

sense of probabilities without making this assumption. When I say that the coin falls "tails" at least once in 96.875 percent of the worlds in which it is tossed five times, I mean that the ratio of the measure of the set of worlds in which the coin falls "tails" at least once out of the five times it is tossed to the measure of the whole set of worlds in which it is tossed five times is 96.875.

14. A set of points may easily have the same area as one of its proper subsets. No doubt the same thing may hold, *mutatis mutandis*, for sets of worlds and their measures. There is, therefore, at least a formal possibility that $p \square \rightarrow q$ might be false even if the probability of q , given τ , is 1. I shall not explore the implications of this formal possibility for the problem of God's middle knowledge.

15. See Lewis (1973), pp. 14–15, 26–31.

16. But see Lewis (1973), p. 29.

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Mencius on Courage

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Mencius 2A2 is one of the most interesting passages in this classic Confucian text.¹ It is, therefore, not surprising that it has occasioned an extensive secondary literature in English. David S. Nivison, Jeffrey Riegel, Kwong-loi Shun, and Lee Yearley have all written important essays on this passage.² Most of the scholarly literature so far has focused on Mencius's intriguing critique of the rival philosopher Gaozi, in "verses" 9 through 16.³ Despite the emphasis of previous scholarship on verses 9 through 16, the passage opens with a tantalizing discussion of *yong*, normally translated "courage," in verses 1 through 8. In this essay, I shall discuss Mencius's conception of courage, using the opening of 2A2 as my focus. I hope to render the passage less cryptic and show that Mencius, in fact, has a nuanced and philosophically defensible account of courage.

Before I turn to the text of 2A2, I want to situate my discussion by providing a brief overview of some Western and early Confucian views about courage. To begin with Western philosophical discussions of courage is *not* to assume that Western approaches are the paradigm against which all non-Western philosophy must be measured.⁴ However, since I (and many of my readers) have been deeply influenced by Western concepts, it will be helpful to begin by clarifying our own understanding of courage. We shall see that courage is a disputed notion even if we limit our discussion to the West. Then, turning to the *Analects*, we will see that many of the issues regarding courage that are raised in the Western tradition are also dealt with in the early Confucian tradition.⁵

People generally agree that courage is a good quality to have. In other words, courage is generally agreed to be a virtue rather than a vice. Furthermore, courage is somehow connected with fear, because courage seems to involve doing things that most people would regard as fearful. Beyond this, though, there are many substantive points of disagreement. I'll mention a few areas of dispute. (1) When we think of courage, we often think immediately of courageous *behavior*. It might seem, at first, that courage consists in *doing* things like rescuing children

from burning buildings, or charging against the enemy in battle. However, a little reflection suggests that no *behavior* or even *kinds* of behavior by themselves are courageous or cowardly. To use a well-worn example from Plato, running away from the enemy seems paradigmatic of cowardice. However, the Spartans pioneered the tactic of strategically retreating to draw the enemy forward, and then turning suddenly and counterattacking. Although it involves running away from the enemy (at least at first), the Spartans' tactic is courageous, not cowardly.⁶ To pick a more up-to-date example, in the movie *The Guns of Navarone* there is a scene in which a partisan grovels and begs for mercy from his Nazi captor. Groveling and begging for mercy is stereotypically cowardly. However this partisan does so only to make his captor let down his guard long enough so that he can grab his weapon and shoot him. Thus, the partisan's action was, in fact, courageous. So it seems that courage is not determined by *what* actions we perform, but, in some sense, by *how* we perform those actions.⁷

(2) Does acting courageously require acting *in spite of fear*? Or is the courageous person the one who is *not afraid*? The philosopher Philippa Foot nicely summed up the dilemma:

we both are and are not inclined to think that the harder a man finds it to act virtuously the more virtue he shows if he does act well. . . . Who shows most courage, the one who wants to run away but does not, or the one who does not even want to run away?⁸

To provide some specific examples, there seems to be, on the one hand, something admirable in Sydney Carton's equanimity on the scaffold as he selflessly sacrifices himself for the one he loves in Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. On the other hand, there seems something almost inhuman and absurd about someone who is completely indifferent to his or her own death or injury. One is reminded of Mel Gibson's character in *Lethal Weapon*, who seems not so much courageous as insane, because his character really is not afraid of dying.

(3) How is courage related to other virtues? I said earlier that courage is a good quality to have. But consider a Mafia hitman. It *may* be a compliment to say that he is a courageous murderer—carrying out his “contract” in the face of risks that most of us would find quite fearsome. But the hitman's “courage” makes him better at doing bad things. If there are to be hitmen in the world, we would prefer them all to be cowardly. Some would say that this shows that courage is sometimes a bad thing for a person to have. However, others would say that the quality the hitman possesses is not “courage” at all. Rather, it is a *semblance* of courage, such as rashness, a semblance being a quality that is not a true virtue, but superficially resembles one.⁹ Courage, on this second view, requires the presence of other virtues, such as practical wisdom and benevolence, while rashness is a semblance of courage sometimes found in those who lack other virtues.

In summary: first, it seems that courage is *not* just a matter of certain kinds of *behavior*. Second, there is disagreement about whether courage requires genuine fearlessness or instead requires acting in spite of fear. Third, there is disagree-

ment about whether courage requires the presence of other virtues, such as practical wisdom.

I. COURAGE IN THE ANALECTS

What did Confucians in ancient China think about issues like these? The *Analects* of Confucius gives a sense for some of the views regarding courage that were prevalent in early China. The *Analects* is, of course, a composite text. It was composed by many hands over many years.¹⁰ Some parts of it probably represent things Confucius actually said, while other attributions in it are apocryphal. On this much, almost all scholars agree. Disagreement arises when we attempt to determine which parts of the *Analects* are authentic and which are not. However, for the purposes of this essay, it doesn't make much difference which portions of the *Analects* are authentic. My point in citing it is only to establish some of the views regarding courage that were “in the air,” as it were, in ancient China. Whether Confucius himself actually held any of these views is, for my purposes in this essay, moot.

One of the key figures connected with courage in the text of the *Analects* is Confucius's disciple Zilu. In *Analects* 5:7, Confucius remarks, “The Way is not put into practice. If I were to get on a boat and float out to sea, I suppose [Zilu] would accompany me?” Zilu heard this and was pleased, apparently thinking that Confucius was complimenting his loyalty. However, Confucius went on to remark, “[Zilu] is more fond of courage than I.”

That Zilu was obsessed with courage is suggested by another passage, *Analects* 17:21, in which he asks Confucius, “Is a noble supremely courageous?” Confucius once again tries to temper Zilu's regard for courage, saying, “Nobles regard righteousness as supreme. If nobles have courage but are without righteousness, then they will be chaotic. If petty people have courage but are without righteousness, then they will be thieves.”

One might wonder, based on these passages, whether Confucius and other early Confucians thought of *yong* as a virtue at all. (Indeed, perhaps we should be translating *yong* as “rashness” rather than “courage”!) However, other passages in the *Analects* suggest a positive role for courage in a virtuous life. Indeed, both *Analects* 9:29 and 14:28 present what appears to be a list of three cardinal virtues, of which courage is one: “Those who are wise are not confused; those who are humane are not anxious; those who are courageous are not afraid.” Similarly, in Chapter 20 of the *Zhongyong*, a work usually known in English as *The Doctrine of the Mean*, it says, “Wisdom, humaneness and courage—these three are the universal virtues (*de*) of the world.” It seems clear, then, that at least some early Confucians regarded *yong* or courage as a virtue.

