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Feature Book Review

David S. Nivison **On translating Mencius**

The *Mencius* (*Meng Tzu*^a) is a Chinese philosophical text of the late fourth or early third century B.C., containing the recorded conversations and sayings of Meng K'o^b, who probably lived from about 390 to about 305. What now exists (it may once have been longer) has been, since Han times, arranged in seven "books," divided into 260 sections. It has been translated many times, and it is hoped that some day it will be translated at least once more. This review of the present situation covers nine translators. In and out of print in English are translations by Legge (1861, 1893, 1895, and so on), Dobson (1963), Chai (father and son) (1965) and Lau (1970). Also available in most university libraries are Lyall (1932), the partial translation of Lionel Giles (1942), and Ware (1960). Among the translations in other Western languages I include two currently in print and widely used: Couvreur (French and Latin, 1895, 1910, and so on) and Richard Wilhelm (German, 1913, 1921, and so on). There are, of course, a number of translations into Japanese and modern Chinese, some of which I shall refer to occasionally. (See the bibliography at the end of this article for abbreviations used in referring to these translators and to a few other studies.) I have found especially useful the translations by Hattori Unoyoshi (Tokyo, 1922), by the Lan-chou University section (Peking, 1960), by Uchino Kumaichiro (Tokyo, 1962), and by Yang Yung (Hong Kong, 1970).

I. THE TRANSLATORS

The Western translators came to their task with a variety of backgrounds and experience:

James Legge (1815–1897) was a Scottish missionary with an academic and scholar's career, first in Malacca (from 1839), then in Hong Kong (from 1860) and later (from 1876) as a professor at Oxford. He published his translation of the "Four Books," including *Mencius*, in 1861 in Hong Kong. The following year he commenced a long association with the Chinese scholar and journalist Wang T'ao^c (1828–?), who assisted him with the remainder of his translation of the Classics (see Arthur Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* [1944], p. 837). Even so, there are not many changes in the revised *Mencius* published in Oxford in 1893 and 1895. *The Chinese Classics* won for Legge the first awarding of the newly established Prix Stanislas-Julien in Paris in 1875.

Father Seraphin Couvreur, a Jesuit (1835–1919), was at the Catholic mission in Ho-chien-fu from 1870 onward. His work includes translations of the basic Confucian Classics into French and Latin, and the compiling of a number of dictionaries, notably the *Dictionnaire Classique de la Langue Chinoise* (1904, 1911, based on the compiler's *Dictionnaire Chinois-Francais*, 1890), still considered one of the best dictionaries of classical Chinese in any language. Couvreur received the Prix Stanislas-Julien four times.

Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930), author of more than a dozen important books and translations into German, including the *Chuang Tzu*^d, *I Ching*^e, *Lao Tzu*^f,

Lu-shih Ch'un Chiu^g, and others went to China in 1899 as an evangelical missionary, working in Tsingtao. (One of his books records the Japanese siege and occupation of the city, during World War I, to which he witness.) In 1925 he founded and became first director of the China Institut at the Universität Frankfurt/Main.

Leonard A. Lyall (1867–?) has translated the *Chung Yung*^h and the *Analects of Confucius*ⁱ as well as the *Mencius*, and also has written a book on China based on his long period of experience there. From 1886 he was in the China customs service, serving for forty-one years and becoming an accomplished sinologist. He was thus an eyewitness, with the perspective of the civil service, to the events of the fall of the Ch'ing and the rise of the republic.

Lionel Giles (1875–1958), son of the sinologist and lexicographer Herbert A. Giles, served for forty years in the British Museum where he was Keeper of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts. He is the author of at least fifteen sinological works, including an English index to the Chinese encyclopedia *T'u-shu Chi-ch'eng*^j, and various translations published in the Wisdom of the East Series; these include partial or complete translations of *Chuang Tzu*, *The Analects*, *Lao Tzu*, *Lieh Tzu*^k, and *Sun Tzu*^l.

James R. Ware was for many years Associate Professor of Chinese at Harvard University, with Mentor series translations of the *Analects* (1955) and *Chuang Tzu* (1963) and a partial translation and study of Ko Hung's *Pao P'u Tzu*^m.

W. A. C. H. Dobson has been Professor of Chinese at the University of Toronto since 1952, with a series of four books on the grammar of early Chinese in different periods, beginning with his *Late Archaic Chinese* (1959) and *Early Archaic Chinese* (1962). Recently he has published a dictionary of Chinese particles.

Ch'u Chai and his son Winberg Chai are on the faculties of the New School of Social Research and of the City University of New York, respectively. The elder Chai had been a professor at National Taiwan University before being brought to the New School as a professor in 1955. The two have collaborated on a number of books and volumes of translation, including *A Treasury of Chinese Literature* (1965).

D. C. Lau was teaching since 1950 in the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, where he was Professor since 1970. With a B. A. from the University of Hong Kong, he received graduate training in philosophy at the University of Glasgow. He has a translation of *Lao Tzu* (1965) in the Penguin series.

These translators differ in readability, accuracy, supporting scholarship, and editorial conveniences. The touchstone here, of course, must be accuracy. With it, readability is a virtue; without it, a pleasingly written text is merely seductive. By supporting scholarship I refer both to accompanying analyses and to notes. By editorial conveniences I mean not just indices and glossaries

but also the arrangement and organization of the text, the way in which notes are presented, and more.

Readability is a subjective (as well as ambiguous) value. To my taste Lau, Wilhelm, and Giles are especially well written, and Lyall, Dobson, and Chai are usually acceptably well written. Ware's English is maddeningly disfigured by his personal translator's crochets. Legge will impress many readers as old-fashioned and awkward; this is a consequence, in part, of the fact that this translation was the work of a missionary working more than a century ago. But in large measure it results from an extraordinary conscientiousness that refuses to smoothe over a spot in the text where the translator feels the sense to be difficult to ascertain. Legge's awkwardness is therefore actually a virtue, and it is not his only virtue.

After all readability is a matter which the reader must judge for himself. I list below the translations here under review, with publication details, and descriptions of the supporting scholarship and editorial conveniences. Following this I shall take up the all-important and often embarrassing problem of accuracy.

II. THE TRANSLATIONS

A. Legge, James, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. II, *The Works of Mencius*, 2d edition. Oxford, 1895, viii, 587 pp. (1st edition, 1861 and 1875). Includes "Prolegomena," pp. 1–123; Chinese text, translation and notes, pp. 125–502; Index of subjects, pp. 503–509; Index of Proper Names, pp. 510–513; Index of Chinese Characters and Phrases, pp. 514–586.

Text, translation, and notes appear together on the same page, section by section throughout the work. Legge has followed the standard ordering and sectioning of the text (due to Chao Ch'iⁿ of the Later Han) and has numbered the sections, introducing numbered subsectioning when sections are long. The notes are by far the fullest of any translation, and use Chinese characters freely, often quoting and translating or paraphrasing relevant Chinese commentaries. The long "Prolegomena" discusses the history of the text, and what is known or reported of the life of Mencius; there is a long and very perceptive treatment of Mencius' philosophy. Also included are translations (with Chinese text) of Hsun Tzu's^o chapter on human nature, Han Yü's^p essay on the same, parts of the Yang Chu^q chapter in *Lieh Tzu*, and the *Mo Tzu's*^r chapters on "universal love." The long, (seventy-page) third index of "characters and phrases" is especially useful. A distinctive feature of the translation is Legge's use of the Biblical convention of indicating supplied words and phrases by using italics. Most of Legge's sources are listed in the "Prolegomena" to the first volume of *The Chinese Classics* (a valuable critical bibliography of thirty-three works in Chinese is found on pp. 128–135).

The 1895 edition has a few corrections in translation, text, and notes, and uses a slightly modified transcription system, and is the one usually cited.

Among many photographic reprints in the Far East and the United States, two need to be noted. The Dover Paperback reprint of the 1895 edition, published in 1970, is easily obtainable. The entire *Chinese Classics* was reprinted by the Hong Kong University Press in 1960. A distinctive feature of the 1960 edition is that it includes a reprint of Arthur Waley's article "Notes on Mencius" (*Asia Major*, new series, 1 (1949): 99–108). The original article was based on Legge's 1861 edition. In the Hong Kong reprinting, the page numbers have been changed to accord with the 1895 edition of which the Hong Kong 1960 edition is a reissue. One more partial reprint must also be mentioned. *The Bible of the World*, edited by Robert O. Ballou and others (New York: Viking Press, 1939), contains a section titled "The Works of Mencius (Meng-Tze)," pp. 428–463. This is obviously only a selection. The editors state that they are using a translation by a certain Charles A. Wong, "published in China without the imprint of a publisher or date." The "Wong" translation is actually taken from Legge's first edition and should be so credited if used; but because Legge did make some corrections in his 1895 edition, it is essential to use that edition. In any case the *Bible* text does not use any section numbering, nor does it systematically indicate section breaks, or even divisions between half-books. One important text not included is 7A15 (see below, Giles and Chai). This book was used as a source on Mencius by Ninian Smart in *The Religious Experience of Mankind* [New York: Charles Scribners, 1969], p. 155.

B. Couvreur, Seraphin, *Les Quatre Livres, IV, Oeuvres de Meng Tzeu*, Ho Kien Fou 1910 (1895): 297–654. Couvreur has text, transcriptions, and parallel French and Latin translations on the same page. Like Legge, he uses the standard organization of the text, without numbering subsections. There are no notes in the ordinary sense, but occasionally Chinese commentary is included in the text in small characters and translated, and sometimes explanatory comments are included in the translations in parentheses. For Couvreur's introductory remarks on what he is attempting, one must go to the first volume of *Les Quatre Livres*. There, Couvreur says that he has reproduced, as faithfully as possible, the interpretation given in *Ssu Shu Pu-chu Fu K'ao Pei Chih*^s, a work by Tu Ting-chi^t published in 1779, based on an earlier work by the Ming scholar Teng Lin^u, containing Chu Hsi's^v (1130–1200) commentaries. (Tu's work is described by Legge in *Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, pp. 129–130; it was evidently also one of Legge's principal sources). The few notes included by Couvreur that I have checked are usually close paraphrases of Chu Hsi's commentaries in *Ssu Shu Chang Chü Chi-chu*^w. Couvreur warns that one attend to both his French and his Latin translation "because often one contains clarifications that are not in the other." In fact I have found a few minor discrepancies between the two translations and not so minor ones between the "clarifications"; for example; on p. 308, a note in the text explaining why King Hui of Liang (Wei^x) identifies his state with defunct Tsin^y is transcribed in parentheses and is translated in Latin, but omitted in French. The French

version, furthermore, is often much freer than the Latin, which I suspect Couvreur did first. As a whole, the translation (taking French and Latin together, as Couvreur intends), within the limits Couvreur has set for himself, is admirably careful.

