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A Translation of a Passage from the *Mencius* 孟子

and Its Annotations Collected in *Mengzi Zhengyi* 孟子正義

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1. Original text and translation of a passage from the *Mencius* (Part of Chapter 6 of Gongsun chou zhangju Part I 公孫醜章句上)

1.1 Original text

孟子曰：「所以謂人皆有不忍人之心者，今人乍見孺子將入於井，皆有怵惕惻隱之心。非所以內交於孺子之父母也，非所以要譽於鄉黨朋友也，非惡其聲而然也。由是觀之，無惻隱之心，非人也；無羞惡之心，非人也；無辭讓之心，非人也；無是非之心，非人也。惻隱之心，仁之端也；羞惡之心，義之端也；辭讓之心，禮之端也；是非之心，智之端也。人之有是四端也，猶其有四體也。」¹

1.2 Translation

The reason why everyone is compassionate is that if someone suddenly sees a child falling into a well today, they will be frightened and compassionate - not because they want to please the child's parents, not because they want to win reputation among their neighbors and friends and not because he hated a reputation for unkindness. It thus appears that a person without compassion is simply not human; a person without shame is hardly human; a person without humility is hardly human; a person without the heart to distinguish right from wrong is

¹ Zhaoqi 趙岐, *Mengzizhushu* 孟子註疏（十三經注疏）, (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2000), P112.

simply not human. Compassion is the beginning of benevolence; Shame is the beginning of righteousness; humility is the beginning of propriety; the ability to distinguish right from wrong is the beginning of wisdom. People have these four origins, just like having limbs.

2. Original text and translation of related annotations collected in *Mengzi zhengyi*

2.1 Original text – Part I

【注】乍，暫也。孺子，未有知小子也。所以言人皆有是心，凡人暫見小小孺子將入井，賢愚皆有驚駭之情，情發於中，非為人也，非惡有不仁之聲名，故怵惕也。

【疏】注「乍暫」至「怵惕也」。正義曰：僖公三十三年公羊傳云「詐戰不日」，注云：「詐，卒也。」廣雅釋詁云：「暫，猝也。」釋言云：「乍，暫也。」乍與詐通，卒與猝通。乍、暫、卒三字轉註也。說文子部云：「孺，乳子也。」劉熙釋名釋長幼云：「兒始能行曰孺子。孺，濡也。言濡弱也。」

2.2 Translation of Part I

Annotation: The Chinese word ‘Zha 乍’ means sudden. ‘Ruzi 孺子’ means ignorant child. It is said that everyone has compassion for others because he suddenly sees a child falling into a well. Both smart and stupid people will worry about him. This feeling is born from the heart and will not vary from person to person. It's not because of interpersonal relationship or because hating a bad reputation so that I am worried about the child.

The comment of annotation: the annotation of this paragraph goes from beginning to end.

Zheng Yi records that in Gongyang's biography said that ‘Zhazhan Buri 詐戰不日’ in the

thirty-third year of the Duke of Xi. The annotation records the Chinese word ‘Zha 乍’ means sudden. Shigu of *Guangya* records that the meaning of the Chinese word ‘Zan 暫’ is also a sudden meaning. According to Shiyan records, the Chinese word ‘Zha’ is the meaning of the Chinese word ‘Zan 暫’. The meaning of character of ‘Zha 乍’ and ‘Zha 詐’ is the same. The meaning of character of ‘Cu 卒’ and ‘Cu 猝’ is also the same. The words ‘Zha 乍’, ‘Zan 暫’ and ‘Cu 卒’ are mutually explanatory. According to the records of Zi department of *Shuowen*, the Chinese word ‘Ru 孺’ means a child. Liu Xi in Shi Zhangyou of *Shiming* said that children who can just start walking are called ‘Ruzi 孺子’. The meaning of ‘Ru 孺’ is weakness, which describes them weak.

