Tang who practiced humane governance and acted for the people's profit (the opening stage, *italicized*). At the same time, Mencius on the one hand approved of King Xuan of Qi's making a war against the kingdom of Yan as a punishment of the ruler of Yan who oppressed its people and did not practice humane governance. On the other hand, Mencius pointed out the acts of Qi after conquering Yan were against the wills of the people and as a result against the principle of humane governance (the argumentation stage, underlined). At the end of the conversation, Mencius suggested that King Xuan of Qi stop his inhumane acts in the kingdom of Yan and consult with the people of Yan in order to stop an attack from the other states (the concluding stage, CAPITALIZED). Mencius's two-fold analysis on the state of Qi's making a war against the inhumane ruler of Yan and on Qi's stopping an attack by other states because of its inhumane acts after conquering Yan shows his consideration of expediency according to the principle of humaneness and righteousness in state governance and in terms of wars, which is essentially founded upon the differentiation between self-centered pursuit of profit and people-oriented pursuit of profit.

Now combining Book 1A5, Book 1A6, Book 1B11 and Book 4A14, we can see that Mencius dissociated "wars" into "unjust wars made by rulers who do not practice humane governance but aim for enlarging private profit" (the "appearance" level) (Book 1A6, Book 4A14) and "just wars made by rulers who practice humane governance and enlarge the people's profit" (the "reality" level) (Book 1A5, Book 1B11) (Chen 2018, p. 98). So, Mencius's view on wars also reflects his conception of reasonableness in holding to the Mean based on the principle but with expediency. In other words, Mencius did not totally negate wars and the necessity of making wars, but just indicated that pursuing the profit for the people under the guidance of the principle of humaneness and

righteousness should become the starting point of deciding on making a war.

5. CONCLUSION

The Confucian philosophy is a moral philosophy (Yang 2017, p. 124). Following but also developing from Confucius's core moral concept - humaneness (*Ren*), Mencius extended humaneness into humaneness and righteousness (*Ren Yi*), a combination of Confucian virtue ethic and Confucian deontic ethic. He further traced humaneness and righteousness back to a moral metaphysical basis - human nature being good, which can be more precisely elaborated as inclination to goodness that is inherent in human nature. Unlike the pursuit of pure knowledge as a philosophical interest in ancient Greece, ancient Chinese philosophers pursued to put knowledge into practice. Just as Mencius explained to his disciple Gongduzi why he argued, the ultimate purpose of Mencius's developing Confucian humaneness into humaneness and righteousness and tracing their source of moral metaphysics is to influence the realistic politics in his times by seeking a sound philosophical foundation for his advocacy of kingcraft as humane governance and to benefit the massive ordinary people. Such a philosophical foundation can be summarized as the conception of reasonableness in the moral idealist perspective. The extensive use of dissociation in the work *Mencius* helps lay bare what was counted as reasonable by Mencius in his argumentative discourse.

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APPENDIX

In the following sections, some passages or parts of the passages with the use of dissociation will be quoted from the work *Mencius*. Borrowed from the marking

system in the pragma-dialectical model of critical discussion, words belonging to the confrontation stage will be **bolded**, words belonging to the opening stage will be *italicized*, those belonging to the argumentation stage to be underlined, and those belonging to the concluding stage to be CAPITALIZED.

Book 1A1 (Passage One, Part A of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

Mencius met (with) King Hui of Liang.

The king said, “*Venerable sir, you have not considered a thousand li too far to come. Surely you have some means to profit our state?*”

Mencius replied: “Why must the king speak of profit? I have only (teachings concerning) humaneness and rightness (or righteousness). If the king says, ‘How can I profit my state?’ the officers will say, ‘How can I profit my house?’ and the gentlemen and the common people will say, ‘How can I profit myself?’ Those above and those below will compete with one another for profit, and the state will be imperiled. One who murders the ruler over a state of ten thousand chariots surely will be from a house of a thousand chariots; one who murders the ruler over a state of a thousand chariots surely will be from a house of a hundred chariots. A share of a thousand in ten thousand or a hundred in a thousand is hardly negligible; yet, when rightness (or righteousness) is subordinated to profit the urge to lay claim to more becomes irresistible. It has never happened that one given to humaneness abandons his parents, nor that one given to rightness (or righteousness) subordinates the interests of his lord. LET THE KING SPEAK ONLY OF HUMANENESS AND RIGHTNESS. WHAT NEED HAS HE TO SPEAK OF PROFIT?” (Mencius 2009, p. 1)