C. Wilhelm, Richard, *Mong Dsi (Mong Ko)*, German translation from the Chinese, with commentary, Jena, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1921 (1913, 1916), xix, 184 pp. Index, pp. 185–207. In a short note on p. xviii of the general introduction (on Mencius' life, thought and background) Wilhelm states that the best commentaries, and the ones he has chiefly used, are those of Chiao Hsün (1763–1820), that is, *Meng Tzu Cheng-i*^z, and of Juan Yüan (1764–1849), that is, *Meng Tzu Chiao-k'an-chi*^{aa}, both found in the *Huang Ch'ing Ching Chieh*^{ab}. The translation is distinguished by much fuller notes than most, and appears to me to be both careful and beautiful. It is available in Germany in paperback.

D. Lyall, Leonard A., *Mencius*, London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1932, xxvii, 242 pp. Index of subjects, 243–260; Index of Names, 261–277; analytical Table of Contents, pp. vii–xvi. There are very few notes. The translator (intentionally I judge) uses an almost monosyllabic English, and usually to excellent effect. He states that he has used the Legge, Couvreur, and Wilhelm translations and acknowledges Chinese professional assistance, but otherwise does not discuss his sources. The text gives chapter numbers to each half-book.

E. Giles, Lionel, *The Book of Mencius* (abridged). The Wisdom of the East Series, London: John Murray, 1942, 128 pp. The translation (omitting 122 sections out of the total 260) is pleasing, with few errors. There are almost no notes. The standard order of the text is observed, and the standard sectioning is indicated, but the sections are not numbered—in an incomplete text, this is a great inconvenience, which must be rectified by hand if one is to use this translation carefully—and the reader is given no warning when the translator has left something out. Usually it is at least a whole section that is omitted and not a part thereof. Sometimes the omissions show shockingly bad judgment: for example, Giles has not given us 6A7, in which Mencius likens “what our hearts have (or approve) in common” to our shared preferences in taste, visible beauty, and so on, the most important source for the ethics of Tai Chen^{ac} (1724–1777). Just as surprising is his omission of 7A15, on “What we know without having to think it out,” the source of Wang Yang-ming's^{ad} (1472–1529) concept of “pure knowing” (*liang chih*^{ae}) or moral intuition.

F. Ware, James R. *The Sayings of Mencius*, Mentor Books (paperback), New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1960; 173 pp. Introduction, pp. 7–43; Translation, pp. 44–165; Index, pp. 169–173. The Introduction contains Ware's translations of (1) the *Shih Chi*^{af} biography of Mencius (pp. 10–11), (2) the “Robber Chih” chapter of *Chuang Tzu* (pp. 17–26), (3) the chapter “Confucius” from *Lieh Tzu* (which Ware accepts as a Chou text) (pp. 27–36), and (4) chapter 28 from *Hsün Tzu* (pp. 37–42). The translation

is without footnotes, but Ware has inserted in the text helpful cross-references to other parts of the book; and whenever Mencius refers to or quotes a poem from the *Shih Ching*^{as} (*Book of Poetry* (Legge), Ware inserts in brackets the *Harvard-Yenching Concordance* text number. (In at least two cases he quotes the whole poem: see 6B3, pp. 141–142). Similarly where there are references to the *Shang Shu*^{ah} (*Book of History*), Ware gives the chapter title; and he sticks in, gratis, references to the *Lun Yü* when he thinks them appropriate. As in his *The Sayings of Confucius* and *The Sayings in Chuang Chou* (also Mentor paperbacks), Ware forces on his reader a number of bizarre pet translations. *T'ien*^{ai}, “heaven” in most of the literature, is “Sky”; *jen*^{aj} (“benevolence” for Legge, borrowing from Bishop Butler) becomes an etymological “manhood-at-its-best”; and *hsin*^{ak} is “heart-and-mind”. Less defensible are “right procedure” (sometimes “Process,” from Whitehead) for *tao*^{al} (“Way”), and “Excellence” for *te*^{am} (no one likes “virtue”, but I suspect it is here to stay). Worst of all, *chün tzu*^{an} and *hsiao jen*^{ao} come out “Great Man” and “Petty Man,” *sans* definite article (perhaps like “Everyman” in medieval morality plays). These annoyances and other quirks are at times almost unbearable. Nonetheless, Ware is a translator worth consulting on a tight problem. The face on the cover (ostensibly that of Mencius), is obviously a joke which has escaped me. (The face of Confucius, plainly labeled “K’ung Tzu”^{ap}, on the cover of Ware’s earlier Mentor translation of the *Lun Yü*, is actually a caricature of Ware himself).

G. Dobson, W. A. C. H., *Mencius: A New Translation Arranged and Annotated for the General Reader*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963 (paperback), xviii, 215 pp. Introduction, pp. xi–xviii; Translation, pp. 3–190; Additional Notes, pp. 193–207; Finding List, pp. 209–215). Dobson has rearranged the text (but without breaking up the Chao Ch’i sections) under the following headings: Mencius at various royal courts; public life; disciples; philosophical rivals; comments on the times; “teachings”; “maxims.” One may notice the artificiality of this organization without denying its usefulness: “teachings” are not different from much of the matter incorporated into the sermons to royal patrons “at court”; while a “maxim” is obviously only a short “teaching.” Still it is convenient, for example, to have all of the matter involving Kung-sun Ch’ou brought together as does Dobson. Users must not forget that the traditional ordering is not just accidental; Book 6A, for example, shows evidence of subtle editorial organization, and this is lost in Dobson’s presentation. Dobson’s Finding List is a two-way correlation of his section numbers with the *Harvard-Yenching Concordance* text numbers, enabling one to work easily with Dobson’s translation. Each subsection in Dobson’s text is prefaced with a short informative historical or analytical introduction. There are some footnotes through the text with obviously needed references to earlier classics, and so on. Bulkier notes are shunted to the Additional Notes section at the end, apparently in the belief that the “general reader” (“that patient abstrac-

tion,” as Chauncey Goodrich has called him) would be offended by too obvious a display of scholarship. The notes are often very good, even if not numerous enough. Whenever dating is a problem, Dobson follows (confer, p. 208) Ch’ien Mu’s *Hsien Ch’in Chu Tzu Chi-nien*^{aq} as a “system of reconstruction complete in itself.” This leads him, like Lau (see I, herein), to date Mencius’ life-span about twenty years earlier (correctly, in my judgment—to circa 390–305 B.C.) than the dating traditionally accepted. (But it also leads him to date *Hsün Tzu* far too early.) Obviously this is a book with virtues. The quality of the translation, which is smooth but sometimes too free, is more problematic, as will be seen.

H. Chai, Ch’u, and Winberg Chai, *The Sacred Book of Confucius, and Other Confucian Classics*, 384 pp., New York: University Books, 1965. “Mencius,” pp. 91–220; Glossary (with Chinese characters), pp. 369–373; Index, pp. 375–384. There are almost no notes. This translation, like Dobson’s, rearranges the text according to the translators’ intuitions (“The Doctrine of Human Nature,” “Political and Economic Measures,” “Way of Life,” “Comments of Mencius,” with subsections), almost always keeping original sections intact, and giving the location according to traditional ordering in brackets at the end of each section. This is completely inadequate, since one wants to be able to find the Chai translation of any text one is working on, and for this there is nothing else to do but create one’s own finding list. Completing this task after several hours, I discovered that the Chai translation has a number of misprints or mistakes in identification: IV14 (#50) should be “IVA14”; VB8 (#88) should be “VB9”; “LIIB7” (#163) should be “III B7”; “V5” (#166) should be “VB4”; “VIIA31” (#215) should be “VIIA30.” Worse, six sections have been accidentally omitted entirely, namely, 4A9, 4A12, 4B4, 6B12, 7A11, and 7A15. (Note, that if 4A9 and 4A12 occurred in the Chai text they would be identified as 4A8 and 4A11; for the Chais, like Legge, Couvreur, Wilhelm, Lyall, and Lau, use a numbering in 4A that differs from the Harvard text, combining Harvard-Yenching 4A7-8 together as 4A7 and separating Harvard-Yenching 4A23 into two lines). Some of the omitted sections are only one line in length, but the omission of 7A15 is particularly serious (see my comments on Giles). (The Chai text also omits the last paragraph of 1A7, intentionally, as it repeats almost exactly part of the text in 1A3.) The translation is often very close to Legge, and is good.

I. Lau, D. C. *Mencius*, Penguin Books, 1970 (paperback), 280 pp. Introduction, pp. 7–46; Translation, pp. 49–204; Appendices pp. 205–263; Textual Notes, p. 264; Glossary of Personal and Place Names (actually an index), pp. 265–280. The introduction alone in this valuable book must count as one of the best published studies of Mencius. Others of especially high quality include Lau’s own “Theories of Human Nature in *Mencius* and *Shyuntzzy*,” *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies* 15 (1953): 541–565; and “On Mencius’ Use of the Method of Analogy in Argument,” *Asia Major*

N. S. 10 (1963): 173–194; and Angus C. Graham, “The Background of the Mencian Theory of Human Nature,” *Ch’ing Hua Hsüeh-Pao* N. S. 6, nos. 1–2 (December, 1967): 215–271; the second of Lau’s articles is reprinted in the Penguin translation as the last of the five appendices. Chinese characters are not used except in the one page of textual notes and in the reprinted article from *Asia Major*. The other appendices, for example, “Early Traditions about Mencius,” “Ancient History as Understood by Mencius,” are useful; and the first, “The Dating of Events in the Life of Mencius,” (pp. 205–213), though I would question some of its conclusions, is an important piece of scholarship. The translation is smooth, and often an improvement on earlier translations (though sometimes making new errors). Footnotes throughout are used far too sparingly; perhaps this was because of editorial policy, but Lau’s “Some Notes on the Mencius,” *Asia Major* N. S. 15 (1969): 67–81, obviously a product of the research that went into the translation, was an opportunity to provide full and adequate notes, and although as far as it goes it is valuable, it does not do so. This lack is especially serious because Lau’s translations are sometimes quite novel as I will show, and the reasoning or authority that lies behind them (Lau never picks a meaning off the wall) needs to be made known. It should be added, however, that Lau probably thought of the rich material he provides in his introduction and appendices as taking the place of heavy footnoting, and thought it a better way of doing the same job. This in part is true.