2.3 Original text – Part II

禮記內則云「孺子蚤寢晏起」，注云：「孺子，小子也。」始能行而尚無知識，不知井之溺人，故將入井也。國語周語「芮良夫云猶曰怵惕懼怨之來也」，注云：「怵惕，恐懼也。」文選東京賦云「猶怵惕於一夫」，薛綜注云「惕，驚也。」驚即駭，驚駭猶恐懼也。趙氏解梁惠王上篇「隱其無罪」為痛，說文心部云「惻，痛也。」漢書鮑宣傳云「豈有肯加惻隱於細民」，注云：「惻，隱，皆痛也。」

2.4 Translation of Part II

Neize of *the Book of Rites* records that children go to bed early and get up late. The annotation explains that ‘Ruzi 孺子’ means a child. He could walk, but he did not know anything. He did not know that the well would drown people, so he was about to fall into the well. Zhouyu of *Guoyu* record that Rui Liangfu say that even so, he worries every day about incurring resentment. The annotation explained that the Chinese words ‘Chuti 怵惕’ means

fear. Anthology of *Dongjing Fu* records that there is still fear of a person. Xue Zong explained: the Chinese word ‘Ti’ means to be frightened. The Chinese word ‘Jing 驚’ means the same as the Chinese word ‘Hai 駭’. ‘Jinghai’ is fear. Zhao explain Yin 隱 of 隱其無罪 in liang Huiwang's first part as grief. Xin Bu in *Shuowen* records that ‘Ce 惻’ means grief. Bao Xuan’s biography in *Hanshu* records that no one has sympathy for the civilians. The explanation: Chinese characters, ‘Ce 惻’ and ‘Yin 隱’ all mean grief.

2.5 Original text – Part III

然則怵惕惻隱，謂為驚懼其入井，又哀痛其入井也。以隱之義已見前經文，下亦自申明之，言惻隱為仁，故略之耳。音義云：「內，本亦作『納』。」納交於孺子之父母，要譽於鄉黨朋友，皆為人之事，故統之云非為人也。孔本作「發於中非為其人也」，無「情」字，有「其」字。呂氏春秋過理篇云「臣聞其聲」，淮南子修務訓云「聲施千里」，高誘注並云：「聲，名也。」禮記表記云「先王謚以尊名」，注云：「名者，謂聲譽也。」故以名釋聲。

2.6 Translation of Part III

However, ‘Chuti Ceyin 怵惕惻隱’ means to worry about him falling into the well and as well feel sad for him falling into the well. The meaning of ‘Yin 隱’ has been explained above, and the following will further explain that compassion is the heart of benevolence, so it is omitted. *Yinyi* records that the word ‘Nei 內’ is also originally ‘Na 納’. Making friends with the child's parents and trying to gain a good reputation among relatives and friends, all belong to the category of human feelings, so they are collectively referred to as not for human reasons. Kong Anguo’s version is 發於中非為其人也. There is no the character of ‘Qing 情’

but is the character of ‘Qi 其’. The chapters of Tongli in *Lu's spring and Autumn Annals* recorded that the minister heard his reputation. Xiuwu Xun of *Huainan Zi* record that the reputation spreads thousands of miles. Gaoyou said that ‘Sheng 聲’ means fame. The chapters of Biaoji of *the Book of Rites* records that the deeds of praising the former king with noble name. The commentary records ‘Ming 名’ means reputation. So use the word Ming to explain Sheng.

2.7 Original text – Part IV

【注】言無此四者，當若禽獸，非人心耳。為人則有之矣，凡人但不能演用為行耳。【疏】注「言此」至「行耳」正義曰：孟子道性善，謂人之性皆善，禽獸之性皆不善也。禽獸之性不善，故無此四者。禽獸無此四者，以其非人之心也。若為人之心，無論賢愚，則皆有之矣。孟子四言「非人」，乃極言人心必有此四者。趙氏此注，深得孟子之旨，不愧通儒。

2.8 Translation of Part IV

Annotation: People without these four kinds of hearts are no different from animals. They have no people's hearts. Being a person will have this heart but someone can not show it.