Book 1A5 (Passage Five, Part A of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

King Hui of Liang said, “*Under Heaven there was no state stronger than Jin, as you, venerable sir, are aware. But when it came to my reign, Jin was defeated by Qi in the east, and my oldest son died there. In the west seven hundred li were lost to Qin, while in the south we were humiliated by Chu. Having incurred such shame, I wish, for the sake of the departed, to expunge it. How may this be done?*”

Mencius replied, “With a territory of no more than one hundred li, one can become a true king. If the king bestows humane government on the people, reduces punishments, and lightens taxes, ... Those other rulers lay claim to the time of their people, so that they are unable to plow or to weed and thus to nourish their parents. ... Were you to go and punish them, who would oppose you? THEREFORE, IT MAY BE SAID THAT THE HUMANE MAN HAS NO ENEMY. MAY IT PLEASE THE KING TO HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS.” (Mencius 2009, pp. 5-6)

Book 1A6 (Passage Six, Part A of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

Mencius saw King Xiang of Liang. On emerging he said to someone, “Seeing him from a distance, he does not appear to be a ruler of men; approaching him, one sees nothing imposing about him. He abruptly asked, ‘How can the empire be settled?’

“I replied: ‘IT CAN BE SETTLED THROUGH UNITY.’

“ ‘Who is able to unite it?’

“I replied: ‘ONE WHO IS NOT FOND OF KILLING PEOPLE CAN UNITE IT.’

“ ‘Who can give it to him?’

“I replied: ‘THERE IS NO ONE IN THE EMPIRE WHO WILL DENY IT TO HIM. Does the king know the way of seedlings? If there is drought in the seventh or eighth month, the seedlings dry out. But when dense clouds gather in the sky and the rain falls in torrents the plants spring up and are revived. When this happens, who can stop them? Now, among the herders of men in the world there is none who is not fond of killing people. IF THERE WERE ONE WHO WAS NOT FOND OF KILLING PEOPLE, THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE WOULD CRANE THEIR NECKS TO LOOK FOR HIM. IF THIS WERE TRULY TO HAPPEN, THE PEOPLE WOULD RETURN TO HIM LIKE WATER FLOWING DOWNWARD, TORRENTIALLY - WHO COULD STOP THEM?’” (Mencius 2009, p. 6)

Book 1B3 (Passage Three, Part B of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

King Xuan of Qi asked, “Is there a way of conducting relations with neighboring states?”

Mencius replied, “There is. But *only one who is humane is able to serve a small state with a large one, as was the case when Tang served Ge and King Wen served the Kun tribes.* ...”

The king said, “*How great are these words!* But I have a failing. I am fond of valor.”

Mencius replied, “Let the king not be fond of *small* valor. One who grasps his sword, stares menacingly, and says, ‘How dare he confront me!’ is displaying the valor of an ordinary man who is able to be the adversary of just one person. Let the king be greater than that.

The ode² says,

The king, his anger blazing,

Led forth and ordered his troops

To repel the march on Ju,

To reclaim the blessings of Zhou,

To respond to all-under-Heaven.

This was the valor of King Wen. In one burst of anger King Wen brought peace to all the people in the world. ...

There was one man who was enacting evil in the world, and King Wu was ashamed of this. This was the valor of King Wu. So King Wu, too, in one burst of anger, brought peace to all the people in the world. NOW YOUR MAJESTY SHOULD ALSO, IN ONE BURST OF ANGER, BRING PEACE TO ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. THE PEOPLE ARE ONLY AFRAID THAT YOU ARE NOT FOND OF VALOR.” (Mencius 2009, pp. 15-16)

Book 1B5 (Passage Five, Part B of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

King Xuan of Qi asked, “Everyone tells me to demolish the Hall of Light. Should I demolish it or should I not?”

² “The ode” refers to an excerpt taken from *Book of Songs* or *Odes* (*Shi Jing*). See Footnote No. 12.

Mencius replied, *"The Hall of Light is a hall of kings. If the king wishes to practice true kingly government, he should not demolish it."*

The king said, *"May I hear about true kingly government?"*

Mencius said, *"In antiquity, when King Wen governed Qi, tillers of the fields were taxed one part in nine and descendants of officers received emoluments. There was inspection but no taxation at border stations and in marketplaces; there was no restriction on the use of ponds and weirs. The wives and children of offenders were not implicated in their guilt. Old men ...*

The king said, "What excellent words!"