In addition to the aforementioned translations, Henri Cordier in *Bibliotheca Sinica* lists more than a dozen others between 1711 and 1904, in Latin, French, English, German, Dutch, Portuguese, and Russian.

III. ACCURACY

There are many sections in the *Mencius* that contain few problems and that most translators handle in a more-or-less acceptable way. To be fair to the art and to Mencius, I shall first examine several sections in *Mencius* that are both full of interest, and also technically easy enough to have made them favorite choices as elementary language-texts.

A. In 2A2, which contains some very difficult material, there is the very simple story everyone knows, of the farmer in the state of Sung who tried to get his shoots of grain to grow faster by pulling them a little. This is followed by a few lines in which Mencius briefly points out his moral: some people think it “of no use” to do anything for their “plants,” and “neglect” them; others “help them grow” and actually hurt them. The language echoes 7A3 (“When you seek it you get it; when you neglect it you lose it; this is when seeking is of use in getting”) and, roundabout, the quotation from Kao Tzu^{ar} earlier in 2A2 (“What you do not get from ‘words’ do not seek in the heart . . .”) —showing that Lau, p. 77n, is quite wrong in supposing 2A2 is actually two different sections joined together. We cannot expect any translator to point out such echoes; it will have to be enough if they get the translation right, and

most do. The Chai translation of 2A2 has a wrenching misprint at the beginning: “Let us be like the man of Sung” (leaving out “not”) and another, as absurd, toward the end: “—they do not weaken their grain,” where “weaken” is a typographical error for “weed.” One should not be surprised to find that there are differences among commentators and translators on the precise sense of *mang-mang-jan* (Legge, p. 191: “looking very stupid”), describing the (stupid) farmer when he returns home. Lau has an outright error: *miao*^{as}, “young grain plant” (not specifying the kind) he renders “rice plant,” which is not the meaning of the word *miao*. Anyway, the story assumes dry-land farming in which the young plants wither (*kao*^{at}) when pulled up a little. In most other respects all the translators do well enough.

B. Longer but no more difficult is 5A5: the disciple Wan Chang asks how the emperor Shun succeeded Yao; did Yao give the throne to him? No, only Heaven can do that; and Heaven did it by indicating its acceptance of Shun through the people’s acceptance of him. Here and there one translator or another makes a questionable choice of words, but unvarnished errors are few. Lau is wrong (p. 143) in “Heaven does not speak but reveals itself through its acts and deeds.” “Its” should be “men’s” or should be omitted entirely, or we should have “. . . it revealed itself through his acts and deeds,” as all other translators see. Dobson has four mistakes: (1, 2). After Yao’s death and mourning, he has it (p. 65) that “Shun fled to the south bank of the Southern River to escape the sons of Yao.” Here Dobson is probably thinking out what would have been the likely history behind the myth, if there had been any behind it; often ugly political scraps get idealized; and Yao must have had more than one son, and obviously had not designated an heir, and primogeniture was a later development. But it could not have seemed this way to Mencius, and Mencius is doing the talking; so Legge (p. 357), with “Shun withdrew from the son of Yao” (*Shun pi Yao chih tzu*^{au}), is right; in what follows, the people have an open alternative, whether to treat Shun as emperor—evidently he is not a fugitive—or *the* son of Yao. No one else translates “sons,” but Ware, too, has “fled” for *pi*^{av}. (3). “The singers of songs sang not to the sons of Yao but to Shun.” Singing ballads to a person does not mark him out as the world ruler, as does rendering homage to him or appealing to him as judge. The meaning is evidently “did not sing the praises of,” or something of the sort, as in all other translations but the Chais’ (in Chinese the words for ‘son of Yao’ are the direct object of the word for “sang songs” or “balladed,” with no mediating preposition). (4). “It was only after these things had happened that Shun returned to the central states, stood in the place of the Son of Heaven, and took up residence in Yao’s palace. If he had begun by driving out the sons of Yao, it would have been pure usurpation.” “Driving out” is too harsh for *pi*^{aw} here; Legge’s “applied pressure to” is what *pi* means if we suppose the possibility of Shun living together with Yao’s son in Yao’s palace. That is just the possibility imagined, and this requires making the sentence break after

“stood in the place of the son of Heaven,” continuing as Legge does: “If he (Shun) had, *before these things*, taken up his residence in the palace of Yao, and had applied pressure to the son of Yao, it would have been an act of usurpation, and not the gift of Heaven.” (This observes, properly, the parallelism of the two clauses *chü Yao chih kung*^{ax} and *pi Yao chih tzu*^{ay}.) Ware makes this error too (as well as “fled” for *pi*), but all others have it right.

C. 6A7 has Mencius arguing that if some men are sometimes morally wayward this is due to environmental influences, just as growing grain varies in quality with soil and climate; and that we all have basically similar moral sensibilities, just as we all have, as human beings, more or less similar preferences in food, music, and physical beauty. The ancient “sages” were, so to speak, connoisseurs in moral taste, and so we accept them as authorities, but our hearts (*hsin*) naturally prefer “order and right” (*li* *i*^{az}) anyway, just as our eyes naturally delight in beauty. The argument is apparently adapted from the contemporary hedonist Tzu Hua Tzu^{ba} (as Angus Graham, *op. cit.*, points out, p. 240; but no translator notices this). Most translators have no trouble, but there are a few points on which they disagree, perhaps excusably. Contrast, at the beginning, Legge (p. 104) “In good years the children of the people are most of them good,” with Lau (p. 164) “In good years the young men are mostly lazy.” Legge (like Couvreur) follows both Chao Ch’i and Chu Hsi. Lau follows Juan Yüan, quoted approvingly by Chiao Hsün, who takes *lai*^{bb} (for Legge (*tzu*) *lai*^{bc} “(self-) relying”, hence “good”, contrasting with *pao*^{bd} “(self-) abandoned” in the next line) as *lan*^{be} “lazy,” and argues that the young men’s hearts can be “ensnared” by either plenty or want. Legge is probably right, but both views are respectable. Dobson’s “amenable” (similarly contrasting nicely with *pao* as “violent”) is also a plausible suggestion here (p. 114). In the grain analogy, *chih yü jih chih chih shih*^{bf} is sometimes rendered in the sense “When the full time (harvest time) is come” (so Legge, Wilhelm, Dobson, Chai), and sometimes *jih chih*^{bg} is taken (I think correctly) in the sense “summer solstice,” giving “by mid-summer” (so Couvreur, Ware, Lyall, Lau). In the phrase *hsin chih so t’ung jan*^{bh}, some follow what I take to be Chao Ch’i’s sense, taking *jan*^{bi} as “so,” giving “the way in which our hearts are alike,” (Lyll, Ware, Dobson, Chai, Lau) and some follow Chu Hsi, taking *jan* as “to approve,” giving “what all hearts alike approve” (Legge, Couvreur, perhaps Wilhelm). The loaded words *li*, *i* are, of course, translated variously. Couvreur follows the Chu Hsi tradition, and his translation here is heavily interpretative; Legge, likewise, with “principles of our nature” for *li*^{bj}, with an additional note expanding on this in terms of Neo-Confucian metaphysical terminology, without seeing that he needs to warn his reader. Wilhelm has a note attempting to distinguish ancient and Neo-Confucian senses of the word—which, incidentally, Mencius uses nowhere else as a philosophical term of art.

Not excusable are the following outright mistakes: Some young people become delinquent in hard times. As to this, Mencius comments, “It is not that

the endowment”—literally, material, *ts'ai*^{bk}—“that Heaven gives (them)” —literally, sends down, *chiang*^{bl}—“is so different.” Lau (p. 164) renders this “Heaven has not sent down men whose endowment differs so greatly,” thereby missing a deliberate grammatical archaism. Mencius uses *T'ien chih chiang ts'ai*^{bm} for *T'ien so chiang chih ts'ai*^{bn}. *Ts'ai* can mean “men of such-and-such quality,” but only in a very different context, for example, a court discussion on how to recruit “talent” into the bureaucracy. Dobson (p. 114) is out of line with “those who create these overwhelming conditions” for *ch'i so i hsien ni ch'i hsin che*^{bo}, literally “that whereby they get their hearts sunk and drowned” (Lau: “what ensnares their hearts). In the grain parable, the structure *sui yu pu t'ung, tse ti yu fei ch'iao . . . yeh. Ku . . .*^{bp} is quite literally (italicizing translations of the functional words *sui*, *tse*, *yeh*, and *ku*^{bq}) as follows: “*although* some of it is not the same, (if this is so) *then it is because* some soil is fertile and some stony. . . . *And so . . .*” Dobson is way off, with “*However*, differing circumstances do arise; some ground is rich, some is poor. *Even so . . .*” (italics mine), thus taking *sui*, illegitimately, as *sui jan*^{br}; not seeing the conditional flavor of *tse*; not grasping the “X, Y *yeh* structure, where X is a clause, which here has (as very often) the force “X, because Y”; and finally finding himself driven to an absurd meaning for *ku*. Further on he slips again on the “X, Y *yeh*” construction, with “Sandals resemble each other; men’s feet are things of a kind.” (Contrast Lau: “All shoes are alike because all feet are alike.”) Further his “All men relish flavourings in their food” won’t do for *t'ung shih*^{bs}, literally “same preferences” (in taste) as in Lau, Mencius says nothing at all about adding “flavourings” to food, and his point is lost when the operative word “same” is dropped. Ware has two careless errors in transcription (“*Yi Wu*” for “*Yi Ya*^{bt}”; “*Tu*” for “*Tzu Tu*^{bu}”). Lau carelessly omits “as to sounds” (or “music”, *chih yü sheng*^{bv}) before “The whole world looks to Shih K’uang.” This section, as I noted, is not found in Giles.