Other passages in the *Analects* provide more detail about the relationship between courage and other virtues. Thus, from *Analects* 14:4 we learn that, “Those who are humane must be courageous; [but] those who are courageous need not be humane.” In other words, those who are fully virtuous will be courageous, but courage is possible in the absence of genuine virtue. As Alasdair

MacIntyre has noted, this suggests that early Confucians did not accept what is known in the West as the doctrine of the “unity of the virtues.”¹¹ Finally, important for our later discussion of *Mencius 2A2* is *Analects 2:24*, which advises us, “To see what is right and not act is to fail to be courageous.”¹² This passage links courage and “what is right” in a manner reminiscent of what Mencius will later do in *Mencius 2A2*. We see, then, that there was general interest and concern among early Confucians about courage and its relationship to other virtues. It is not surprising that Mencius, too, should address this issue.

II. MENCIUS 2A2

A. Verses 1 to 3

Let us turn now to *Mencius 2A2*. The text begins with Mencius being presented with a hypothetical question by his disciple Gongsun Chou.¹³ If Mencius were to be made prime minister of Qi, Gongsun Chou suggests, it would not be surprising if the lord of Qi were to become a king or at least ruler of the feudal lords.¹⁴ If this were to happen to you, Mencius, would it “perturb your heart”? Mencius replies that it would not. His heart, he explains, has “not been perturbed” since he was forty. The expression “perturb one’s heart” occurs in only two passages in the *Mencius*, here in 2A2 and in 6B15. The phrase is not defined in either passage, but both contexts suggest that for something to perturb one’s heart is for it to disturb or frighten one.¹⁵ Thus, to have an “unperturbed heart” is to fail to be disturbed or frightened.¹⁶

Gongsun Chou next suggests that, in having achieved an “unperturbed heart,” Mencius has surpassed someone named “Meng Ben.” Mencius responds that what he has achieved is not all that difficult. After all, says Mencius, “Gaozi had an unperturbed heart before I did.” We know little about Meng Ben. The Han Dynasty commentator Zhao Qi reports simply that he was “a courageous knight.” The Qing Dynasty commentator Jiao Xun has culled a few more references to him in some early texts. Typical is the statement that “Meng Ben, when travelling by water did not avoid serpents, and when travelling by land did not avoid rhinoceroses and tigers.” I think it tells us something interesting about Gongsun Chou that he should pick such a person as an example of someone who is “unperturbed.” (Compare a contemporary American whose idea of a courageous person is “Rambo.”)

We know more about Gaozi. He was a rival philosopher whom Mencius criticizes later in 2A2, and with whom Mencius debated in Book 6A. As I noted earlier, there is already an extensive body of literature discussing Gaozi. Consequently, I will limit myself here to suggesting that my interpretation of the opening of 2A2 is consistent with Mencius’s comments about Gaozi elsewhere in the text.¹⁷

Gongsun Chou next asks, “Is there a Way to have an unperturbed heart?” Mencius says that there is and then refers to four people, three of whom explicitly “cultivated courage.” This is the first time the term *yong*, courage, is mentioned

in the discussion. However, I have suggested that to have an unperturbed heart is to not be disturbed or frightened, so being courageous can be seen as, at least, one way in which one can have an unperturbed heart.

B. Translation of Verses 4 to 8

What are we supposed to learn about courage from the paradigms provided by the four individuals to whom Mencius refers? Let’s start answering this question by reading what Mencius says about them in verses 4 through 8:

(iv) As for Bogong You’s cultivation of courage, his body would not shrink, his eyes would not blink. He regarded the least slight from someone like being beaten in the market place. [Insults] he would not accept from a coarsely clad fellow he also would not accept from a lord of ten thousand chariots. He looked upon running [a sword] through a lord of ten thousand chariots like running through a common fellow. He did not revere the various lords. If an insult came his way he had to return it.

(v) As for Meng Shishe’s cultivation of courage, he said,

I look upon defeat the same as victory. To advance only after sizing up one’s enemy, to ponder [whether one will achieve] victory and only then join [battle], this is to be in awe of the opposing armies. How can I be certain of victory? I can only be without fear.

(vi) Meng Shishe resembled Master Zeng. Bogong You resembled Zixia. Now, as for the courage of the two, I do not really know which was better. Nonetheless, Meng Shishe preserved something important (*yue*).

(vii) Formerly, Master Zeng speaking to Zixiang said, “Are you fond of courage? I once heard about great courage from the Master.”¹⁸

If I examine myself and am not upright (*su*) although [I am opposed by] a coarsely clad fellow, I would be afraid.¹⁹ If I examine myself and am upright, although [I am opposed by] thousands and tens of thousands, I shall go forward.”²⁰

(viii) Meng Shishe’s preservation of his *qi* was still not as good as Master Zeng’s preservation of what is important (*yue*).

So we need to know about four individuals: Bogong You, Meng Shishe, Master Zeng, and Zixia. We know almost nothing about Bogong You and Meng Shishe outside of what this passage tells us. Fortunately, we do have additional information about Master Zeng and Zixia. Both were disciples of Confucius, and the *Analects* sketches a pretty clear picture of each.

C. Zixia and Master Zeng

Zixia was apparently very acute intellectually. In *Analects 3:8* Confucius compliments Zixia on his interpretation of one of the classic odes. In addition, Zixia is

identified as being outstanding in “culture and learning” in *Analects* 11:3. That Zixia placed great emphasis upon learning is also suggested by some of the quotations attributed to him, several of which discuss learning (19:5, 6, 7). Apparently, Confucius’s other disciples also regarded Zixia as especially smart. For example, in *Analects* 12:22, Fan Chi receives a teaching from Confucius and is unsure about its meaning. Consequently, he seeks out Zixia to explain it to him.

But Zixia also had certain characteristic weaknesses. Confucius found it necessary to admonish Zixia, “Be a noble scholar (*ru*), not a petty scholar” (6:13). In addition, when Zixia came to occupy a government office, Confucius thought it wise to offer him the following advice: “Do not see petty profits. . . . If you see petty profits, the great tasks will not be accomplished” (13:17). Once again, other disciples apparently agreed with Confucius’s judgment: in 19:12, fellow Confucian Ziyou carps,

The disciples and younger followers of Zixia are acceptable when it comes to sweeping and cleaning, responding and replying, coming forward and withdrawing. But these are only details (*mo*). As for what is basic (*ben*), they lack it. What is one to do with them?