Mencius said, *"If the king finds them excellent, why does he not practice them?"*

The king said, *"I have a failing - I am fond of wealth."*

Mencius replied, *"In antiquity Gong Liu was fond of wealth. The ode says, Gathered up and storing,*

Bundling provisions in sacks and bags,

He thought of bringing the people together,

And bringing glory to the state,

Bows and arrows were displayed,

And shields, spears, and battle-axes,

Only then did the march begin.

Therefore, those who stayed at home had well-stocked granaries, and those on the march had well-prepared provisions: only then could the march begin. IF THE KING SHARES HIS FONDNESS OF WEALTH WITH THE PEOPLE, HOW COULD THIS INTERFERE WITH BECOMING A TRUE KING?"

The king said, *"I have a failing - I am fond of women."*

"In antiquity King Tai was fond of women, and he loved his concubines. The ode says,

Old Duke Danfu came in the morning,

Riding his horse by the western bank,

Reaching the foot of Mount Qi,

He brought the lady of Jiang along with him,

And there, together, they selected the site.

At that time, within the confines of home there were no dissatisfied women, and outside the home there were no unattached men. IF THE KING SHARES HIS FONDNESS OF WOMEN WITH THE PEOPLE, HOW COULD THIS INTERFERE WITH BECOMING A TRUE KING?" (Mencius 2009, pp. 19-20)

Book 1B8 (Passage Eight, Part B of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

King Xuan of Qi³ asked, "Is it true that Tang⁴ banished Jie⁵ and King Wu (of Zhou)⁶ assaulted Zhou⁷?"

Mencius replied, "It is so stated in the records."

"Then can a minister be allowed to slay his ruler (or commit regicide)?"

"One who offends against humaneness is called a brigand; one who offends against rightness (or righteousness) is called an outlaw. Someone who is a brigand and an outlaw is called a mere fellow (or an "outcast"). I have heard of the punishment of the mere fellow (or an "outcast") Zhou but never of the slaying of a ruler." (Mencius 2009, pp. 21-22; Mencius 2004, p. 23)

Book 1B11 (Passage Eleven, Part B of Book I *King Hui of Liang*)

After the people of Qi had attacked Yan and taken possession of it, the rulers of the other states were making plans to rescue Yan. King Xuan said, "Many of the lords are making plans to attack me. How shall I prepare for them?"

Mencius replied, "I have heard that there was one with seventy li who extended his government to the entire realm: this was Tang. I have not heard of one with a thousand li who feared others. It says in the Classic of Documents: 'When Tang undertook the work of punishment, he began with Ge.' The whole world trusted him. When he pursued the work of punishment in the east, the Yi in the west felt aggrieved; when he pursued the work of punishment in the south, the Di in the North felt aggrieved, saying, 'Why does he leave us Until last?' ... Now, Yan oppressed its people, and you went and punished its ruler. The people believed you were going to deliver them from out of the flood and fire and, bringing baskets of rice and pitchers of drink, they welcomed your army. Then you slew their fathers and older brothers, bound their sons and younger brothers, destroyed their ancestral temple, and carried off their treasured vessels - how can this be condoned? Certainly the world fears the might of Qi. Now you have doubled your territory but have not practiced humane government; it is this that is setting the troops of the realm in motion. IF YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY ISSUE ORDERS TO RETURN THE CAPTIVES AND HALT THE REMOVAL OF THE TREASURED VESSELS, AND IF YOU CONSULT WITH THE PEOPLE OF YAN

³ King Xuan of Qi was a ruler of the kingdom of Qi, one of the seven major states in the Warring States period (c. 453 BC - 221 BC) of ancient China. He reigned from 319 - 301 BC.

⁴ Tang (or Cheng Tang, c. 1675 - 1646 BC) was the first king of the Shang dynasty (16th century BC - c. 1046 BC) in Chinese history. He overthrew Jie (or King Jie of Xia, 1728 - 1675 BC), the last ruler of the Xia dynasty (c. 2070 BC - c. 1600 BC), who was said to be a tyrant and mistreat his people. The Xia dynasty is the first dynasty in traditional Chinese history, which is said to have been established by the legendary Yu the Great (c. 2123 - 2025 BC).

