



Undergraduate assignment feedback form
(to be completed by marker)

<i>Student Name:</i> Xiran Yao	
<i>Module Code:</i> SICH4007	<i>Student number:</i> 2205749
<i>Module title:</i> Sinological English I: A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship	
<i>For completion by marker:</i> <i>Comments:</i> 	
<i>Marker's signature:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Provisional mark:</i> NB. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the final examination board.	

AI Acknowledgement

☐ **I have not used AI in my assignment**

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

☒ **I have used AI in my assignment**

I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com/>) on 27 May 2025 to I used the prompt(s):

1. Please check the following text for readability, grammar and syntax.

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

BOOK XXXIX. TÂ HSIO

OR

THE GREAT LEARNING¹.

✓ 1. What the Great Learning teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to love the people²; and to rest in the highest excellence.

The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained to. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose there will be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment (of the desired end).

Things have their root and their branches; affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught (in the Great Learning).

2. The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they

¹ See the introductory notice, vol. xxvii, pp. 53, 54.

² The text of the Tâ Hsio, since the labours of K'û Hsî upon it, reads here—'to renovate,' instead of 'to love,' the people. K'û adopted the alteration from Po-shun, called also Ming-t'ao, one of his 'masters,' the two brothers K'h'ang; but there is really no authority for it.

first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge.

3. The extension of knowledge is by the investigation of things¹.

4. Things being investigated, their knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.

From the son of Heaven down to the multitudes of the people, all considered the cultivation of the person to be the root (of everything besides). It cannot be, when the root is neglected, that what should spring from it will be well ordered. It never has been the case that what was of great importance has been slightly cared for, and at the same time what was of slight importance has been greatly cared for².

¹ There is great difficulty in determining the meaning of this short sentence. What *K'ang* and *Khung Ying-tâ* say on it is unsatisfactory. *K'ü* introduces a long paragraph explaining it from his master *K'ang*;—see Chinese Classics, vol. i, pp. 229, 239.

² Here ends the first chapter of the Book according to the arrangement of *K'ü Hsî*. He says that it is 'the words of Confucius, handed down by *Šang-ze*,' all the rest being the commentary of *Šang-ze*, recorded by his disciples. The sentiments in this chapter are not unworthy of Confucius; but there is no

Translation 2 (by Ian Johnston and Wang Ping)

Scan from library resources

Daxue 大學: *The Greater Learning*

135

DX: The Way of greater learning lies in manifesting the original brightness of innate virtue; it lies in restoring the original brightness of that virtue in the people generally; it lies in coming to rest in the utmost goodness. [1] Know where to rest, and afterwards there is stability; be stable, and afterwards there can be calmness; be calm, and afterwards there can be tranquility; be tranquil, and afterwards there can be contemplation; be contemplative, and afterwards there can be attainment. [2] In things there is root (the brightness of innate virtue) and branch (restoring the original brightness of innate virtue in the people). In activities there is a beginning (finding a place to rest) and an end (attaining completion of the sequence). Know what is first and what follows. Then you come near to the Way. [3]

The ancients, in wishing to manifest luminous virtue in the world, first brought good order to their states. In wishing to bring good order to their states, they first regulated their households. In wishing to regulate their households, they first cultivated themselves. In wishing to cultivate themselves, they first rectified their minds. In wishing to rectify their minds, they first made their intentions *cheng* 誠 (true, genuine, sincere). In wishing to make their intentions *cheng* 誠, they first extended their knowledge to the limit. Extending knowledge to the limit lies in investigating things. [4] Investigate things and then knowledge is perfected. When knowledge is perfected, then intentions become *cheng* 誠. When intentions are *cheng* 誠, then the mind is rectified. Rectify the mind and the self is cultivated. Cultivate the self and the household is regulated. Only after the household is regulated is the state well ordered. Only after the state is well ordered is the world at peace. [5] From the Son of Heaven down to the common people, all without exception should take self-cultivation as the root. [6] For the root to be in disorder and yet the branches to be well ordered is not possible. For what is important to be trivialised or what is trivial to be given importance should never be the case. [7]

Translation 3 (by Wu Guozhen 吳國珍)

Scan from library resources

《大学》正文

The Great Learning

孔经

The Classic Preaching by Confucius

» 1

dà xué zhī dào¹, zài míng míng dé², zài qīn mǐn³, zài zhǐ⁴ yú zhì shàn
大学之道¹，在明 明德²，在亲民³，在止⁴于至善。

The aim of the great learning is to help carry forward the moral excellence in men, to push the people to remold themselves, and to help the learners to attain to perfection.

zhǐ zhǐ ér hòu yǒu dìng dìng ér hòu néng jìng jìng ér hòu néng ān ān ér hòu néng lù
知止而后有定，定而后能静，静而后能安，安而后能虑，
lù ér hòu néng dé
虑而后能得。

One must know what realm to attain to before he can set his aspiration; he must set his aspiration before he can settle quietly down; he must settle quietly down before he can retain the placidity in mind; he must retain the placidity in mind before he can have careful thoughts; he must have careful thoughts before he can achieve his goal.