D. The first third of the long section 3A4—as far as the famous “saying” Mencius quotes, “Some work with their physical strength, some with their hearts . . .” is an account of the philosophical scene in T’eng^{bw}. This leads into a conversation between Mencius and Ch’en Hsiang^{bx}, a follower of Hsu Hsing^{by}, who thinks everyone, even a ruler, should grow his own food, and that a ruler who does otherwise is exploiting his people. Mencius takes him apart fairly smoothly, but we encounter two problem spots: the word *she*^{bz} can (with Chao Ch’i) be interpreted as “only” or “just” and taken with the following (“get everything he needs from his own house,” Lau p. 101) or it can with others be interpreted as “shop” and taken with what precedes (“set up a potter’s and smith’s shop”). Something seems wrong, but either interpretation gives the same sense. (Perhaps a third view, offered in Lan-Chou, pp. 132, 397, is right, taking *she* as a particle meaning “whatever (kind of thing is needed).”) Further on, there has been much argument about the word *lu* in *shuai t’ien hsia erh lu*^{ca}: either, if everyone has to make what he uses, this will “keep all

the people running about on the roads” (Chu Hsi’s sense, followed by Legge, Couvreur, Wilhelm, Lyall, and Giles); or “have everyone completely worn out” (Chao Ch’i, seconded by Arthur Waley (notes on Mencius,” *Asia Major* 1, N. S. (1949): 102, and followed more or less by Ware, Dobson, Chai, and Lau). I don’t think the point is settled (see Chiao Hsün’s comment), and the overall sense is about the same.

There are other disagreements in translation where there should be none. A good ruler, Hsü Hsing says, “labors in the fields with his people and eats (the fruit of his labor)” (Chai, p. 192)—*yü min ping keng erh shih*^{eb}. Dobson (p. 116) misinterprets this as “should both plow and eat with his people,” translating as if the particle *erh*^{ec} were not there. Ware’s “Isn’t the one who exchanges his grain for utensils exploiting the potter or the founder?” (p. 85) is wrong; in effect, Ware inserts a negative in the next clause to get this meaning. Ware is wrong again in understanding *ho Hsü Tzu chih pu tan fan*^{ed} as “Why doesn’t Hsü hesitate before all the trouble he is causing?” The trouble is trouble to Hsü himself, not to others. Dobson’s handling of this line is even worse: “What can be said of Hsü Hsing’s ‘not involving himself in complications?’” *Pu tan* means “not avoiding” rather than “not involving himself in”; and the line is not a comment on an epithet. The idiom “*ho S chih P*?”^{ee} simply means “Why does S P so much?” So Dobson makes a double mistake here.

Dobson makes a double mistake again in a line farther on that has, surprisingly, caused all the translators trouble. The words *ch’ieh i jen chih shen erh po kung chih so wei pei*^{ef} are translated correctly (if awkwardly) by Legge (p. 249). Mencius is emphasizing the beauty of the system of division of labor in our lives: high and low each have their proper work, “furthermore,” (my translation), “in the case of each individual person even, all the various artisans’ products are available (to him if needed).” There is what appears to be a slightly different interpretation which takes this as a statement of what is necessary if human needs are to be met, rendering *pei*^{eg} (“available,” “provided”), in effect, as “must be provided, that is, “are all necessary” (Couvreur, Wilhelm, Giles, Chai, Lau), however, the sentence just does not say this, and obviously no one person needs *all* the kinds of things artisans can make.

To see how this mistake actually arises (and so, to see that it is not so minor) we must go to Couvreur’s Latin, which is here defensively word-for-word: “Imo unius hominis persona est quam varii opifices faciunt instructam (rebus necessariis)” (p. 422). Literally, “Furthermore, the person of one human being is what the various artisans (make, i.e.) cause to be provided (with necessary things)” —taking “. . . *chih so wei pei*”^{eh} as “What . . . cause to be provided,” and so requiring something like “(with necessary things)” to complete the sense. Couvreur here ignores the grammatical function of *erh* after *i jen chih shen*^{ei} (“unius hominis persona”). He evidently had a source in some commentary (not in Chu Hsi himself, who says nothing), for the grammatical

error is cited and scotched by Chiao Hsün (p. 218), who simply points out how Chao Ch'i rearranged the syntax: *i jen erh pei po kung chih so tso^{ck}*—showing that *wei^{ck}* means *tso^{cl}* here, and that *pei* is not part of the *so^{cm}* construction. But Couvreur aims to give us Mencius as read by Tu Ting-chi, and Tu has this right (see *Ssu-shu Pu-chu Fu-k'ao Pei-chih*, 1848 edition, *Meng Tzu* 2.24b). So even if Couvreur had a source, he must be held accountable.

Ware (“A fulfillment takes place . . .”) doesn’t understand *pei* at all, and Dobson and Lyall miss the sense by trying to incorporate this sentence with the next as an extra conditional clause. Dobson’s “in a single lifetime” for *i jen chih shen* is an additional mistake, apparently confusing *shen* here with its use in the idiom *chung shen^{en}* “spend all one’s life doing” Legge’s meaning (he does not say so) is that of Chao Ch’i; he is uneasy about it, and notes but rejects the meaning Couvreur and others adopted, which he identifies as from the *Jih-chiang Ssu Shu I-chieh^{co}*, an official publication of 1677 (which I have not been able to examine). Uchino has no difficulty with the line (p. 182), taking it properly as a separate sentence with the meaning I have given it.

There are a few more things to note: Ware’s “sincere at being a prince of the highest caliber” (p. 84) is a daring attempt to give strict logical consistency to Ch’en Hsiang’s remarks; but the word *ch’eng^{cp}* is not the verb in the sentence. (Still the intuition is right: Ch’en is, in effect, suggesting that the Duke’s intentions, at least, are good; he is a *hsien^{ca}* ruler, but he cannot *do* what is *hsien* in the way he is proceeding.) Chai’s “not,” in “Why does he not carry out all this multifarious dealing . . .” (p. 193), I assume to be simply a lapse in editing. The Chai punctuation “Some toil with their minds, and some toil with their bodies,” taking what follows as not part of the “saying” but Mencius’ comment on it, is a possible interpretation, but found nowhere else. I suppose it is inevitable that expressions like *shu shih^{cr}* (“several tens”—the number of Hsü Hsing’s followers) will continue to be “translated” by inaccurate but more natural expressions in English such as “several scores” (Chai, Lau) or “several dozen” (Wilhelm, Ware) when it does not seem to matter much (possibly justifiable, if one reflects that if Chinese had had a single word, say “X,” for “dozen” and had not had a common phrase *shu shih*, Mencius probably would have said *shu X*).

These texts are, really, easy as well as enjoyable, and the translators’ troubles, which I have thought it instructive to exhibit with care, are still relatively few compared to their difficulties in most parts of the book. In the texts so far, translators differ here and there, and here and there some of them trip, but usually not seriously. The sections are so rich anyway that the reader gets a lot for his reading time. If all of *Mencius* were like this, I perhaps would not need to go on.

Unfortunately all of *Mencius* is not like this. Much of the book is quite difficult. Often this is because Mencius is quoting earlier writings, or tagging and adroitly twisting earlier ideas (as in fact he was in 6A7), perhaps in ways

his contemporaries recognized easily while we do not. Some of these difficult parts are very important for understanding Mencius' philosophy.

Some of these difficult *and* important texts are so problematic that, to be fair to the translators, I must admit that even extended monographic treatment would not end argument; indeed in some cases the monographic literature is already large. It would be unfair to use texts of this kind to test our translators' abilities, and I will mention a few of them only to show that in working with Mencius the scholar's concerns can never be casually waved aside.

Item: 2A2 is notorious for its difficulties (it is the section in which Mencius talks about cultivating his "vast *ch'i*es"). In this section, a friend (or opponent? or disciple?) asks Mencius to compare another method of attaining inner steadiness—that of the rival philosopher, Kao Tzu (alive? or dead?)—with his own method. Mencius quotes sixteen words from Kao Tzu (about whom almost nothing is known) and proceeds to develop his own view by criticizing Kao Tzu's formula. No two translators or commentators agree on what those sixteen words mean, and, I believe, no one has got it right. The key, I think, is to take *yen*^{et}, "words," in the first line as meaning "philosophical doctrines" or "moral maxims." "What you do not get from *yen* do not seek in the heart . . ."; but to substantiate this would require me to write another article. So, no one really has seen fully what is going on as Mencius develops his *own* position at this crucial point.

Item: 6A3 and 6A4 have been labored over much; one of the most astute attempts to crack them will be found in Lau's appendix 5. (For another, see Graham op. cit., pp. 244–250). This spot, too, finds Mencius arguing (this time apparently in person) against the same Kao Tzu, who seems to be arguing among other things that we "perceive" our duties to others just as we perceive natural qualities of things. This text is greatly, if not completely, clarified (in a way I think no one has seen) by running 6A3 and 6A4 together and then construing the syntax of 6A4 in a way that will immediately be suggested by this move. This will enable one to read 6A4 without any amending of the text, contrary to all the translators and commentators: "Mencius replied, 'It's different from the case of the "whiteness of a white horse"' (the standard example of a perceptual quality); 'that's no different from the whiteness of a white man; but. . .'" Here Mencius is shown to be totally on top of the game of fourth century logic-chopping (as Lau rightly argues, though he handles this text differently).

Item: 7A17 is a one-liner, only seventeen words in length, literally, "Do not do what (you) do not do. . . ." I think it likely that no translator or Chinese commentator has understood it completely. Chu Hsi at least saw that 7B31 is an expansion of it, and no translator who fails to point this out in a note is doing his job. But this does not completely solve the problem. What is required here is that we reconstruct Mencius' entire philosophy of action (obviously a task for a substantial monograph), noticing that Mencius, as a Confucian

moral self-cultivationist, had to believe that we *do* have moral responsibility for at least a part of our structure of emotions and motivations, and that we *can* shape them. This is not a popular view in Western moral philosophy, and no doubt a subliminal feeling of charity has operated in the translators to steer them away from Mencius' real meaning, which I think was this: "You have an instinctive aversion to wrong acts of this or that kind in simple situations; *extend* (*tui*^{cu}) (you *can* do it! 1A7) that feeling to all not so simple situations of essentially the same kind. . . ." The thought is deep, and Mencius was right, but that is another story (and yet another monograph). But still, do anything to avoid having Mencius say it: One translator (Lau) renders the line "Do not do what others do not choose to do . . ." giving no footnote; and another (Ware, apparently, though he does not tell us, following the Han commentator Chao Ch'i), "Do not have done what you yourself would not do. . . ." I think it is clear that the difficulty here involves much more than the translator's ability to read.