⁵ Refer to Footnote No. 14.

⁶ King Wu of Zhou, whose ancestral name was Ji, and given name Fa, was the first king of Zhou dynasty (c. 1046 BC - 256 BC) of ancient China. He was the son of King Wen of Zhou (Refer to Footnote No. 5).

⁷ Refer to Footnote No. 9.

ABOUT WITHDRAWING ONCE A RULER HAS BEEN INSTALLED FOR THEM, YOU MAY STILL BE ABLE TO STOP AN ATTACK.” (Mencius 2009, pp. 23-24)

Book 2A3 (Passage Three, Part A of Book II *Gongsun Chou*)

Mencius said, “*One who, supported by force, pretends to being humane is a hegemon, and a hegemon has to have a large state. One who out of Virtue practices humaneness is a true king, and a true king does not need anything large. Tang did it with only seventy li, and King Wen did it with a hundred.*

“When one uses force to make people submit, they do not submit in their hearts but only because their strength is insufficient. When one uses Virtue to make people submit, they are pleased to the depths of their hearts, and they sincerely submit. So it was with the seventy disciples who submitted to Confucius. The ode says,

From the west, and from the east,

From the south and from the north,

No one thought of not submitting.

This is what was meant.” (Mencius 2009, p. 33)

Book 2A6 (Passage Six, Part A of Book II *Gongsun Chou*)

Mencius said, “All human beings have a mind that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others....

Here is why I say that all human beings have a mind that commiserates with others. Now, if anyone were suddenly to see a child about to fall into a well, his mind would be filled with alarm, distress, pity, and compassion. That he would react accordingly is not because he would hope to use the opportunity to ingratiate himself with the child’s parents, nor because he would seek commendation from neighbors and friends, nor because he would hate the adverse reputation [that could come from not reacting accordingly]. From this it may be seen that one who lacks a mind that feels pity and compassion (or commiseration) would not be human; one who lacks a mind that feels shame and aversion would not be human; one who lacks a mind that feels modesty and compliance would not be human; and one who lacks a mind that knows right and wrong would not be human.

The mind’s feeling of pity and compassion (or commiseration) is the sprout of humaneness [*ren* 仁]; the mind’s feeling of shame and aversion (or shame and dislike) is the sprout of rightness (or righteousness) [*yi* 义]; the mind’s feeling of modesty and compliance (or reverence and respect) is the sprout of propriety [*li* 礼]⁸; and the mind’s sense of right and wrong (or approving and disapproving)

⁸ In Book 7A15, to have respect for elders is included into the scope of righteousness, while here and in Book 2A6, it says that the mind of shame and dislike is (the sprout of) righteousness while the mind of respect and reverence is (the sprout of) propriety. We need to understand Mencius’s conceptions of humaneness and righteousness in two senses. In the narrow sense, (the sprout of) humaneness is the mind of pity and compassion, and the sprout of righteousness is the mind of shame and dislike. In the broad sense, humaneness

is the sprout of wisdom (or intelligence) [*zhi* 智]. Human beings have these four sprouts just as they have four limbs. ...”(Mencius 2009, pp. 35-36)

Book 3A1 (Passage One, Part A of Book III *Duke Wen of Teng*)

Duke Wen of Teng, Shizi (crown prince) on his way to (the kingdom of) *Chu*, passed by (the kingdom of) *Song* in order to see Mencius. Mencius spoke about human nature being good, constantly commending Yao⁹ and Shun. When Shizi (crown prince) was returning from (the kingdom of) *Chu*, he again went to see Mencius. Mencius said, “Do you doubt my words? The Way¹⁰ is one and one only. ...” (Mencius 2009, p. 49)

Book 3B9 (Passage Nine, Part B of Book III *Duke Wen of Teng*)

Gongduzi said, “Outsiders all say that the Master is fond of argument. I venture to ask why?”

Mencius said, “How should I be fond of argument? I am compelled to do it. A long time has passed since the world came into being, and periods of order have alternated with periods of chaos. In the time of Yao, the waters overflowed their channels, inundating the Middle Kingdom; snakes and dragons dwelled in it, depriving the people of a settled life. Those who lived in low-lying places made nests, while those who lived on higher ground made caves. The *Classic of Documents* says, ‘The flood waters were a warning to us.’ ‘The overflowing waters’ refers to the waters of the deluge. Shun caused Yu to control them, and Yu dug out the earth so that the water would flow to the sea. He drove the snakes and dragons into the marshes. The waters flowed through the channels, and so it was with the Yangtze, the Huai, the Yellow, and the Han rivers. Once the dangers had been removed, and the birds and beasts that had injured people had disappeared, the people secured the level ground and could dwell upon it.