Master Zeng was, in many ways, the very opposite of Zixia. Whereas Zixia was smart, Master Zeng is bluntly characterized in *Analects* 11:18 as “stupid” (*lu*). Furthermore, the quotations attributed to Master Zeng in the *Analects*, while often quite moving, do not, in general, suggest an acute mind.²¹ What the *Analects* does suggest about Master Zeng is that he had an intense personal commitment to being a good person. It was, after all, Master Zeng who famously said, “I daily examine myself on three counts”—loyalty, faithfulness, and practice (1:4). Perhaps especially relevant to the contrast between Master Zeng and Zixia is *Analects* 8:4, where Master Zeng says,

There are three things that a noble, in following the Way, places above all the rest: from every attitude, every gesture that one employs one must remove all trace of violence or arrogance; every look that one composes in one’s face must betoken good faith; from every word that one utters, from every intonation, one must remove all trace of coarseness or impropriety. As to the ordering of ritual vessels and the like, there are those whose business it is to attend to such matters.²²

We may safely assume, I think, that the phrase “those whose business it is to attend” to “the ordering of ritual vessels and the like” is meant as a put-down of people like Zixia.

How would Mencius have thought about these characterizations? Although it is common to speak of “Confucianism” as if it were a monolithic movement, there were in fact different, competing Confucian sects soon after the death of Confucius. Master Zeng and Zixia each founded a sect. Now, Zhao Qi, the Han Dynasty commentator, says that Mencius was a student of Confucius’s grandson, Zisi, while the Han historian Sima Qian claims that Mencius studied, not under Zisi himself, but under the *disciples* of Zisi. Whichever account is cor-

rect, the important point here is that Zisi is reputed to have studied under Master Zeng. So Mencius is, as it were, in the spiritual line of descent from Master Zeng. So we can expect Mencius to favor Master Zeng over Zixia.

In fact, another passage in the *Mencius* confirms that our philosopher favored Master Zeng over Zixia. *Mencius* 3A4, verse 13, provides the following story. After the death of Confucius, three of his disciples—including Zixia—thinking that someone named You Ruo “was similar to” Confucius, wanted to serve him, in the way that they had served Confucius, and tried to force Master Zeng to join them. However, Master Zeng refused, suggesting that no one could compare to Confucius. This anecdote is perfectly in line with the characterization of Zixia as superficial.

Master Zeng is, in fact, quoted a number of times in the *Mencius*. Several of these citations stress the fact that Master Zeng excelled at filial piety (3A2, 4A20, 7B36). Typical of these passages is 7B36, which says that, after his father died, there was a certain sort of date that Master Zeng could never again bring himself to eat—because it had been his father’s favorite. As we shall see, at least one interpreter sees Master Zeng’s filial piety as being important to understanding 2A2.

D. Bogong You and Meng Shishe

Now, what does *Mencius* 2A2 indicate about the other two individuals mentioned in the passage, Bogong You and Meng Shishe? There is one important similarity between the two: both fail to distinguish or discriminate aspects of the situations they are in. Of Bogong You, the text says, “He regarded [*si*] the least slight from someone *like* being beaten in the market place. . . . He looked upon [*shi*] running [a sword] through a lord of ten thousand chariots *like* running through a common fellow.” Similarly, Meng Shishe says, “I look upon defeat *the same as* victory.” (In contrast, we shall see that Master Zeng’s courage involves being much more discriminating about one’s situation.)

The text also suggests that there are important differences between Bogong You and Meng Shishe. Note that the description of Bogong You is largely (although not exclusively) a description of Bogong You’s actions. This is not to deny that Bogong You’s courage involves “looking at” or “perceiving” the world in a distinctive (albeit indiscriminating) way. However, it seems clear that, for Bogong You, a major component of courage is *behaving* in certain ways.

In contrast, for Meng Shishe courage consists in being “without fear,” regardless of the likelihood of victory or defeat.²³ Notice that we have no corresponding description of Bogong You’s emotional state. (Indeed, for all we know, Bogong You acts as he does because he is terrified of being humiliated or defeated.) Notice also that the text gives us a third-person description of Bogong You and a first-person description of Meng Shishe. This stylistic factor reflects, I think, Meng Shishe’s emphasis upon the first-person, emotional aspect of courage, and Bogong You’s emphasis upon the third-person, behavioral aspect of courage. In summary, there is an important respect in which the courage of Meng

Shishe is similar to that of Bogong You: neither emphasizes discrimination or judgment about the situations they are in. However, Meng Shishe's courage is distinct in that it specifically requires the absence of fear.

E. Verse 6: How Is Meng Shishe Like Master Zeng and Bogong You Like Zixia?

Given what we have learned about Zixia, Master Zeng, Bogong You, and Meng Shishe, we can make sense of Mencius's next comment, in verse 6: "Meng Shishe resembled Master Zeng. Bogong You resembled Zixia. Now, as for the courage of the two, I do not really know which was better. Nonetheless, Meng Shishe preserved something important (*yue*)." Zixia was accused of emphasizing insignificant and petty matters of detail—things like "sweeping and cleaning"—over the real substance of virtue. Similarly, Mencius is suggesting, Bogong You attends to superficial manifestations of courage in behavior.

How, then, is Meng Shishe similar to Master Zeng? In his commentary on this text, Zhao Qi offers the following suggestion:

Mencius regards Master Zeng as outstanding in filial piety. Filial piety is the basis of all [other] activities. Although Zixia knew many things, this is still not as great as Master Zeng's filial piety. Hence, [Mencius] compares [Meng Shi-] She to Master Zeng, and [Bogong] You to Zixia. Since [Meng] Shishe's aim was not to be afraid, he aimed at what is important. (Commentary on 2A2.6)²⁴

Thus, this commentary suggests that Master Zeng and Meng Shishe are similar in that each emphasizes something that is of central importance—filial piety and being fearless, respectively—whereas Zixia and Bogong You emphasize things that are peripheral, and less important—things like "sweeping and cleaning" and stereotypically courageous actions, respectively. This interpretive hypothesis seems very plausible because it provides a comprehensible explanation of what Mencius is saying, and also fits in with what we understand about Master Zeng and Zixia from other texts. (This is the most we can ask of any interpretation.) So Mencius is making two parallel points: first, the kinds of virtues that Master Zeng had, especially filial piety, are a more important part of being a good person than the ritual and intellectual activities that Zixia emphasized; similarly, being fearless is a more important part of being courageous than is just acting in stereotypically courageous ways.

This is surely *part* of the message that Mencius wants to convey, but I believe there is more. I have suggested that Meng Shishe was more concerned with what we might describe as the emotional aspect of courage, whereas Bogong You emphasized the behavioral manifestations of courage. This too, I submit, has an analogue in the differences between Master Zeng and Zixia, for, as we saw, Master Zeng showed a strong, personal, emotional commitment to the Confucian Way, whereas Zixia emphasized the behavioral manifestations of Confucianism. Perhaps this is what the Song Dynasty philosopher Zhu Xi is hinting at when he

remarks, in his commentary on this passage, that "Master Zeng reflected and 'sought it within himself'."²⁵

Finally, is it relevant to the comparison that Zixia was intelligent and learned? At first, I thought not. However, the Qing Dynasty commentator Jiao Xun has an interesting observation on this point:

Bogong You in all affairs sought to defeat others. Hence, he is similar to Zixia, who knew many things. Meng Shishe did not ask whether he was necessarily able to defeat others or not. He simply concentrated upon maintaining his own fearlessness. Hence, he is similar to Master Zeng, who grasped what is great in the Way. (Commentary on 2A2.6)

In other words, this commentary suggests that Zixia's desire for learning was a manifestation of his desire to be better than others, rather than a commitment to virtue for its own sake. And in his passion for victory over others, he is like Bogong You. Again, this interpretation seems plausible because it makes sense of what Mencius is saying and fits in with what we know about the individuals involved.