The comment of annotation: Explain from ‘Yan Ci 言此’ to ‘Xing Er 行耳’. *Zheng Yi* records that Mencius said that human nature is good. This is to said that the nature of human are good and the nature of animals are bad. The nature of animals are not good because they do not have these four kinds of hearts. Animals have no the four hearts due to they do not have human's hearts. If it is a human heart, there will be all these, whether the person are smart or stupid. Mencius proposed four times that ‘not a person’, which is to emphasize that

people must have these four hearts. Zhao's annotation is very consistent with Mencius's original intention. He is indeed a sensible Confucian.

2.9 Original text – Part V

三國志鐘繇傳注引先賢行狀，李膺謂鐘觀曰：「孟子以為人無好惡是非之心非人也。」禮記曲禮注引孟子「人無是非之心非人也」。孔氏正義兼引「人無惻隱之心非人也，人無是非之心非人也」，於句首俱加「人」字。則四稱「非人」，竟為指斥罵詈之辭，非孟子義。趙氏云：「人但不能演用為行」，正申明人必有此心，惟禽獸無之耳。

2.10 Translation of Part V

The biographical of Zhong You in *Sanguo Zhi* quoted the articles of the sages. Li Ying said to Zhong Jin: "Mencius believed that a person who does not have the ability to distinguish good from bad is not a complete person. The annotation of Quli of *the Book of Rites* quoted from Mencius that a person who have not the ability to distinguish right from wrong is not a complete person. In *Zhengyi*, Kong also quoted that a person without compassion is not a person, and a person who does not measure right and wrong is not a person. Add a Chinese character 'Ren 人' before the first sentence. Four times he said that 'not a person', but the explanation turned out to be accusatory and abusive words, which was not what Mencius intention. Zhao said that people can not show it, which declare that people have this kind of heart and only animals do not have.

2.11 Original text – Part VI

【注】端者，首也。人皆有仁義禮智之首，可引用之。【疏】注「端首」至「用之」，正義曰：儀禮鄉射禮注云：「序端，東序頭也。」頭，首也。故端為首。端與耑通。說文耑部云：「耑，物初生之題也。」題亦頭也，故考工記「輪人鑿端」，注云：「內題方有頭，可由此推及全體。」惠氏士奇大學說云：「大學致知，中庸致曲，皆自明誠也。中庸謂之曲，孟子謂之端，在物為曲，在心為端。致者，擴而充之也。」

2.12 Translation of Part VI

Annotation: The Chinese word ‘Duan 端’ means beginning. Everyone has the beginning of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom, which can be used. The comment of annotation: the paragraph from ‘Duanshou 端首’ to ‘Yongzi 用之’, *Zheng Yi* explain that the annotation from Xiangsheli of Yili say that ‘Xudian 序端’ is the beginning of the east Wall. The Chinese character ‘Tou 頭’ means beginning. Therefore, Duan is beginning. The Chinese character ‘Duan 端’ and the Chinese character ‘Duan 耑’ have the same meaning. Duan 耑 Bu in *Shuowen* explained that the Chinese character Zhuan means the beginning of an object or thing. Chinese character ‘Ti 題’ also means beginning. Therefore, *Kaogong Ji* records that Lunren Zaoduan 輪人鑿端. the annotation says that the top inside is the head, from this it can be inferred that the whole. Hui Shiqi said in *Daxueshuo* that *the Great Learning* stresses the extensive exploration of the nature of human and *the Doctrine of the Mean* constantly focuses on one aspect, it is all about sincerity comes from understanding. In *the Doctrine of the Mean*, it is called ‘Qu 曲’. In *the works of Mencius*, it is called ‘Duan 端’. The beginning of the object is ‘Qu’, and the beginning of the heart is ‘Duan’. The Chinese word ‘Zhi 致’ means expansion.