Once Yao and Shun were no more, the Way of the sages declined, and oppressive rulers arose one after another. They destroyed houses and dwellings in order to make pools and ponds, and the people had no peaceful refuge. They caused fields to be abandoned to make parks and gardens, and the people could not get clothing and food. As deviant speech and oppressive actions became more prevalent, and as pools and ponds, thickets and marshes proliferated, wild animals returned. When it came down to the time of the tyrant *Zhou*, the world was once again in great chaos. The Duke of Zhou assisted King Wu and destroyed *Zhou*. He attacked Yan and, after three years, put its ruler to death. He drove Feilian to a corner by the sea and annihilated him. The kingdoms he destroyed

contains the corresponding part in the narrow sense as well as the mind of approving and disapproving (intelligence), and righteousness includes the corresponding part in the narrow sense together with the mind of respect and reverence (propriety).

⁹ See Footnote No. 1.

¹⁰ Instead of the translation of “Way”, the more widely-accepted wording now is “Dao”, referring to the general principles. Therefore, in the later sections, “Dao” will be employed.

were fifty. He drove away tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses, and elephants, and the people of the world were greatly delighted. The *Classic of Documents* says,
How great and splendid were the plans of King Wen,
How greatly realized through the energies of King Wu!
They are for the help and guidance of us, their descendants,
Correct in everything, deficient in nothing.

Again the world declined, and the Way was concealed. Deviant speech and oppressive actions again became prevalent. There were cases of ministers murdering their rulers and of sons murdering their parents. Confucius was afraid, and so wrote the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* are concerned with the affairs

of the Son of Heaven, and thus Confucius said, 'It is by the *Spring and Autumn Annals* alone that I will be known, and for them alone that I will be condemned.' Once again sages and kings do not appear, the lords have become arbitrary and intemperate, and unemployed scholars indulge in uninhibited discussions. The words of Yang Zhu and Mo Di flow throughout the world; the teachings circulating in the world today all go back to Yang or Mo. Yang holds for egoism, which involves denial of one's sovereign; Mo holds for impartial care, which entails denial of one's parents. To deny one's parents or to deny one's sovereign is to be an animal. Gongming Yi said, "In their kitchens there is fat meat. In their stables there are fat horses. And yet, the people have a lean and hungry look, and in the wilds there are those who have died of starvation. This is leading beasts to devour people." If the ways of Yang and Mo are not stopped, and the way of Confucius is not made known, the people will be deceived by these deviant views, and the path of humaneness and rightness will be blocked. When the path of humaneness and rightness is blocked, animals are led to devour people, and people will be led to devour one another. I am fearful about this and defend the way of the former Sage by resisting Yang and Mo and banishing their licentious words. Those who espouse deviant views must be prevented from putting them into effect, for what is effected in the mind causes harm in affairs, and what is implemented in affairs causes harm to government. If a sage should arise again, he would not change my words. In former times Yu controlled the waters of the deluge, and the world was at peace. The Duke of Zhou controlled the Yi and the Di and drove away the wild animals, and the people enjoyed repose. Confucius wrote the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and rebellious ministers and violent sons were struck with terror. The ode says,

The Rong and the Di he attacked,
And Jing and Shu he punished,
So that none of them will dare to withstand us.

As the Duke of Zhou would have chastised those who denied fathers and rulers, I, too, want to correct people's minds, to stop deviant speech, to resist perverse actions, to banish licentious words, and so to carry on the work of the three Sages. In what way am I fond of argument? I am compelled to do it. Whoever can resist Yang and Mo with words is a follower of the Sage." (Mencius 2009, pp. 68-71)

Book 4A14 (Passage Fourteen, Part A of Book IV *Li Lou*)