In summary, there are at least three respects in which Master Zeng and Meng Shishe may be contrasted with Zixia and Bogong You. (1) The former emphasize what is centrally important, while the latter emphasize what is peripheral and less important. (2) The former emphasize certain emotional states, while the latter emphasize behavior. (3) The former emphasize achieving their own excellence, while the latter emphasize being better than others.

F. Verses 7 to 8: Master Zeng on Courage

In verse 7, Mencius tells us about Master Zeng's own views on courage, once again giving a first-person account:

Formerly, Master Zeng speaking to [his disciple] Zixiang said, "Are you fond of courage? I once heard about great courage from the Master:

If I examine myself and am not upright, although [I am opposed by] a coarsely clad fellow, I would be afraid. If I examine myself and am upright, although [I am opposed by] thousands and tens of thousands, I shall go forward."

Here, Master Zeng explicitly links courage with being a good person,²⁶ and uses the rhetorical device of paradox to make his point. The expression "a coarsely clad fellow" suggests someone who is poor and lacking in social status. Mencius's literati audience would find nothing fearsome about such a person. In contrast, most people *would* find fearsome being opposed by "thousands and tens of thousands." In contrast, "the Master" says that, if, upon self-examination, he finds that he is in the wrong, then even if the person opposing him is not fearsome, he *would* be afraid. In other words, he is suggesting that one ought to be afraid of doing what is not "upright."²⁷ Furthermore, if self-examination reveals that he is doing

what is right, then the Master would continue to pursue the correct course of action, regardless of how powerful his opponents are.

Mencius invidiously compares this sort of courage to that of Meng Shishe in verse 8, saying, “Meng Shishe’s preservation of his *qi* was still not as good as Master Zeng’s preservation of what is important (*yue*).” Explaining this line requires saying a little bit about what *qi* is. This is really a topic unto itself, and here I can sketch only some of the uses of this concept. *Qi* can refer to mist generally (clouds, fog, etc.) and breath. More esoterically, *qi* was thought of as a kind of fluid, found in both the atmosphere and the human body, responsible for the intensity of one’s emotions. For example, in the *Zuo zhuan*, we find the comment, “The people have likes, dislikes, delight, anger, sorrow and joy. These are generated by the six *qi*.”²⁸ Consequently, in saying that Meng Shishe preserved his *qi*, Mencius is saying that he controlled his emotions. Specifically, he controlled the emotion of fear.

In contrast, Master Zeng preserves something more “important” than fearlessness alone. Specifically, Master Zeng preserves, and acts on, his sense of “uprightness.” Some confusion might be occasioned here by the fact that Meng Shishe is himself described, earlier in 2A2, as having “preserved something important.” The point is presumably that fearlessness and uprightness are both important parts of courage. Consequently, in being fearless, Meng Shishe preserved “something important” in comparison with Bogong You. However, Mencius holds that uprightness is a more important aspect of courage than fearlessness alone. Consequently, in being upright, Master Zeng recognized a more important aspect of courage than did Meng Shishe. In other words, Mencius’s point is that what is really important in courage is not simply being without fear regardless of the circumstances; rather, the highest courage involves responding to one’s situation in a virtuous manner.

So *Mencius* 2A2, verses 4 through 8, present us with a hierarchy of kinds of courage. The lowest sort of courage is that of Bogong You, who simply acts in stereotypically courageous ways. Meng Shishe recognizes a more important aspect of courage: fearlessness. But Master Zeng has grasped the most important aspect of courage: being virtuous.

2A2 continues with Gongsun Chou asking Mencius to explain the difference between his own “unperturbed heart” and that of the rival philosopher, Gaozi. I think Gongsun Chou had a very good reason for being curious about this. Gaozi was like Mencius, but unlike Bogong You or Meng Shishe, in being concerned with righteousness. However, as we learn from both book 6A of the *Mencius* and 2A2 itself, Gaozi had very different views from Mencius about the proper way to cultivate righteousness.²⁹

III. THE FULLY COURAGEOUS AND FEAR

There are obvious connections between Mencius’s views on courage and the other Confucian views we found in the *Analects*. In both the *Mencius* and the *Analects* (14:4), the fully virtuous will be courageous, but as the examples of Bo-

gong You and Meng Shishe demonstrate, the courageous need not be fully virtuous. In addition, recall that the *Analects* claims that “To see what is right and not act is to fail to be courageous” (2:24). This is reminiscent of the connection Mencius sees between being courageous and being “upright.”³⁰ On one issue, however, it is not obvious whether Mencius is continuing or departing from the *Analects*’ view of courage. The *Analects* twice says, “those who are courageous are not afraid.” Now, recall the saying attributed to “the Master” in verse 7 of 2A2:

(a) If I examine myself and am not upright, although [I am opposed by] a coarsely clad fellow, I would be afraid. (b) If I examine myself and am upright, although [I am opposed by] thousands and tens of thousands, I shall go forward.

There are at least two ways to interpret the significance of the first sentence in this quotation, which I have labeled (a) for convenience of reference. (1) It may mean that true courage requires being afraid if one finds that one is in the wrong. (2) However, it may be that (a) does not describe “great courage”; rather, only the second sentence, (b), describes “great courage.”³¹ In other words, on the interpretation being considered, being afraid when one recognizes that one is not upright is *not* part of “great courage”; rather, “great courage” consists only in “going forward” when one recognizes that one is upright. Which reading is correct? In favor of the first reading is the fact that (a) is immediately preceded by Master Zeng introducing the topic of “great courage.” Having just introduced the topic of “great courage,” it is somewhat misleading for Master Zeng to immediately quote something that does not illustrate this virtue. However, there are several reasons for believing that (b) alone describes “great courage.” First, as we have seen, the view that the courageous are fearless was common among at least some other early Confucians. Second, Meng Shishe, who is fearless, is described earlier in 2A2 as preserving “something important.”

It also seems to be the view of several recent Western interpreters of Mencius that a morally perfected person will feel no fear. Thus, Donald Munro suggests that one of the goals of the Confucian process of self-cultivation is “tranquility,” and says (specifically discussing 2A2), “When one has successfully carried through this process, external objects will be unable to move the bodily [*qi*], causing it, in turn, to move the mind; instead, the mind will be in control of the external objects and will stay on the straight path.”³² Similarly, Lee Yearley has argued that “Mencius’s depiction of perfect courage seems to describe a state in which the truly courageous person has no fear of the objectionable results, of the loss of real goods.”³³

Although Mencius holds that the fully courageous are completely fearless, he also seems to hold that a fully courageous person has a vivid awareness of the goods that one may have to sacrifice if one is to do what courage requires. For example, in both 3B1 and 5B7, Mencius approvingly quotes what appears to be a saying: “Purposeful scholars do not forget that they may end up in a ditch or gutter. Courageous scholars do not forget that they may lose their heads.” In

addition, Mencius holds that the courageous value their lives, even when they are willing to sacrifice them. Thus, in 6A10, he says,

Life is something I want, and righteousness is also something I want. If I cannot succeed in getting them together, I shall forsake life and choose righteousness. Life is something that I want, [but] there are things that I want more than life. Hence, I will not do just anything to obtain it.