The point of the foregoing examples is that there are many sticky passages in Mencius, often very important ones, whose interpretation is debatable. In some cases it is even true that how they are translated affects substantially how Mencius' philosophy as a whole is interpreted. Any translation that represents the *Mencius* as smooth and unproblematic reading at these points is dangerously misleading. Even though I think I know how to handle these three cases I have just examined, I would have to respect a scholar who disagreed with me, and I could not, therefore, charge him with a blunder as a translator. In the last example, however, there is one criticism that must be made of the *translation* performance of the two translators quoted. Both recognized the text to be a problem. This is shown at once (to anyone checking the original Chinese) by the way they twist the original to get English that satisfies them as making sense. Any translator, for that matter, should be put on guard, at least, by the fact that Chao Ch'i and Chu Hsi, the two best-known commentators, disagree so sharply as to what this section is all about. Yet, neither Lau nor Ware warns the reader that he is looking at a problematic text; in fact, the only two translators being reviewed here who do (calling attention to different commentators' views) are Legge and Wilhelm.

I must pursue this issue further; and I shall not be impressed if I am told that the average reader does not want to be distracted by footnotes: the reader too has his duties, and if he is not interested in being dealt with honestly he does not deserve my concern for him. Consider what happens as the translators confront 2B13. Mencius, leaving Ch'i after failing to gain the serious attention of the King, is asked by a man accompanying him why he seems distressed, and is reminded that he himself has previously counseled that "The superior man does not murmur against Heaven" (Legge, p. 232). Mencius replies that a new King of all China should have appeared before now; Heaven must not wish it so; "If it wished this, who is there besides me to bring it about?" (that

is, by converting a local ruler into a “true king”). Legge continues: “How could I be otherwise than dissatisfied?” A natural thing for Mencius to say, but unfortunately there is nothing in the Chinese corresponding to “otherwise than,” and although Legge has a footnote, he does not mention this matter. Legge is followed by Wilhelm, Lyall, Ware, Dobson, and the Chais (Giles omits the section), none of whom footnote the difficulty. The last three furthermore, did their work after the publication of Arthur Waley’s “Notes on Mencius” in 1949, which points out that “Legge’s ‘otherwise than’ is an arbitrary insertion” (p. 101). Lau does better, translating absolutely literally, leaving the reader to struggle with the apparent nonsequitur.

What is amazing here is that the problem has been dealt with at length by Chu Hsi, who takes the text as it stands and argues that Mencius is indeed insisting he *is not* discontented, reassuring himself that if Heaven wished to act he would be Heaven’s instrument. Chu continues, “We see in this how the sage’s grief for the world can coexist harmoniously with an honest delight in Heaven.” (Chao Ch’i argues similarly, but briefly.) Couvreur, who like Lau translates literally, gives us one of his rare in-text notes which paraphrases this resolution of Chu’s: “Although one mustn’t resent Heaven, can’t one be sad about Heaven’s bidding?” Chu may be right, though there is, if so, an undeniable lack of coherence in the section. But surely, only chaos can be the result if the principle is accepted that a translator may supply or withhold a *negative* simply on the basis of his sense of the logic of a passage, without telling the reader what he is doing. Yet this is exactly what six of our nine translators have done. One begins to wonder if the translation of Mencius is out of control.

Another example requires praise as well as blame. In 3B5 Mencius is moralizing on the Sung state’s difficulties in power politics, and has occasion to quote from a (now lost) *Shang Shu* chapter dealing with the campaigns of King Wu, founder of the Chou dynasty. King Wu marches eastward, “there being some who would not become the subjects” (*sc.* of Chou). So Legge (p. 273), followed in substance by Couvreur, Wilhelm, Lyall, Ware, Dobson, and the Chais (Giles omits) and in agreement with commentators Chao Ch’i, Chu Hsi, and Chiao Hsün. In understanding the text, all take the (second) word *yu*^{cv} in the line *yu yu pu wei ch’en*^{cw} as the early archaic equivalent of the preverbal pronoun *so* (literally, “There were (places) *where* (they) did not submit”). This is grammatically possible and makes good sense. Lau alone differs, translating (p. 110) “The state of Yu did not submit.” Lau gives no note, no hint to the reader that he will find this interpretation in no other translator, and probably in no commentator; nor any justification whatever for a radically new translation, taking what had been thought to be a pronoun as the name of a petty state.

Yet Lau’s translation may very well be right, and impressive scholarship lies behind it. There *was* a feudal state of Yu in pre-Chou China. It is mentioned

repeatedly in late Shang oracle inscriptions concerning a royal campaign against eastern border peoples, and its location is known. It was less than a hundred miles east-south-east of the capital of the Sung state of Mencius' day, where he probably was when this conversation took place, and so was also a territory King Wu would have had to march east to get to. Further, the Shang bone inscriptions indicate that it was a Shang frontier feudal dependency or a strong border supporting power. It would not be surprising if such an entity were to try to hold out after the main action of the conquest. There are probably references to the same entity, using variant graphs, in the *Tso Chuan* and in early Chou bronze inscriptions. The whole matter is dealt with by Ch'en Mengchia in his *Pu-tz'u Tsung-shu* (Taipei reprint of his *Yin-hsü Pu-tz'u Tsung-shu*^{cx}, Peking, 1956), p. 306. (Ch'en himself cites Mencius 3B5.) (Incidentally, some would want Lau to render *yu-Yu* as "the ruler of Yu"; but Lau is correct here. See my "The Pronominal Use of the Verb *Yu*^{cy} . . . in Early Archaic Chinese," *Early China* 3 (1977): 1–17.) So, Lau knew what he was doing. Very good; but surely he should have told us.

The reader needs a footnote when the translation calls for justification, but always, what is needed is correct translation. It is time to prick illusions about this matter, and one may as well begin at the beginning. Mencius 1A1 gives us Mencius' initial interview with King Hui of Liang: "Aged sir, you have not thought a thousand *li* too far to come. . . ." The text is sometimes thought to be easy (Raymond Dawson, in his *An Introduction to Classical Chinese*, [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968], pp. 12, 24–29, 80, uses it as his opening lesson.) It is hardly that, but the difficulties are ones we should expect a person publishing a translation of Mencius to be able handle. Lau's translation (p. 49) is almost but not quite right; he errs in rendering *wang i yueh*^{cz} . . . near the end as "perhaps you will now endorse what I have said," essentially following Legge, Ware, Lyall, and Wilhelm who take *i*^{da} as "also"; others see that it is here, as at the beginning of the section, a particle reinforcing the final *erh i*^{db} "only." See Waley, op. cit., p. 100; *i* at the beginning of Mencius' remarks is misinterpreted as 'also' by Wilhelm and Lyall only. (Waley's very first note, in his "Notes on Mencius," criticizes Legge for just this mistake. Legge does make the error in the 1861 edition, but corrects it in the Oxford edition of 1895, which Waley unwisely did not use.)

Lau (with Wilhelm, Couvreur, Lyall, and Giles) handles perfectly the idiom "*che, pi*^{de}" halfway through: "When regicide is committed in a state of ten thousand chariots, it is certain to be by a vassal with a thousand chariots. . . ." Legge mysteriously (and inappropriately) uses the language of Biblical prophecy: "In the Kingdom of ten thousand chariots, the murderer of his sovereign shall be *the chief of* a family of a thousand chariots" (compare Isaiah 39.6: "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house . . . shall be carried to Babylon. . . ."). He is followed by the Chais (p. 109) who simply copy him, and in substance also by Ware. Dobson (p. 26) goes wild: "In a 'ten-thousand

chariot state' . . . he who slew his prince might gain a 'thousand-chariot state' ,” and so on, and he continues the error by translating “a thousand in ten thousand . . . is no small profit.” (Contrast Lau’s correct rendering: “a share of a thousand in ten thousand . . . is by no means insignificant”. Embarrassingly, Dawson follows Dobson at these points, in a model translation he provides for his beginning students—Dawson, p. 80.) Dobson should have recognized the “*che, pi*” idiom as one that also occurs at the end of 6A1 (he translates 6A1 so loosely that I cannot tell whether he understood it there).

We find several more difficulties in the rendering of this section. It will be noticed that Legge and Couvreur use the definite article before “kingdom of ten thousand chariots” (“le domaine qui”). This is acceptable, though not necessary; they do it following a tradition that only the Chou king could have that many chariots. The Chais, copying and improving Legge without seeing what he was doing, also use the definite article in the next, parallel sentence: “In the kingdom of a thousand chariots . . . ,” requiring us to give “the” a different sense (“the (typical)”). Returning to Dobson, we find more squeaks and rattles: *wei yu jen erh i ch’i ch’in che yeh*^{dd} (Lau: “No benevolent man ever abandons his parents”) he inverts: “There has never been a Humane man abandoned by his kin.” Dobson, of course, does not think that the Chinese has this meaning (he translates this sentence correctly in *LAC*, p. 119); he is just being very careless, as he is in 2B11, p. 53, when having just translated “Duke Wu of Lu” he interpolates two references to him in the next three lines as “King.” One more Dobson error is his rendering of the conditional particle *kou*^{de} (*kou wei hou i erh hsien li*^{df}) as “if indeed” *Kou* actually means “if at all” or “if . . . just . . .” (in Japanese; *iyashiku mo*). It is acceptable to render it simply “if” so long as the context shows Mencius’ meaning, which is here that *just* making this *one* mistake (of putting “profit” before “right”) is enough to ruin your state. But Dobson is convinced that *kou* is a synonym of *ch’eng* (“sincerely,” “really,” and so on)—see *LAC*, p. 132—and so he roughs the sense here a bit. He repeats this error elsewhere, for example, in 2A6 (p. 132): “If in fact a ruler can . . .” should be “If a ruler can just . . . ,” as the context here clearly shows. (To see the difference, ask yourself what “in fact” and “just” *deny* as well as what they *say*.) Thus we find in 1A1 a disquieting parade of mistakes, in a very familiar section of only a dozen short sentences.