Mencius said, “*When Ran Qiu served as chief officer of the Ji clan, he was unable to improve the quality of their Virtue, and yet he doubled the tax in grain over what the people had previously paid. Confucius said, ‘Qiu is no follower of mine. Little ones, you may beat the drums and attack him.’ From this it can be seen that one who enriched a ruler who was not given to the practice of humane government was cast off by Confucius.* How much more would this be true in the case of one bent on making war? Wars that arise from territorial contests kill so many people that the fields are packed with corpses; wars that arise from contests over cities kill so many people that the cities are packed with corpses. This is what is called leading the earth to devour human flesh. Death is not an adequate punishment for such a crime. THEREFORE, THOSE WHO ARE SKILLED IN WAR SHOULD SUFFER THE HIGHEST PUNISHMENT, FOLLOWED BY THOSE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING ABOUT ALLIANCES AMONG THE FEUDAL LORDS, AND THEN BY THOSE WHO OPEN UP UNCULTIVATED LANDS AND OBLIGE THE PEOPLE TO CULTIVATE THEM.” (Mencius 2009, p. 81)

Book 4B19 (Passage Nineteen, Part B of Book IV *Li Lou*)

Mencius said, “That wherein human beings differ from the birds and beasts is but slight. The majority of people relinquish this, while the noble person retains it. Shun¹¹ was clear about the multitude of things and observant of human relationships. Humaneness and rightness (righteousness)¹² were the source of his actions; he did not just perform acts of humaneness and rightness (righteousness).” (Mencius 2009, p. 89)

Book 4B20 (Passage Twenty, Part B of Book IV *Li Lou*)

Mencius said, “Yu disliked fine wine but loved good words. *Tang held fast to the Mean and appointed persons according to their ability rather than adhering to fixed criteria. King Wen looked on the people as he would on a person who was injured and aspired toward the Way though he could not see it realized. King Wu did not slight those who were near, nor did he forget those who were distant. The Duke of Zhou thought of bringing (the virtues of) those three kings together in himself and demonstrating the four kinds of service that they performed. When he found any practice in his own time that did not conform with theirs, he looked up and thought about it from day until night. When he was fortunate enough to get it, he sat and waited for the dawn.*” (Mencius 2009, pp. 89-90)

¹¹ Shun (c. 2294 - 2184 BC) was a legendary leader of ancient China. He, along with Yao (c. 2356 - 2255 BC) and Yü or Da Yü (c. 2200 - 2100 BC), was worshipped as one of the three ideal emperors by Confucius and his followers.

¹² Irene Bloom uses the word “rightness” here in his translation (Mencius 2009), but considering conformity with the word use in Xiong Minghui and Yan Linqiong (2018), “righteousness” is preferred here. Similar situations appear in the following quotes taken from Irene Bloom’s translation, in which words in the brackets will be adopted in the latter analysis for conformity in use. Therefore, hereinafter, for similar cases, no more notes will be given.

Book 6A3 (Passage Three, Part A of Book VI *Gaozi*)

Gaozi said, "That which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'."

"That which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'." said Mencius, "Is it the same as white is what is meant by 'white'?" "Yes." "Is the whiteness of white feathers the same as the whiteness of white snow and the whiteness of white snow the same as the whiteness of white jade?" "Yes." "In that case, is the nature of a hound the same as the nature of an ox and the nature of an ox the same as the nature of a man?" (Mencius 2004, p. 123)

Book 6A4 (Passage Four, Part A of Book VI *Gaozi*)

Gaozi said, "Appetite for food and sex is human nature. ..." (Mencius 2009, p. 122)

Book 6A6 (Passage Six, Part A of Book VI *Gaozi*)

Gongduzi said, "Gaozi said that human nature is neither good nor not-good. Others say that human nature can be made to be good or not-good, which is why, during the reigns of Kings Wen and Wu (of Zhou dynasty)¹³, the people were inclined to goodness, whereas under the reigns of (Kings) You and (of Zhou dynasty)¹⁴, the people were inclined to violence. Still others say that (human nature is inborn) the natures of some are good and the natures of others are not good, which is why when Yao was the ruler, there could be Xiang¹⁵, while with a father like Gusou¹⁶, there could be Shun, and with *Zhou*¹⁷ as the son of their older

¹³ King Wen of Zhou (1152 BC - 1056 BC) was greatly respected for his honorable governance. After his death, his son King Wu of Zhou followed his wishes, crushed the tyrannical King Zhou of Shang dynasty in c. 1046 BC, and created the imperial Zhou dynasty as the first king of Zhou dynasty (c. 1046 BC - 256 BC). Nevertheless, King Wen of Zhou is regarded as the founder of Zhou dynasty.