Indeed, Mencius is critical of those who would carelessly give up their lives, as is shown by 4B23, where he remarks, "If it is permissible to die, [but also] permissible not to die, to die is an abuse of courage."

So, Mencius holds that fully courageous individuals are fearless. But Mencius also holds that the fully courageous act with awareness of the goods they are sacrificing, and are not indifferent to their own well-being. This suggests a philosophical problem, though. Is it even coherent to suggest that I anticipate sacrificing some great good, yet am not afraid? Admittedly, some anticipated sacrifices need not occasion fear. I anticipate that I must forgo buying new speakers for my sound system, because it is more important to buy new tires for our car, and we cannot afford both. This irritates me, but does not frighten me.³⁴ However, new speakers are merely something I *want*, not something I *need*. Does it really make sense to say that I anticipate sacrificing something necessary for my well-being, such as my own life, yet am not afraid?

Perhaps we can rescue Mencius from this difficulty by distinguishing between *being afraid* and *feeling afraid*. It does seem to me, at least, that it is possible for one to greatly value one's own life, and regret its loss, without actually *feeling* fear. I think James Wallace, in his discussion of courage, makes an important point in this regard:

In thinking of fear, there is a tendency to think exclusively of the set of physiological occurrences and feelings that accompany panic and terror. . . . Such physical changes and the feelings that accompany them, however, are but one aspect or facet of fear, which is a far more complex and complicated phenomenon. . . . Being afraid of something can be thought of as a syndrome of symptoms: in a particular case, certain symptoms may be particularly pronounced while other symptoms may be slight or even missing altogether.³⁵

If this is correct, then I may be afraid to die even if I do not actually have the subjective feeling of fear. And perhaps it is only the subjective feeling of fear that, according to Mencius, the fully courageous lack. It is worth noting, though, that this is a very speculative suggestion, as the text of the *Mencius* does not directly address this issue. We do not yet know enough about Mencius's psychological and physiological views to judge this issue with any degree of confidence.

The statement that the Mencian sage is "unperturbed" must be qualified in another way as well. In one of the most famous passages in the *Mencius* (2A6), our philosopher says,

The reason why I say that humans all have hearts that will not bear [the suffering of] others is this. Suppose someone suddenly saw a child about to fall into a well: everyone [in such a situation] would have a *feeling of alarm* [*chu ti*] and *compassion*.

Mencius must think that sages, like ordinary people, have hearts that will not bear the suffering of others. Indeed, Mencius's view is that sages have *heightened* concern for others. And a feeling of "alarm" is a sort of perturbation; it even seems properly described as a sort of fear. So even sages can be "perturbed." More direct evidence that sages can, in some sense, be perturbed comes from 5A1, which states that the sage Shun "cried out and wept to the autumn sky" because his parents did not love him. Shun's sadness would seem to be a kind of perturbation. How can Mencius reconcile his suggestion that the fully courageous are unperturbed with the admission that even sages can be alarmed or greatly saddened?

I submit that the examples Mencius uses suggest that there are at least two ways in which the fear or perturbation of the sage differs from that of those who are not courageous. First, the *objects* of the fear of sages differ from the objects of noncourageous fear.³⁶ Master Zeng, it seems, is not "perturbed" by the possibility that *he* will be harmed, even if acting righteously requires putting his life at risk. However, anyone who saw a child about to fall into a well would be alarmed *for the sake of the child*. Likewise, 5A1 specifically says that Shun had available to him sex, wealth, and prestige, so Shun did *not* weep to the autumn sky because he lacked these things. Instead, Shun was perturbed because his parents did not love him. And this is a perfectly virtuous concern. So Mencius's examples suggest that the *objects* of the perturbations of the fully courageous differ from the objects of the perturbations of the unvirtuous.

A second difference, I submit, is that sages manifest "motivational harmony" even when perturbed.³⁷ For example, *I* am not fully virtuous myself. If *I* recognize that doing the right thing requires endangering my own well-being, *I* will feel fear, because my strong desire for my own well-being will conflict with my desire to do what is right. *I* feel fear because my motivations are in conflict. We might say that *I* am "of two minds." In contrast, even when a Mencian sage is perturbed or afraid, the sage still possesses "motivational harmony." Specifically, a sage who has a feeling of alarm because a child is about to fall into a well is not of two minds and is not pulled in two directions about what to do. The only thing the sage wants to do is to save the child. Likewise, Shun does not weep because he finds his motivations pulling him in two directions. He wants only that his parents should love him.

Consequently, careful examination of what Mencius says about courage and perturbation suggests the following conclusions. Those who are fully virtuous lack a particular sort of fear. Specifically, although the fully virtuous value their own well-being, they do not feel fear when righteousness requires them to sacrifice their lives. In addition, the fully courageous may be frightened by the prospect of the suffering of others, and may be saddened by the absence of things

like familial love. However, even when perturbed in these ways, the fully courageous continue to manifest motivational harmony.

IV. A PARTIAL DEFENSE OF MENCIUS

I have tried to argue that, when we come to understand the intellectual, historical, and literary background against which he spoke, we can see that Mencius is presenting a detailed and nuanced typology of courage in the opening of 2A2. In addition, we have seen that he takes stands on many of the philosophical issues regarding courage that I noted at the opening of this essay. However, those familiar with Western discussions of courage might perceive a weakness in Mencius's account. Specifically, in 2A2, Mencius makes clear *that* he prefers the courage of Master Zeng to that of either Meng Shishe or Bogong You, and he makes clear *what* is distinctive about the courage of each, but he does not explain *why* the courage of Master Zeng is superior to the other two kinds. This might lead us to conclude either that Mencius is not a philosopher, or that, if Mencius is a philosopher, he is not a very good one. I think either of these conclusions would be precipitate.

One point we should keep in mind is that Gongsun Chou is one of Mencius's disciples, and he is asking for *clarification* of the nature of courage. Gongsun Chou did not ask for a *justification* of the claim that Master Zeng's courage is superior. Consequently, it is not surprising that Mencius does not provide such a justification in this passage. Furthermore, it is often the case that Mencius's arguments on a given topic are spread out over a number of different passages. What I want to do next is to survey some of what Mencius says about courage in other passages, and argue that he *does* provide some justification for his hierarchy in 2A2. Mencius's general line of argument is this: those who possess the lesser forms of courage will be led to perform actions that frustrate the achievement of goals and concerns they can be expected to have.

A. Passing Comments on Courage: Mencius 4B30 and 7B1

A passing remark in 4B30 is illuminating. In a catalogue of things that are unfilial, Mencius includes "being fond of courage and conflict so as to endanger one's parents." One can easily see how the mindless bravado of a Bogong You, or the indiscriminating fearlessness of a Meng Shishe, could lead one to acquire enemies who would be threats to one's parents. And it is not only children who might endanger family members with their rashness. In 7B1, Mencius laments, "Unbenevolent was King Hui of Liang!" He goes on to relate that King Hui fought a war for the sake of territory and suffered a great defeat. The king decided to launch another campaign and sent his own son to lead it. The son died in battle. Mencius remarks, King Hui "was afraid that he would be unable to be victorious. Hence, he urged the son whom he loved to his death."³⁸ Unlike Master Zeng, King Hui valued the wrong thing, territory, and was afraid of the wrong thing, failure to be victorious. And because of this he acted against his love of his son.