2.13 Original text – Part VII

戴氏震孟子字義疏證云：「仁者，生生之德也，民之質矣。日用飲食，無非人道。所以生生者，一人遂其生，推之而與天下共遂其生，仁也。言仁可以賅義，使親愛長養不協於正大之情，則義有未盡，亦即仁有未至。言仁可以賅禮，使無親疏上下之辨，則禮失而仁亦未為得。且言義可以賅禮，言禮可以賅義，先王之以禮教，無非正大之情；君子之精義也，斷乎親疏上下，不爽幾微。而舉義舉禮，可以賅仁，又無疑也。舉仁舉禮可以賅智，智者，知此者也。」

2.14 Translation of Part VII

In *Mengzi Ziyi Shuzheng* Dai Zhen explained that benevolence means the kindness of giving birth to all things, which is the essence of the people. The food people need every day is a manifestation of humanity. The nurture all lives is that one person is nourished, extend it to everyone, and let them be nourished too, which is benevolence. Benevolence can contain righteousness and care for their relatives without being selfless. In this way, righteousness is missing, and benevolence has not done it. Benevolence can also include propriety. Without the concept of intimacy and alienation and superiors and subordinates, there is neither benevolence nor propriety. Righteousness can include propriety, and propriety can include righteousness. The ancient king used propriety to educate the people to be selfless. A gentleman is very righteous and can clearly distinguish between closeness and alienation and the relationship between superiors and subordinates. Righteousness and propriety can include benevolence, there is no doubt. Benevolence and propriety can include wisdom. The wise are those who know these things.

2.15 Original text – Part VIII

「易曰：『立人之道，曰仁與義。』而中庸曰：『仁者，人也。親親為大。義者，宜也。尊賢為大。親親之殺，尊賢之等，禮所生也。』益之以禮，所以為仁至義盡也。語德之盛者，全乎智仁而已矣，而中庸曰：『智仁勇三者，天下之達德也。』益之以勇，蓋德之所以成也。就人倫日用，究其精微之極致，曰仁，曰義，曰禮。合三者以斷天下之事，如權衡之於輕重，於仁無憾，於禮義不愆，而道盡矣。自人道遯之天道，自人之德性遯之天德，則氣化流行，生生不息，仁也。」

2.16 Translation of Part VIII

The Book of Changes says, benevolence and righteousness are the way that everyone should abide by. However, *the Doctrine of the Mean* says: benevolence is people's characteristic, loving relatives is the greatest benevolence. Righteousness is doing everything properly, respecting the virtuous is the greatest righteousness. There should be a degree for kindness to our relatives and respect to the virtuous people. The principle of propriety comes into being in this way. Combined with the propriety, it is the ultimate of benevolence and righteousness. Combining wisdom and benevolence will reach the prosperity of virtue. *The Doctrine of the Mean* says: wisdom, benevolence and courage are the most comprehensive virtues in the world. Combined with the brave, people can achieve the virtue. In ethical relations and daily life, the most extensive and subtle are benevolence, righteousness and propriety. There are three virtues, dealing with the affairs of the world is like weighing the weight. there is no regrets in benevolence, there is no mistakes in propriety and righteousness, The Dao will be perfect. Trace the way of nature from the way that people should abide by, and trace the virtue of nature from the virtue of human nature. The movement and change of Qi is everywhere, filling and nourishing all things in the universe constantly, which is benevolence.