¹⁴ King Li of Zhou was the tenth king of Zhou dynasty, reigning from 877 BC to 841 BC. He was such a corrupt and decadent king as to force many peasants and soldiers into revolt. King You of Zhou was the twelfth king of Zhou dynasty and the last one of the Western Zhou dynasty (c. 1046 BC - 771 BC), reigning from 781 BC to 771 BC. He was infamous in the Chinese history for his squandering his feudal lords' respect and humiliating them just to make his favorite concubine laugh.

¹⁵ Xiang was said to be Shun's half-brother. He was mean, selfish and brutal, and together with their father Gusou, treated Shun so terribly as to almost kill Shun.

¹⁶ Gusou, Shun's father, was said to be blind and treated Shun badly. Nevertheless, Shun was still a filial son to his father.

¹⁷ *Zhou*, namely, King Zhou of Shang (reigning from 1075 BC - 1046 BC), the last king of Shang dynasty, was a tyrannical ruler in ancient China.

brother as well as their ruler, there could be Qi, the Viscount of Wei¹⁸, and Prince Bigan¹⁹. Now, you say human nature is good. Does this mean that these others are all wrong?"

Mencius said, "One's natural tendencies enable one to do good; this is what I mean by human nature being good. When one does what is not good, it is not the fault of one's native capacities. ..." (Mencius 2009, pp. 123-124)

Book 7A26 (Passage Twenty-six, Part A of Book VII *Jin Xin*)

Mencius said, "*Yangzi chose egoism. If by pulling out a single hair from his own body he could have benefited the entire world, he would not have done it. Mozi chose impartial care. If by rubbing his whole body smooth from head to heel he could have benefited the world, he would have done it. Zimo held to the Mean, and by holding to the Mean he was closer to it. But holding to the Mean without allowing for exigencies resembles their holding to one point. The reason I dislike holding to one point is that one steals from the Way, holding up one point while suppressing a hundred others.*" (Mencius 2009, p. 150)

Book 7A15 (Passage Fifteen, Part A of Book VII *Jin Xin*)

Mencius said, "What people are able to do without having learned it is an expression of original, good ability. What they know without having to think about it is an expression of original, good knowledge. There are no young children who do not know enough to love their parents, and there are none who, as they grow older, do not know enough to respect their older brothers. To be affectionate toward those close to one - this is humaneness. To have respect for elders - this is rightness (or righteousness). All that remains is to extend these to the entire world." (Mencius 2009, p. 147)

Book 7A41 (Passage Forty-one, Part A of Book VII *Jin Xin*)

Gongsun Chou said, "*How lofty the Way is, and how beautiful! Indeed it is like ascending to Heaven - so attainable does it seem. Why not make it something that others might expect to attain in order to encourage them to make daily effort?*"

Mencius said, "The great artisan does not change or dispense with the marking line for the sake of an unskilled craftsman, nor did Yi change his rule for drawing the bow for the sake of an inept archer. The noble person, having drawn the bow but not yet released the arrow, positions himself, as if by a great leap, at the center of the Way. Those who are able will follow him." (Mencius 2009, p. 154)

Book 7B37 (Passage Thirty-seven, Part B of Book VII *Jin Xin*)

¹⁸ Qi, the Viscount of Wei, was the brother of King Zhou of Shang. He was a loyal official and tried to advise King Zhou of Shang to change his tyrannical ruling, but was rebuked by King Zhou of Shang.

¹⁹ Prince Bigan, was the uncle of King Zhou of Shang. He was reputed as a sage in his time and tried all means to remonstrate with King Zhou of Shang. Tragically, his heart was ripped out by King Zhou of Shang in the end.

Wan Zhang asked, "When Confucius was in Chen, he said, 'Would it not be better to return home? The scholars of my school are madly ardent and impetuous. Intent on going forward and seizing their opportunity, they do not forget their origins.' Since Confucius was in Chen, why should he have been thinking about the mad scholars of Lu?"

Mencius said, "*Since Confucius did not get those who followed the middle way, he had to accept the madly ardent and the cautiously restrained.* The ardent go forward and seize their opportunities; the restrained have things that they will not do. *Confucius would have preferred those who followed the middle way, but, since he could not be sure of getting them, he thought in terms of the next best.*" ... (Mencius 2009, p. 165)