B. Mencius 1B3

Next to 2A2, the most extensive discussion of courage in the *Mencius* may be found in 1B3, which is a dialogue between Mencius and King Xuan of the state of Qi. This is one of a number of recorded conversations between Mencius and King Xuan. From a long conversation in an earlier passage, 1A7, we learn that Xuan wishes to expand his rule beyond the borders of the state of Qi, and become ruler of all of the Middle Kingdom. Mencius warns him that, given the military resources of the state of Qi, the consequences of trying to conquer all of the Middle Kingdom would be disastrous. In a justly famous simile, Mencius tells King Xuan, "To seek what you want by the means that you employ is like climbing a tree in search of a fish."³⁹ Instead, Mencius advises, Xuan should concentrate on making his own subjects healthy and happy, which would not only be benevolent but would also have the good practical consequence of solidifying his own rule. Note that, in order for Xuan to act on this advice, he must *not* be like Meng Shishe. Mencius is advising Xuan that he *should* "advance only after sizing up the enemy, . . . ponder [whether he will achieve] victory and only then join [battle], . . . [and] be in awe of the opposing armies."

1B3 itself opens with Mencius lecturing King Xuan on proper relations between states of unequal power. The king responds, "Great are your words! But I have a weakness. I am fond of courage." Mencius replies,

I beg your Majesty not to be fond of petty courage. If one brandishes a sword and looks fierce, saying, "How dare he stand up to me?!" this is the courage of a common fellow, and is just a matter of opposing a single person. Let your Majesty make it into something greater.

Mencius then discusses the courage of the ancient sage kings Wen and Wu, each of whom "brought peace to the people of the world in a single burst of anger." In other words, the sage kings used military force *only* when it *benefited* the common people by bringing *peace* to them. Given the context of Mencius's previous discussions with King Xuan, the significance is clear. The courage of a "common fellow" is useful only in "opposing a single person." The bravado of a "common fellow" is useless, or even dangerous, for a ruler to have, since a ruler's sphere of activity is not a one-on-one confrontation but large-scale interstate politics and warfare. To try to rule with this sort of mindless bravado can only lead to disaster. Instead, Mencius urges King Xuan to rule in the *virtuous* manner of the sage kings. The relevance to 2A2 is, I hope, clear. The courage of the "common fellow" corresponds to the courage of Bogong You, while that of the sage kings corresponds to the courage of Master Zeng. Consequently, 1B3 can be seen as providing argument that courage growing out of virtue, like that of Master Zeng, is superior to mindless bravado.

I have been arguing that Mencius *does* have reasons, which he supplies in other contexts, for holding that the sort of courage he ascribes to Master Zeng in 2A2 is superior to the sort he ascribes to Bogong You or Meng Shishe. But as a philosopher I am also interested in whether his reasons are *good* reasons. As I

noted earlier, Mencius's basic argument is that those who possess the lesser forms of courage will be led to perform actions that frustrate the achievement of goals and concerns they can be expected to have. Most of us do, I think, have the sorts of goals and concerns that Mencius identifies. Almost all of us care for some other people—family members and friends. It does seem likely that the mindless bravado of a Bogong You would cause us to act in ways that would damage the interests of those about whom we care. Admittedly, very few of us are, like King Xuan of Qi, rulers of powerful states. However, very many of us *are* in situations similar to King Xuan in important respects. Specifically, any of us who are committed to complicated projects that involve the cooperation of others will, like King Xuan, find the courage of a Bogong You counterproductive. The success of complicated projects involving the cooperation of others—including such diverse things as running a business enterprise, engaging in academic administration, playing on a sports team—requires that we often avoid conflict and respond to obstacles and threats in a more nuanced way than would a Bogong You. So if we have any of these sorts of commitments, there will be good reason to prefer the courage of a Master Zeng.

C. Two Deeper Objections

There are two deeper objections to Mencius's position on courage that I want to at least mention. (I will confess in advance, though, that I plan to only *sketch* what responses to these deeper objections would look like.) First, what if one lacks *any* of the commitments that Mencius has been assuming we have? What if one cares neither about the well-being of any other humans nor about the success of any complicated cooperative projects? Second, we might accuse Mencius of being guilty of offering us a "false trichotomy." Perhaps the courage of Master Zeng *is* demonstrably preferable to the courage of either Bogong You or Meng Shishe. But surely there are other kinds of courage that are combined with more prudent and nuanced responses to one's situation, yet are not as explicitly moralized as is Master Zeng's courage. To return to an earlier example, what about the courage of a prudent hitman? Such a person would, *ex hypothesi*, not be virtuous, since he would be neither benevolent nor just, so he would not have the courage of Master Zeng. But a prudent hitman would not have to be as mindless or undiscerning in responding to his situation as are Bogong You or Meng Shishe. He could wisely choose which "contracts" to accept, and prudently choose the right moment to make his "hit." Mencius would prefer Master Zeng's courage to that of the hitman, but does he have any justification for this preference?

I have raised these two questions together because I think the form of Mencius's answer to each would be very similar. Virtues are dispositions that contribute to living a flourishing or choiceworthy life. Thus, in order to show that a disposition is a virtue, one must explain how that disposition contributes to living a flourishing or choiceworthy life. On the other hand, if a disposition detracts from living a flourishing or choiceworthy life, it is a vice. Consequently, in order to answer the first of the objections, Mencius would have to show that one who

lacked commitments to other people and to complicated cooperative projects could not lead a flourishing or choiceworthy life. Similarly, in answer to the second objection, Mencius would have to show that a prudent hitman could not lead a flourishing or choiceworthy life. Can Mencius succeed in showing either of these things? Here I must beg off. In order to show either of these things, I would have to construct a Mencian justification for a certain sort of virtuous life. In other words, Mencius's response to either of these objections would have to be a special case of his answer to the general question, "Why be a good person?" And that is a bigger question than I can tackle in a brief essay.

V. CONCLUSION

I have tried to achieve several things in this essay. I have attempted to explicate and provide a partial defense of Mencius's conception of courage, using verses 1 through 8 of *Mencius* 2A2 as the focus of my inquiry. Although this passage seems, at first, extremely obscure, I tried to show that it is perfectly coherent once we understand the intellectual background that Mencius and his interlocutors assumed. Furthermore, I argued that, in other portions of the text, Mencius presents arguments for his evaluation of the different types of courage discussed in 2A2. Finally, I have provided a partial defense of Mencius's evaluation.

One of the things distinctive of great philosophers is that careful, critical reading of their works both requires and stimulates one's own philosophical reflection and engagement. To read the *Republic* carefully, for example, is not to passively absorb Plato's philosophy; it is to do philosophy *with* Plato. It is my hope that this essay at least suggests that, as I. A. Richards long ago argued, Mencius is a philosopher in a league with Plato.⁴⁰ To read carefully Mencius's views on courage is to be challenged to think deeply about courage itself.