wù yǒu běn mò shì yǒu zhōng shǐ zhī suǒ xiān hòu zé jìn dào yī
物有本末，事有终始。知所先后，则近道矣。

Everything has its substantial and secondary parts; every event has its start and end. To differentiate the order of importance is to get to the essence of things.

gǔ zhī yù míng míng dé yú tiān xià zhě xiān zhì qí guó yù zhì qí guó zhě xiān qí qí
古之欲明明德于天下者，先治其国；欲治其国者，先齐其
jiā yù qí qí jiā zhě xiān xiū qí shēn yù xiū qí shēn zhě xiān zhèng qí xīn yù zhèng
家⁵；欲齐其家者，先修其身；欲修其身者，先正其心；欲正
qí xīn zhě xiān chéng qí yì yù chéng qí yì zhě xiān zhì qí zhī zhì zhī zài gé wù⁶
其心者，先诚其意；欲诚其意者，先致其知；致知在格物⁶。

Those in ancient times who wished to extend their moral excellence all over the land would first govern their states rightly; in order to govern their states rightly they would first manage their families well; in order to manage their families well they would first cultivate themselves; in order to cultivate themselves they would first rectify their mind; in order to rectify their mind they would first form sincerity in thought; in order to form sincerity in thought they would first acquire knowledge; in order to acquire knowledge they would first make researches on the way of things. Knowledge can be acquired only when researches are made into the way of things.

wù gé ér hòu zhī zhì zhī zhì ér hòu yì chéng yì chéng ér hòu xīn zhèng xīn zhèng
物格而后知至，知至而后意诚，意诚而后心正，心正
ér hòu shēn xiū shēn xiū ér hòu jiā qí jiā qí ér hòu guó zhì guó zhì ér hòu tiān xià píng
而后身修，身修而后家齐，家齐而后国治，国治而后天下平。

It is only when researches are made into the way of things that knowledge can be acquired; it is only when knowledge is acquired that sincerity can be formed in thought; it is only when sincerity is formed in thought that the mind can be rectified; it is only when the mind is rectified that self-cultivation can be carried on; it is only when self-cultivation is carried on that the family can be managed well; it is only when the family is managed well that the state can be rightly governed; it is only when the state is rightly governed that the entire kingdom can be pacified.

zì tiān zǐ yǐ zhì yú shù rén yī shì jiē yǐ xiū shēn wéi běn qí běn luàn ér mò zhì
自天子以至于庶人，壹是皆以修身为本。其本乱而末治
zhě fǒu yǐ qí suǒ hòu zhě bó ér qí suǒ bó zhě hòu wèi zhī yǒu yě
者否矣。其所厚者薄，而其所薄者厚，未之有也。

From the Son of Heaven down to the populace, all must take self-cultivation as their essential task. If this essential is upset, it is not likely that the minor details would be well managed. Should greater emphases be laid on what is of secondary importance and lesser emphases be laid on what is of prime importance, there would never be any success.

Comments

Translation 1

The language of Legge's translation is quite classical, and many advanced vocabularies are used in the translation. Legge was a pioneer of translating Chinese classics and set the foundation for the later translations. This translation tried to keep the original appearance of the text and give western people a correct understanding of the Chinese classics and philosophy. As it was translated in the nineteenth century, some expressions may not be commonly used today.

This translation is found in the *Book of Rites*, and except for the difference in text order, there is almost the same as the translation of the version in the Four Books. As for *gewu* 格物, he adopted Zhu Xi's interpretations and translated as 'investigation of things'. Only for the concept of *qinmin* 親民, he used 'to love the people' to separate from Zhu Xi's interpretation 'renovate the people'.

Translation 2

As they declared in the introduction, their translation is based on the commentaries, and this version is based on Zhu Xi's interpretation. They tried to deliver the exact meaning of the text and remained the original structure and appearance. In this passage, they use seven and eleven words, respectively, to translate *mingmingde* 明明德 and *xinmin* 親民, in order to fully express these meanings. Also, some brackets are added to supplement the missing information which was clearly indicated in the commentary. For some core concepts with profound and complex meaning such as *cheng* 誠, they use transliteration followed by a bracket of a few English terms rather than direct translation. To improve clarity and conciseness, some adjustments are made. For example, when *mingmingde* is mentioned a second time, the long phrase is shortened to 'manifest luminous virtue'.

Translation 3

This translation adopts a simple and straightforward style, using plain expressions and vocabulary. This strategy is apparently easier for English readers to understand but might sacrifice some deep meanings of the original text. For instance, the concept *zhizhi* 致知 is translated as 'acquire knowledge' and *mingmingde* 明明德 as 'carry forward the moral excellence in men'. At the end of the second paragraph, the sentence about 'acquire knowledge' and 'make researches on the way of things' appear twice.

This translation might be targeted at those common people without an academic background and those who are not familiar with technical terms and give them a general understanding of Chinese classics and philosophy.