Henceforth I will take up either one-line sections or isolated points in longer ones to illustrate various kinds of problems. Sometimes the problem in a poor translation is not ignorance of language but ignorance (or ignoring) of a simple background fact. We find an example of this in Mencius’ long conversation with King Hsuan of Ch’i (Mencius 1A7). Mencius repeats to the king an account another officer had given him of the King’s having noticed an ox being led to sacrifice, taking pity on it, and ordering a sheep to be put in its place. The story begins, according to Lau (p. 54): “The King was sitting in the upper part of the hall and someone led an ox through the lower part.” In interpreting “*kuo*

t'ang hsia^{ds}” as “through the lower part,” Lau stands with Couvreur, Giles, and Dobson, and in part Legge (who has “past the lower part”). It is an intriguing picture they seem to share. (How charmingly primitive these early royal courts must have been! Would there have been a flunky whose duty was to clean up the droppings? What would his title have been?) All have neglected two simple linguistic facts and one equally simple architectural fact: (1) “*X hsia^{dh}*” can mean either ‘the lower part of X’ or ‘below X’, or even (if X is in a low position) ‘down in X’; (2) *kuo^{di}* can mean either ‘pass through’ or ‘pass by’; and (3) important Chinese buildings, such as royal audience halls, were in ancient and not so ancient times built with the main floor high off the ground and were approached by a broad stairway. So, the line might have the meaning Lau gives it, or it might mean, as Lyall (Ware, the Chais, and Wilhelm are similar) translates: “The King was sitting in the hall above when a man passed below the hall dragging an ox.” It is up to the translator to notice these two possibilities, pick out the more likely one, and verify his choice with independent evidence if he can. In this case the independent evidence is plentiful, for we often find such expressions as “*tang chih shang^{dj}*” (“(up) in the hall”), “*hsia t'ang^{dk}*” (“descend from”—that is, go out of “the hall”), and so on. For example, Chuang Tzu tells of the sacred turtle-shell of Ch’u, which the king wrapped in a napkin and placed in a box, “keeping it in the ancestral temple” *ts’ang chih miao t’ang chih shang^{dl}* (Harvard-Yenching text, 45/17/82). These are things a translator ought simply to know—and be able to remember when he needs to.

Some will have noticed that there is one translation problem I have been largely ignoring, and they may be puzzled. For example, Ware, whom I judged to have translated the foregoing text correctly, translates the word *niu^{dm}* not as “ox” but as “buffalo”. Is he right? One cannot fault him: *niu* is a generic term for bovid animals, and archaeology verifies that the water buffalo and other bovids already were domesticated in north China by Shang times. Perhaps ritual texts would pin down the zoological question here, but if so this would require a footnote, and not only a judicious use of English. It is even truer when accurate representation of the thought of a passage is at stake (which is not the case here) that at a problematic spot the translator has got to do more than just pick the “best” word. On the other hand, when nothing rests on the matter we tolerate patent inaccuracy. I will even forgive (as I often must in these translations) “mile” for *li^{dn}* if it is clear what the translator is doing. But regarding “humanity” versus “benevolence” versus “love” versus “manhood-at-its-best” for *jen*, one may recognize degrees of appropriateness, but even the best is not enough. This does not mean that pregnant Chinese philosophical terms like *jen* are in any paradoxical way not translatable, it simply means that the ongoing scholarship by which we continue to clarify these concepts is itself part of the process of translation. When translation really goes awry, the trouble, as in almost all the examples I am discussing,

is usually a failure to grasp the structure of idioms and sentences, or the background or shape of thought in a whole paragraph or still larger context. (The *t'ang hsia* problem is important for the thought, quite aside from the fact that mistranslation results in comic absurdity: Mencius, I suggest, builds his effect on the fact that the incident flowers out of a wandering of the king's attention (think of him as, so to speak, absent-mindedly looking out the window); and so he is able to say to the king more dramatically, "See? You can catch yourself doing it!")

Of course, it is possible for the translator to see perfectly well how the sentences are to be parsed, and still simply be wrong in his choice of some English word as the equivalent of a Chinese word in his text. Lau was just wrong in picking "rice plants" for *miao* in 2A2. Lau is probably persuaded that he has a reason for translating *pao*^{do} in 1A7 and elsewhere repeatedly as "give peace to" rather than "protect" or "take care of," but I doubt that his reason can be adequate. (Lau is not absolutely consistent about this; for example, in 2A6, *pao* becomes "protection.") But the translator's most serious difficulties are likely to be structural confusions.

A telling reason for giving priority to such structural questions is that, with work, they can usually be settled with finality. They are "hard data" from which we can extend inferences into the less certain areas of the semantics of terms. Conversely, if the handling of idioms and syntactic structures goes wrong, everything is going to be nonsense. A methodologically very interesting instance is found in 4A15. Mencius is condemning ministers who devise and carry out "unbenevolent" policies for their princes—wars of aggrandizement, power diplomacy, and exploitation of the agricultural population. For example, *Jan Ch'iu*^{dp}, sometime disciple of Confucius disowned by his teacher: "Ch'iu acted as chief officer to the head of the *Chi*^{dq} family, whose *evil* ways he was unable to change, while he exacted from the people double the grain formerly paid"—Legge, 304–305; Wilhelm, Lyall, Giles, Chai, and Lau have similar translations; Cuvreur makes "Chi" the subject of "exacted," which is equally admissible; Ware's "... although he was unable to change their evil character he did (double the tax)," mistakes the relationship between the clauses, but is otherwise acceptable. Now, the Chinese for Legge's "*evil* ways" (Ware: "evil character") is *te*^{am}, sometimes just the "character" of a thing or person, but almost always "good character", and the usual translation is "virtue." Dobson sticks to the normal meaning of *te* and misconstrues the line: "When Ch'iu was steward of the Chi family, upon whom Ch'iu's virtue exercised not the slightest effect, he even imposed, on their behalf, a double exaction of grain" (p. 126). Dobson uses the line in 1959 in his *Late Archaic Chinese* (p. 66) as an example, he supposes, of the passive use of a verb: *wu neng kai yu ch'i te*^{dr}, "They would not be changed by his virtue." Dobson uses "would not" for *wu*^{ds} here, because one of his grammatical theories is that *wu* is a subjunctive negative (see *LAC*, p. 45). In his Mencius translation in 1963 he has apparently

dropped this “subjunctive” theory of preverbal *wu*. He continues, however, to regard the construction as “passive,” and so the “virtue” in question is for Dobson Jan Ch’iu’s, and remains the sort of “virtue” that influences others for the better. However, in context we see that Mencius could not be ascribing this kind of “virtue” to Jan Ch’iu, for the whole point of the section is that (here, at least) Ch’iu is a scoundrel. Further, in this kind of situation, Jan Ch’iu’s ideal role *would* be to improve and strengthen the *te* of his lord. A precise translation is “he [that is, Ch’iu] could change nothing in their [that is, the Chi’s] character and (even, on their behalf,) imposed . . .” and not, as Dobson apparently supposes, “they [that is, the Chis] were not capable in any respect of being changed by his (Ch’iu’s) virtue, and (he [that is, Ch’iu] even) imposed (on their behalf). . . .” Notice that the correct interpretation smoothly keeps “Ch’iu,” subject of the whole sentence, as subject of each of the succeeding phrases. In this instance, as often, error is avoided by arriving at an interpretation which best accommodates grammatical, rhetorical, situational, and semantic factors, and here the grammar, rhetoric, and situation force us to give *te*^{am} a very unusual but permissible (and quite interesting) meaning.

Another case is in 1A4, in which Mencius reproaches King Hui for seeing to it that “there is fat meat in your kitchen and there are well-fed horses in your stables” but so neglecting the people’s welfare that in the countryside they drop dead of starvation. “This,” says Mencius (Lau, p. 52), “is to show animals the way to devour men” *tz’u shuai shou erh shih jen yeh*^{dt}. The entire context shows that Mencius means this to be taken figuratively (“Is there any difference between killing (a man) with a knife and killing him with misrule?”), and in fact, as Dobson (p. 196) notes, Mencius is here using a (probably well-known) saying by the second-generation Confucian disciple Kung-ming Yi^{du} (see Mencius 3B9). Lau agrees with Legge’s translation, as does almost everybody, and there really is no problem with the line (except that a few, for example, Giles, “This is tempting beasts to devour men” and the Chais (p. 33) “This incites beasts to devour men” may be confused, supposing Mencius to be saying that animals will be tempted to eat the dead bodies). Dobson alone blunders, picking an inappropriate meaning for *shuai*^{dv} and matching it with a mistaken structural interpretation of the whole line: “This is a policy of ‘governing animals and eating men’” (p. 29)—and he gives a note insisting on his interpretation, holding that the line is a deliberate paradox, “a reversal of the expected ‘governing men and eating animals.’” Dobson repeats the mistake at 3B9 (p. 58), and at 4A15 (p. 126), already noticed, where, varying the metaphor, Mencius is condemning war as “showing the land the way to devour human flesh” (Lau p. 124); Dobson has “governing property and living off human flesh.” (But it is literally *shuai t’u ti erh shih jen jou*^{dw}, “leading the land to eat human flesh”; would Dobson say “this is a reversal of the expected ‘governing human flesh and eating land?’”) Dobson

has mechanically word-for-word-ed his way through a simple idiom, namely, “Subject(X) + verb(A) + object(Y) + *erh*^{cc} + verb(B) + object(Z)” where the medial *erh* with what follows is so to speak intentional only: “X does A to Y in order that X, or Y, shall do B to Z.” Failing to see this, Dobson has chosen the wrong meaning for *shuai* (very often used in this idiom) which is not “govern” here, but “lead.” It is only fair to add, however, that in other places Dobson handles this idiom quite correctly: for example, in 3A4, p. 119, he translated *hsiang shuai erh wei wei*^{dx} as “men would be led on to swindle each other”; in 3A4, p. 117, he translates *shuai t’ien hsia erh lu* as “would have everyone completely worn out”; in 6B3, p. 79, he translates *yu jen yu tz’u, Yüeh jen kuan kung erh she chih*^{dy} as “Suppose a man is threatened by a Yüeh man drawing his bow.” (The idiom occurs also at the end of 6A1 but here apparently Dobson, p. 110, does not understand it.) It should also be pointed out that although I have held up Lau as correct against Dobson’s treatment of the “lead on animals” passages, Lau himself mistranslates the “intentional” *erh* idiom in translating 6B3 (p. 173): “If a man from Yüeh bends his bow and takes a shot at him . . .” *Erh she chih*^{dz} here means “to shoot him”—without implying that the shot is actually discharged, or if discharged, successful. (For examples of this usage, see Walter Simon, “Functions and Meanings of *Erh*,” IV, *Asia Major* n.s. 4 [1954]: 32). Giles omits the section, and all other translators get the phrase right.