NOTES

1. Versions of this essay were presented at the University of Michigan, Vassar College, and the Neo-Confucian Seminar of Columbia University. I learned much from the comments on each occasion, and from the comments of an anonymous referee. All translations in this essay are my own, unless otherwise noted. I shall identify portions of *Mencius* 2A2 using the so-called "verses" in James Legge's translation, *The Works of Mencius* (New York, 1970; o.p. 1895). I have also consulted the following translations and commentaries: D. C. Lau, *Mencius* (New York, 1970), Uchino Kumaichiro, *Moshi*, vol. 4 of *Shinshaku Kambun Taikei* (Tokyo, 1962), Zhao Qi, *Mengzi zhu*, Sun Shi, *Mengzi zhushu*, Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, Jiao Xun, *Mengzi zhengyi*.

2. David S. Nivison, "Philosophical Voluntarism in Fourth Century China," originally written in 1973 and reprinted in Nivison, *The Ways of Confucianism: Investigations in Chinese Philosophy* (La Salle, Ill., 1996), Jeffrey Riegel, "Reflections on an Unmoved Mind: An Analysis of *Mencius* 2A2," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion Thematic Issue 5*, edited by Henry Rosemont a supplement to 47: 3 (September 1980): 433–57, Kwong-Loi Shun, "Mencius and the Mind-Inherence of Morality: Mencius' Rejection of Kao Tzu's Maxim in *Meng Tzu* 2A:2," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 18 (December 1991): 371–86, Lee H. Yearley, *Mencius*

and Aquinas: *Theories of Virtue and Conceptions of Courage* (Albany, N.Y., 1990), especially 151–53.

3. In the works previously cited, Nivison and Shun do not discuss verses 1–8. Yearley devotes only two paragraphs to this section of 2A2 in all of his book (pp. 151–52). Riegel has an interesting discussion of the verses on pp. 437–39 (although I differ from him on many points). Probably the best previous discussion is in Shun's dissertation, "Virtue, Mind and Morality: A Study in Mencian Ethics," Department of Philosophy, Stanford University, 1986 (UMI Order No. 8700818), 41–57.

4. For my own views on the relationship between Western and Chinese philosophy, see "What Should Western Philosophy Learn from Chinese Philosophy?" in *Chinese Language, Thought and Culture: Nivison and His Critics*, edited by Philip J. Ivanhoe (La Salle, Ill., 1996).

5. My comparison suggests an important methodological issue: How do I know that *yong* is properly translated as "courage"? The only way to show this is to see whether the hypothesis that *yong* is properly interpreted as "courage" results in translations of sentences from classical Chinese that make sense. The fact that interpreting *yong* as "courage" does result in sensible translations of sentences from the *Analects* and the *Mencius* provides evidence that my interpretive hypothesis is correct. If someone claims that *yong* is not properly interpreted as "courage," the burden of proof is on her to show how some alternative interpretation of *yong* makes better sense of the translated passages.

6. Plato, *Laches and Charmides*, translated by Rosamond Kent Sprague (Indianapolis, 1992), p. 32 (191A–C).

7. If we think of an action as a combination of behavior, intention, emotion, etc., then courage at least involves performing certain actions. My point is that courage requires more than certain kinds of external behavior.

8. Philippa Foot, *Virtues and Vices* (Berkeley, 1978), 10.

9. On the notion of semblances of virtues, see Yearley, *Mencius and Aquinas*, p. 17ff. Foot's (rather complex) view on this issue is that "courage is not operating as a virtue when the murderer turns his courage, which is a virtue, to bad ends" (Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, 16).

10. The two best published English-language summaries of the textual issues regarding the *Analects* are Robert Eno, *The Confucian Creation of Heaven* (Albany, 1990), 80–81, and 239–41, nn. 2–4, and Steven Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality* (Stanford, Calif., 1991), 17–28. There is also an outstanding forthcoming textual study of the *Analects* by E. Bruce Brooks and A. Taeko Brooks, *The Original Analects: Sayings of Confucius and His Successors* (New York, 1997). Citations of the *Analects* in this essay follow the sectioning in the Harvard-Yenching Institute concordance.

11. Alasdair MacIntyre, "Incommensurability, Truth, and the Conversation between Confucians and Aristotelians about the Virtues," in *Culture and Modernity*, edited by Eliot Deutsch (Honolulu, 1991), 106.

12. Similar is this comment from the *Zuo zhuan*, Duke Ai, 16th year: "Adhering to benevolence is what I call being trustworthy, and practicing righteousness is what I call being courageous. . . . Just doing what one has sworn to do is not trustworthiness, and dying when the time comes is not courage" (translation modified from Burton Watson, *The Tso Chuan* [New York, 1989], 203).

13. Riegel suggests that Gongsun Chou, far from being a disciple, is actually criticizing Mencius in 2A2 and other passages ("Reflections on an Unmoved Mind," p. 450, n. 4). However, Zhao Qi identifies Gongsun Chou as one of Mencius's disciples in his commentary to 2A1, and Gongsun Chou identifies himself as Mencius's disciple in 2A1.7. Moreover, both the content of his questions ("I venture to ask wherein you excel, Master?") and the form (he allows Mencius to answer at great length) are inconsistent with hostile cross-examination.

14. Mencius was, at some point, some sort of minister in Qi (see 2B6). Riegel thinks that Mencius had already been prime minister by the time of this conversation, and that Gongsun Chou is needling Mencius about his failure to reform the ruler of Qi. He interprets *ba wang bu yi yi* as meaning that there was no difference between acting as a true king and acting as a hegemon during the time Mencius was in office ("Reflections on an Unmoved Mind," p. 436,

and p. 451, n. 6). David S. Nivison has observed (in conversation) that Mencius's standard manner of saying that A is not different from B is not A B *bu yi* but is rather A *yu* B *wu yi yi ye* (1A4) or A *wu yi yi yu* B (6A4). In addition, the use of *yi* to mean "to regard as surprising" is attested in other passages in the *Mencius* (e.g., 5B9). Legge, Uchino, and Lau also read the opening of 2A2 as I do.

15. In Lau's translation, the relevant portion of 6B15 reads, "That is why Heaven, when it is about to place a great burden on a man, always first tests his resolution, exhausts his frame and makes him suffer starvation and hardship, frustrates his efforts so as to shake him from his mental lassitude, toughen his nature and make good his deficiencies." The emphasized phrase is Lau's translation of the phrase I render "to perturb one's heart."

16. A more literal translation of the Chinese (*bu dong xin*) would be "to (not) move one's heart." However, in English, saying that someone's "heart is unmoved" suggests callousness, and that is not what Mencius has in mind here, so I have followed Legge in using the word "unperturbed."

17. Briefly, Mencius and Gaozi are similar in that both think courage should grow out of a commitment to "righteousness." However, Gaozi regards righteousness as "external." This means, at least, that Gaozi does not think we have innate dispositions toward righteousness. Mencius, of course, claims that we do have such dispositions, and that righteousness is "internal."

18. By "the Master" he means Confucius. What follows may be intended as a direct quotation from Confucius, but it may also be Master Zeng paraphrasing the Master's teaching.