2.17 Original text – Part IX

「由其生生有自然之條理，觀其條理之秩然有序，可以知禮矣。觀於條理之截然不可亂，可以知義矣。在天為氣化之生生，在人為生生之心，是乃仁之為德也。在天為氣化推行之條理，在人為其心知之通乎條理而不紊，是乃智之為德也。惟條理是以生生，條理苟失，則生生之道絕。凡仁義對文，及智仁對文，皆兼生生條理而言之者也。」

2.18 Translation of Part IX

There is the natural order of giving birth to all things. By observing the natural law of this order, people will know the propriety. Observing the orderly order, the righteousness can find. For the nature, it is that the movement and change of Qi nurture all lives. For human beings, it is the heart to nourish all lives, these are the virtue of benevolence. For the nature, it is the order of movement and implementation of Qi. For human beings, they understand the way to be organized and not disorderly, which is the virtue of wisdom. Only when there is in order, all life will be nourished. If the order is lost, all things will be extinct. Benevolence and righteousness decorate each other, and wisdom and benevolence decorate each other, both have to do with the order of nurturing life.

2.19 Original text – Part X

程氏瑤田通藝錄論學小記云：「仁主於愛，與忍相反，故言仁政，則曰「以不忍人之心，行不忍人之政」也。凡視聽言動之人於非禮者，皆生於己心之忍，忍則己去仁，己去仁則己去禮，故曰克己復禮為仁。」按賈誼新書道術篇云：「惻隱憐人謂之

慈，反慈為忍。」不忍人之心即是惻隱之心。惻隱為仁之端，仁義禮智，四端一貫，故但舉惻隱，而羞惡、辭讓、是非即具矣。但有仁之端，而義禮智之端即具矣。²

2.20 Translation of Part X

In Lunxue Xiaojing of *Tongyilu*, Chen Yaotian said that benevolence consists chiefly in love and is the opposite of forbearance. Therefore, saying benevolent governance, they will say that if there is the heart of compassion for the people, there is a policy of compassion for them. Seeing, hearing, speaking and deeds do not conform to the propriety, it attributed to the forbearance. Forbearance is far from benevolence. No benevolence, no propriety. So it is said that restrain oneself and restore propriety is benevolence. In the chapter Daoshu of *Xinshu* Jiayi said that compassion for those who suffer misfortune is called benevolence, forbearance is the opposite of benevolence. This heart of Buren 不忍 is sense of compassion. Compassion is the beginning of benevolence. The four beginnings of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom are consistent. As long as people have compassion, they will also have the heart of shame, humility and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. As long as there is the beginning of benevolence, there are other beginnings of righteousness, propriety and wisdom.

3. Commentary

Mencius' s discussion in this chapter based on the nature of human beings. Benevolence is the innate nature of all people, and it will naturally reveal when we encounter things. Because everyone has the virtue of benevolence and compassion comes from the benevolence, hence,

² Jiaoxun 焦循, *Mengzizhengyi* 孟子正義, (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju 中華書局, 2000), P233.

everyone will have compassion. The above annotation says that if a person has a heart of compassion, he or she will possess a heart of shame, humility and the ability to distinguish right and wrong. Besides, if people have the benevolence, they will possess the righteousness, propriety, and wisdom. Benevolence is the innate nature of human beings, everyone has it, so it also means that everyone will have the four beginnings of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and the heart of shame, humility and the ability of distinguishing right from wrong. Mencius said that having these four beginnings is like a person who has healthy limbs, so that the person can finish and improve many things. Saying he can not do it is deceiving himself. Therefore, Mencius emphasized at the end of this chapter that people should constantly cultivate and expand these virtues. When a king has a heart of sympathy, he will formulate the policy that benefit for people. If the benevolent policy can be implemented, the country is easy to govern. Therefore, if the leader can develop and expand these four beginnings, it will be enough to stabilize the world. For ordinary people, if these four virtues cannot be carried forward, they can't serve their parents well. This means that all people, from the king to the common people, need to follow benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom in dealing with others. If people do not follow these four principles, then the most basic things will not be done well. On the contrary, they can cultivate themselves, harmonize their family and govern the country and the world.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, human beings are born with a good nature. Therefore, everyone has the ability to do good works and do things that benefit others. No matter when and where we are, no matter how high or low our status is, we must develop and complete the four beginnings that is our inherent and follow our own nature to get along with others and deal with things.

5. Bibliography

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