If translators are making mistakes to this extent, sooner or later, we must find them misunderstanding sections that are philosophically quite important. Here are some revealing examples.

I have already noted the importance of 7A15 (on *liang chih*^{ae}) a section which was omitted entirely by Giles and the Chais. (Incidentally, there is an error in Dobson’s “finding list”: his section number for 7A15 is not 6.14 as given there, but 6.42). I pursue the matter with hesitation, because this section of only sixty-two graphs contains some problems that I perhaps should classify as “monographic.” We can note in passing the various translations of *liang chih*, defined by Mencius as what one “knows without having to reflect on it” Lau, p. 184; “intuitive knowledge” (Legge); “essential” (“eigentlich”) knowledge (Wilhelm); what one knows *naturellement* (Couvreur); “true knowledge” (Lyal); “highest type of knowledge” (Ware); what one “truly knows” (Lau). Dobson’s very free “endowment for good” is unfortunate only in being used for both *liang chih* and *liang neng*^{ea}. Any of these attempts could be the beginning of explication and none is more than that. Mencius says simply that we have abilities that we do not have to learn and knowledge we do not have to think out; that these innately given things are a child’s love for parents, which is “benevolence” (*jen*), and a maturing person’s respect for elders, which is “rightness” (or perhaps “duty”, *i*^{eb}). It is possible to argue whether Mencius says here that we are innately disposed in these ways, or simply that we have innate intuitions about how we ought to be

disposed without necessarily feeling that way. (There are stubborn philosophers who will pronounce this last idea self-contradictory.) There is a fascinating discussion of this in Chiao Hsün, who sternly argues (in effect separating moral “knowledge” and “action”) that it was Mencius’ view that to convert intuition into effective disposition requires education, and may well require the rod.

Here I am interested only in the following, final line. It reads, very simply, *Wu t’o, ta chih t’ien-hsia yeh^{ec}*, and may be rendered “There is nothing else (needed) but to extend these to (everyone in) the world.” The commentators (Chao Ch’i, Sun Shih^{ed} (962-1033), Chu Hsi and Chiao Hsün) would all accept my rendering, but only because my English is ambiguous. Does it mean that the morally “noble man” is to bring it about that all people in the world have the same (developed) moral feelings he has? Such, as I read him, is a possible view of Chu Hsi. Or does it mean that he is to direct toward and apply to all others (in appropriate ways and in due degree, we must suppose) his own moral-emotional capacities which are in him naturally directed toward his parents and elders? Such is, explicitly, Chao Chi’s and Sun Shih’s view of Mencius here (and also mine), and possibly Chu Hsi’s. Or does it mean that the moral teacher (“sage”) has simply to spread, not his feelings (in some sense of “spreading”), but the “way,” the virtues of *jen* and *i* through the world, and that he is able to proceed with this moral educating because all men have moral-making intuitions toward love for parents and respect for elders, which are (potentially) *jen* and *i*? This is Chiao Hsün’s view. The problem is one of the most important in the interpretation of Mencius. Lyall (“To spread these feelings . . .,” p. 208) may be taking either the first or the second view. Ware (“It only remains for us to spread these virtues through the world!” p. 148) seems to take the third. Wilhelm explicitly takes the second (“Es handelt sich um nichts anders, als diese Gefühle auszudehnen auf die ganze Welt,” p. 160, citing Chao Ch’i). Lau (“What is left to be done is simply the extension of these to the whole empire,” p. 184) is as clever as I am, and can be read in any of the three ways. Legge, Couvreur, and Dobson have variations on a fourth interpretation, all taking *ta chih t’ien-hsia^{ec}* somehow to mean “they (these moral intuitions) are found throughout the world” (while they struggle with *wu t’o^{ef}* in different ways). The translations of these last three must be rejected. They should have noticed the way Mencius uses the word *ta^{eg}* “to extend,” notably in 7B31. Legge, in a footnote, bases his translation on phrases in Chu Hsi’s commentary, which Legge also misinterprets. The same misinterpretation is found in Tu Tung-chi, and so Couvreur, aiming to give us Tu’s interpretation, must be excused. This fourth interpretation is also found in Uchino, p. 454.

Lau did well on 7A15. He does less well on 7A45. His translation:

Mencius said, “A gentleman is sparing with things but shows no benevolence toward them; he shows benevolence toward the people but is not attached

to them. He is attached to his parents but is merely benevolent towards the people. He is benevolent towards the people but is merely sparing with things.”

A note on “sparing” (*ai*^{eh}) observes that Mencius is exploiting the fact that the word also means ‘to love.’

There are two problems to be resolved here if this section is to be anything but sheer triviality. Lau gets his meanings ‘sparing’ (for *ai*) and ‘things’ (for *wu*^{ei}) from Chu Hsi. But what could be the point? Who, in Mencius’ time, would suppose the “gentleman” would ever be “benevolent” (*jen*) towards “things”? Wang Yang-ming might, indeed, say this; but this is not a point of view Mencius had to deal with. One has to notice that *wu*, “things,” can also mean “animals”—a better construction of the series “parents, people (*min*^{ej}) . . .” and that *ai*, “sparing,” here has not just another meaning quite different from the common meaning “love”. *Ai*, even as “sparing,” can be thought of as a limiting case of *caring*. Mencius seems to be saying that it is the kind of “love” appropriate only toward animate objects below the level of human beings. As other translators—Legge, Wilhelm, Dobson, and indirectly Lyall—note, this section is an attack on the Mohists (and so an endorsement of “graded love” against “universal love,” *chien ai*^{ek}).

However, its anti-Mohist message is subtler than this; and this is the second problem: What is the point of the last line? As Lau translates it, it merely repeats what has already been said, in a sort of empty jingle. Are we to suppose Mencius is merely mumbling here? Lau’s “jingle” treatment of it is found in all the translators except Dobson and Chai, who undoubtedly have it right. Dobson (p. 139): “He who feels the love of family toward his own kin will feel humanity for all men. He who feels humanity for all men will be kind to all living creatures.” Some Mohists in Mencius’ time seem to have admitted that their universal “love” would not be psychologically possible unless there were a natural developing ground for it, which presumably is family affection; but then, unlike the Confucians, then argued that one must spread it out flat, so to speak. This issue is argued out between Mencius and the Mohist I Chih^{el} in 3A5. Lyall alone notes (p. 222) the relevance of 3A5, but misses the point, seeing Mencius as developing a primitive clan-centered morality. Mencius is actually arguing, as 7A45 now makes clear, that the family is a kind of nursery for our potential for a wider humanity (as 7A15, in another way, is also saying). This interpretation is stated succinctly by Chao Ch’i (as Dobson should have footnoted) and indirectly but with more sophistication by Chu Hsi (who quotes 3A5 obliquely). The failure of seven translators to see it is hardly excusable. (Kanaya on 2, p. 290 misses this, but Lan-chou on p. 322, Uchino on p. 481, and Yang Yung on p. 347, also get it exactly right, and Uchino further appears to notice its connection with Mencius’ concept of “extending” (*t’ui*) moral feelings: “. . . sono kokoro wo oshite^{em} tami wo jin-shi; tami wo jin-shite nochi, mono wo ai-subeki de aru^{en}; with “. . . sono

kokoro wo oshite . . . ,” that is, *t’ui shih hsin*^{eo}, compare, for example, M 2A9, *t’ui wu o chih hsin*^{ep} and 1A7, *t’ui en*^{eq}.)

Turning to a specimen of Mencius’ political thought, one finds 4A10 omitted by Giles, and again this does not mean that it is not important. Mencius says that the bad kings of old lost the world, and their thrones and lives, by losing the people’s hearts, and that tyrants actually drive the people into the arms of more considerate rulers; “Thus the otter drives the fish to the deep” (Lau p. 122). But how does one “get” the people’s hearts? There is a “Way,” namely, *so yŭ*^{er}, *yŭ chih chŭ chih*^{es}; *so wu*^{et}, *wu shih erh yeh*^{eu}. Legge, p. 300, has rendered this, “it is simply to collect (*chŭ*^{ev}) for them (*yŭ chih*^{ew}) what they like (*so yŭ*), and not to lay on them (*wu shih*^{ex}) what they dislike (*so wu*). In this he follows Chu Hsi and, with a minor difference, Chao Ch’i also. Six later translators follow essentially the same interpretation. The Chais deviate slightly (for reasons not evident to me) but not significantly. Ware, evidently worried about “for them” for *yŭ chih*, tries “give them (*yŭ chih*), gather about them (*chŭ chih*^{ey}) the things that are desired (*so yŭ*). Do not bestow upon them (*wu shih*) what they dislike (*so wu*).” *Chŭ*, here “gather about,” must also be felt to be a problem; Chao Ch’i interprets as if it came before *yŭ chih* (as does Lyall), and Wilhelm just omits it. One may well wonder whether this picture of a good ruler as playing to his people’s wishes is quite what Confucian benevolence implies. Perhaps Chu Hsi has this in mind in making the point of arguing that it is the basic desires of human life the king is to enable the people to satisfy.

Only one translator dissents. Dobson (p. 166) gives us this:

There is a way to gain their sympathy. Share with them the accumulation of things you wish for, and do not impose upon them the things you yourself dislike.

Dobson gets his translation simply by supplying “you” instead of “they” as subjects of the subjectless verbs *yŭ*, “wish,” and *wu*, “dislike,” and taking *yŭ chih chŭ chih* as “together with them (the people) accumulate them (the wished for things),” all perfectly possible. Unfortunately, he gives no note of justification or explanation for this choices. But Dobson is almost certainly right. And when one thinks out the reasons, one will wonder why no one else saw them.