19. In Chinese, this sentence is *zi fan er bu su, sui hekuambo, wu bu zhui yan*, which would most naturally be translated as, "If I examine myself and am not upright, although [I am opposed by] a coarsely clad fellow, I would not be in fear." This does not make any sense in context, however. There have been five proposals for interpreting this sentence, the first four of which give basically the same sense: (1) The second *bu* is an interpolation. (2) The second *bu* is equivalent to *qi bu*. (This reading is suggested by Yan Ruoku, cited in Jiao Xun, and followed by Legge.) (3) The second *bu* is a mistake for *bi*. (This is D. C. Lau's suggestion in "Some Notes on the *Mencius*," *Asia Major*, n.s., 15:1 [1969], 71.) (4) The final *yan* is an interrogative particle, making the sentence a rhetorical question. (Uchino reads this way.) (5) The *zhui* is transitive, giving the sense, ". . . I will not make him afraid." The problem with this last reading is that it is not clear what not making someone else afraid has to do with courage. (I am indebted to Scott Cook for making clear the need to address this issue.)

20. *Su* (read *suo* in modern Mandarin), which I have translated as "upright," is a rare character. Jeffrey Riegel, following one reading of an occurrence of *su* in the *Shi jing* (Mao 237), interprets it as "bound tight" ("Reflections on an Unmoved Mind," p. 438, and p. 452, n. 18). However, Zhao Qi glosses *su* both as "upright" (*zhi*) and as "righteous" (*yi*). Furthermore, Zhu Xi, in his commentary, provides two examples from the *Li ji* in which *su* is contrasted with *heng*, "transverse." In addition, a passage in the *Hanfeizi* (which Riegel cites, loc. cit.) parallels 2A2.7 except that *su* is replaced with "upright." Finally, I think that even in the *Shi jing* passage that Riegel cites *su* can be read as "to make upright."

21. The only apparent exception to this generalization is *Analects* 4:15, in which Master Zeng is presented as unravelling a cryptic dictum of Confucius. However, I follow many scholars (e.g., Brooks and Brooks, *Original Analects*) in regarding the incident reported in this passage as a fabrication, the motive of which was precisely to combat the image of Master Zeng as a dullard.

22. This translation is modified from Arthur Waley, *The Analects of Confucius* (New York, 1989; o.p. 1938), 133.

23. I take it that Meng Shishe does *not* think one ought to "advance only after sizing up one's enemy, to ponder victory and only then join [battle]." To do so would make one's courage dependent upon being "certain of victory." In contrast with this, Meng Shishe does not care what the odds of victory are, he does not care whether he is certain of victory. Regardless of the situation, he is "without fear."

24. Let me explain my use of the commentarial tradition. I do not quote traditional com-

mentaries because I assume that they are always right. (They could not be, since they often disagree with one another.) However, I think there are a variety of good reasons to use commentaries. First, the authors of traditional commentaries are often linguistically closer than we are to the texts we are interpreting. Zhao Qi's Chinese is closer to Mencius's than is that of any contemporary human. Likewise, even though he is separated from Mencius by more than a millennium of linguistic and cultural evolution, Zhu Xi was immersed in classical Chinese from an early age in a way that no one will ever be again. Second, the classical commentators are our colleagues. Just as I can learn something from an interpretive hypothesis or argument offered by one of my contemporary colleagues, so can I learn from ancient or medieval colleagues. In fact, as will be evident, I think many of the interpretive hypotheses offered by classical commentators are the "best explanations" of the meaning of 2A2.

25. Paraphrasing *Analects* 15:21.

26. Does Master Zeng link courage to being a good person, or merely to following one's own sense of what is right? (In other words, is courage a matter of virtue, or simply a matter of "authenticity"?) For Mencius, the two are not separable. He thinks that our innate sense of righteousness will (if we nurture it) guide us to do what is really right. Mencius would have understood Master Zeng along the same lines.

27. In discussion, Luis Gomez has suggested that the Master's fear might be due to the social disgrace consequent upon being defeated by a social inferior. There are several problems with this reading. (1) If the cause of the fear were the social disgrace of being defeated by an inferior, then there would be no reason for "the Master" to raise the issue of whether, upon self-examination, one is upright. (2) I am aware of no texts in which any early Confucians express (or even mention) the fear of being defeated by a social inferior. Indeed, (3) early Confucians do not disdain those who have low social status. Sage King Shun, for example, began life as a farmer (6B15), and Confucius condemns those who are ashamed of "poor clothes and poor food" (4:9).

28. Duke Zhao, Year 25, summer. This and many other early references to *qi* are helpfully collected in the appendix to A. C. Graham, *Yin-Yang and the Nature of Correlative Thinking* (Singapore, 1986), 70-92. *Qi* is also referred to later in 2A2 (verses 9 to 15), and in 6A8 and 7A36.

29. As I noted at the beginning of this essay, Mencius's critique of Gaozi has been extensively discussed in previous literature. Consequently, the remainder of this essay will focus on other interpretive and philosophic issues raised by verses 1 through 8.

30. Admittedly, the ethical terms here are different: "upright" in Mencius is *su*, while "right" in the *Analects* is *yi*. However, in his commentary, Zhao Qi glosses *su* as *yi*. So both the *Analects* and *Mencius* see a relationship between at least the highest kind of courage and virtue.

31. This interpretation was suggested by Stephen Darwall and Jennifer Church in separate discussions.

32. Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China* (Stanford, Calif. 1969), 153.

33. Yearley, *Mencius and Aquinas*, 156. For more discussion, see *ibid.*, 150-68, and Shun, "Virtue, Mind and Morality," 41-57.

34. If it irritates me, it perturbs me. Is Mencius committed to saying that *this* shows a lack of courage on my part?

35. James D. Wallace, *Virtues & Vices* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1978), 71-72.

36. Yearley also makes this observation (*Mencius and Aquinas*, 156).

37. I borrow the phrase "motivational harmony" from Shun, "Virtue, Mind and Morality," 41-57.

38. Emphasis mine. On King Hui's son, see 1A5.1.

39. *Mencius* 1A7.16.

40. I. A. Richards, *Mencius on the Mind: Experiments in Multiple Definition* (London, 1932), 28.

Awe and the Religious Life: A Naturalistic Perspective

HOWARD WETTSTEIN

I. ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION

That philosophy provides scrutiny of fundamentals is its great virtue, one that brought many of us to its study. Virtues and vices—theoretical no less than personal—are often intimately linked. In the theoretical domain, the linkage is evident in philosophical studies of religion, at least in those carried out in the analytic tradition. Concern with what seems fundamental—the existence of God—often has been all-absorbing and, would argue, distracting.

There are intellectual arenas in which we get along quite well in the absence of settled doctrines about the fundamentals, the philosophy of mathematics, for example. While questions about the existence and status of mathematical entities like numbers and sets is of great interest, no one would suggest that work in the philosophy of mathematics awaits a satisfactory treatment of these basic questions. Imagine the folly of the even stronger thesis that work in mathematics itself awaits such philosophical underpinning. However, with regard to the philosophy of religion and even to religion itself, we commonly assume that we need to attend to the fundamental questions first.

The difference is of course explained by our complete confidence in mathematical practice. We are surely more confident about mathematics itself than about any philosophical account of its nature. In the case of mathematics, the institution and its practices, we might say, are primary, the interpretation a much more dubious business.¹ Whereas with respect to religion, the institution awaits the sort of justification in which philosophers trade, or so we usually assume.

Were we confident of the power of religious practice, confident about the