The juxtaposition of the phrases *so yŭ* and *wu shih* “What (you) wish . . . don’t do to . . .” at once should suggest Confucius: *chi so pu yŭ wu shih yŭ jen*^{ez} (LY 15.24) “What you don’t want done to yourself don’t do to others.” From this much we don’t *know* that this is what Mencius had in mind, but there’s more. Consider 1B1 on King Hsüan of Ch’i’s fondness for music, concluding, “Now if you shared your enjoyment with the people, you would be a true King” (Lau, p. 61), or 1B2, on how King Wen shared his royal park

with the people, or 1B4, to King Hsüan, on whether good kings of old had palaces like his (see also 1A2): “To speak ill of those in authority because one is not given a share in such enjoyments is, of course, wrong. But for one in authority over the people not to share his enjoyment with the people is equally wrong. The people will delight in the joy of him who delights in their joy . . . ;” or 1B5, on the King’s various “weaknesses”: he is fond of wealth; well then, let him govern in such a way that the people have wealth to enjoy too. He is fond of women; well then, let him “share this fondness with the people,” seeing to it that men are able to find wives and women are able to have husbands. It has always been supposed that in this doctrine of governing by sympathy (notice Dobson’s use of this word) Mencius had the Confucian “golden rule” in mind and was applying it to government. 4A10, as Dobson’s translation reveals, proves that this is the case.

IV. JUDGMENTS

Which is best? What can these translations be used for? What more do we need, and how can we get it? I am hardly in a position to submit a certified grade sheet. I have only presented a small sampling of translators’ performances. To do enough of this to justify firm comparative judgments would require a book, containing all the work that would be needed for a really adequate retranslation of Mencius. I have not done this work, and if I had, the efficient way to present it would be to publish a new translation, with careful commentary.

Nonetheless, we can ask what the texts examined here show, if one chooses to treat them as a sample for making comparisons of competence. If you look back and count the errors I have noted and compared with others’ performance, a plausible way of scoring them will show that Giles and Couvreur have very low counts of three errors. (Of course, Giles takes fewer risks: four of the sections discussed, including a third of the possibilities for error, are not translated by him.) Chai will have five errors; Lyall and Wilhelm, six each; Legge and Lau, seven and ten respectively; Ware is a bit higher, with about a dozen, and Dobson’s score I leave to the reader. This does not take into account the important difference between the relatively minor error and the howler, and it rests in part on my doubtful distinction between passages that I call merely very difficult and those that I pronounce “problematic” (and so did not count). It also rests on a doubtful distinction between a minor error and a rendering that merely makes me uneasy. Still, the sampling has ranged over most of the subjects in Mencius and has included both easy and difficult sections.

So, some very tentative judgments are possible. In any case, it seems to me obvious that any translator who does as badly, *even once*, as does Dobson on 1A1 cannot ever be used with confidence. It appears equally obvious, that any translator who does as well in comparison with others, *even once*, as does

Dobson on 7A45 and on 4A10 must always be consulted by the thorough scholar and must be read with respect. Dobson is perhaps the extreme case. In some degree the reader faces this dilemma with every translator. This isn't news, but it gets forgotten. Too often the translators are not giving us the real Mencius, who can be subtle and rich (and surprisingly systematic) behind a deceptive simplicity. The scholar or the student in an advanced seminar uses everything. In an introductory college course in Chinese philosophy I would use Lau (when he is in print) or Legge, or both. I'm not sure which translation is better or which book is better, all told, but the supporting material in Lau almost requires using him. Dobson's work, in spite of the "general reader" label, is more of a scholar's work than it seems (and it can be relatively good: compare Dobson p. 205 (5.1, note 1) on Chang Yi and Kung-sun Yen, to Lau, p. 107, who renders 3B2 as though these men were already dead, with no note). However, Dobson's translation cannot be trusted enough to use at this level (I have tried it); and it is important to show the student what the book of *Mencius* actually looked like to the two millenia of Chinese who studied it. We have the same difficulty in the arrangement of the text with the Chai translation, and the absence of a finding list (of the sort provided by Dobson) makes it virtually useless. This is unfortunate, for my study suggests that this translation is a rather good one, in spite of very sloppy editing. Giles, too, is relatively good and well written, but out of print and with too much valuable material left out. Ware surely ought to be reserved to the user who can read him quite critically. Most American students no longer use French or German, unfortunately; but both Couvreur and Wilhelm seem to me to be very good, and I of course appreciate Wilhelm's commentarial conscientiousness. It should be pointed out, however, that Couvreur is not quite comparable to the others, since the task he attempted was not to translate Mencius himself but Mencius as interpreted in the Chu Hsi tradition. This was important to do, but is likely to have been an easier job, and the result less easily criticized. Whereas Mencius is often problematic, Chu Hsi and his followers are often much less so. Moreover, Couvreur's choice of Tu Tung-chi as a standard was not the best; Tu led him into error, and apparently did not enjoy the highest regard in China—for we do not find his work listed in the better bibliographies. It would be interesting, perhaps, to have a translation that presents Mencius strictly according to Chao Ch'i.

But let us have a rest from new translations that are gotten out for no better reason than that a publisher of popular intellectual fare has his attention called to Mencius, discovers that he's interesting (he is), and thinks the books will sell. The basic uneasiness I have with such translations of Mencius is that inevitably conscience is going to be prostituted to readability. It is true that many parts of *Mencius* can be straightforwardly translated into an English that conveys Mencius' thought easily, and it is true that much of this material is so rich in philosophical and general human interest that it seems a shame

not to make it available to people who are not specialists but are intellectually alive. Still it is also true that large parts of Mencius are very difficult to read, and true also that these difficult parts include texts that are crucial for a correct understanding of Mencius' moral philosophy.

Bad publications make it more difficult, and so, even more expensive to get really good books printed. The fact that this review leaves Legge's work, which came out more than a century ago, as still one of the best presentations available, should suggest how difficult it is going to be to do a really significantly better job. The research of the past century on Chinese history and society, and on Mencius' language, makes a much better job possible. But it will take a long time. And it will be better done, and more surely completed with due care if done by several scholars in collaboration. Particularly interesting, it seems to me, would be a translation that attends not just to philological and historical problems in the text but also analyzes philosophical problems in it, and gives some space to the philosophical importance of this or that section at later points in the long tradition of Mencian ethics, among such very different thinkers as Chu Hsi, Wang Yang-ming, Tai Chen, and Chiao Hsün.

Mencius is surely worth this kind of attention and care.

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^a 孟子	^{ao} 小人
^b 孟軻	^{ap} 孔子
^c 王韜	^{aq} 錢穆, 先秦諸子紀年
^d 莊子	^{ar} 告子
^e 易經	^{as} 苗
^f 老子	^{at} 槁
^g 呂氏春秋	^{au} 舜避堯之子
^h 中庸	^{av} 避
ⁱ 論語	^{aw} 逼
^j 圖書集成	^{ax} 居堯之宮
^k 列子	^{ay} 逼堯之子
^l 孫子	^{az} 理義
^m 葛洪, 抱朴子	^{ba} 子華子
ⁿ 趙歧	^{bb} 賴
^o 荀子	^{bc} 自賴
^p 韓愈	^{bd} 暴
^q 楊朱	^{be} 嬾
^r 墨子	^{bf} 至於日至之時
^s 四書補註附考備旨	^{bg} 日至
^t 杜定基	^{bh} 心之所同然
^u 鄧林	^{bi} 然
^v 朱熹	^{bj} 理
^w 四書章句集註	^{bk} 才
^x 梁(魏)	^{bl} 降
^y 晉	^{bm} 天之降才
^z 焦循, 孟子正義	^{bn} 天所降之才
^{aa} 阮元, 孟子校勘記	^{bo} 其所以陷溺其心者
^{ab} 皇清經解	^{bp} 雖有不同, 則地有肥磽...也。故...
^{ac} 戴震	^{bq} 雖, 則, 也, 故
^{ad} 王陽明	^{br} 雖然
^{ae} 良知	^{bs} 同耆
^{af} 史記	^{bt} 易牙
^{ag} 詩經	^{bu} 子都
^{ah} 尚書	^{bv} 至於聲
^{ai} 天	^{bw} 滕
^{aj} 仁	^{bx} 陳相
^{ak} 心	^{by} 許行
^{al} 道	^{bz} 舍
^{am} 德	^{ca} 率天下而路
^{an} 君子	^{cb} 與民並耕而食

cc 而
 cd 何許子之不憚煩
 ce 何S之P
 cf 且一人之身而百工之所爲備
 cg 備
 ch ...之所爲備
 ci 一人之身
 cj 一人而備百工之所作
 ck 爲
 cl 作
 cm 所
 cn 終身
 co 日講四書義解
 cp 誠
 cq 賢
 cr 數十
 cs 氣
 ct 言
 cu 推
 cv 攸
 cw 有攸不爲臣
 cx 陳夢家, 殷虛卜辭綜述
 cy 有
 cz 王亦曰...
 da 亦
 db ...而已矣
 dc ...者, 必...
 dd 未有仁而遺其親者也
 de 苟
 df 苟爲後義而先利
 dg 過堂下
 dh X下
 di 過
 dj 堂之上
 dk 下堂
 dl 藏之廟堂之上
 dm 牛
 dn 里
 do 保
 dp 冉求
 dq 季
 dr 無能改於其德
 ds 無
 dt 此率獸而食人也
 du 公明儀
 dv 率
 dw 率土地而食人肉
 dx 相率而爲僞

dy 有人於此, 越人關弓而射之
 dz 而射之
 ea 良能
 eb 義
 ec 無他, 達之天下也
 ed 孫奭
 ee 達之天下
 ef 無他
 eg 達
 eh 愛
 ei 物
 ej 民
 ek 兼愛
 el 夷之
 em ...その心を推して
 en 民を仁し, 民を仁して後,
 eo 物を愛すべきです
 ep 推是心
 eq 推惡惡之心
 er 推恩
 es 所欲
 et 與之聚之
 eu 所惡
 ev 勿施爾也
 ew 聚
 ex 與之
 ey 勿施
 ez 聚之
 fa 己所不欲, 勿施於人
 fb 蘭州大學中文系
 fc 孟子譯注小組
 fd 孟子譯注
 fe 中華書局
 ff 楊勇
 fg 孟子譯解
 fh 大衆書局
 fi 題辭
 fj 服部宇之吉
 fk 國譯孟子
 fl 國譯漢文大成
 fm 國民文庫刊行會
 fn 金谷治
 fo 朝日新聞社
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