

ON MENCIUS' USE OF THE METHOD OF ANALOGY IN ARGUMENT

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It is not unusual for a reader of *Mencius* to be left with the impression that in argument with his opponents Mencius was a sophist with little respect for logic. Not the least contributory factor to this impression is the type of argument which centres round an analogy. Yet it is difficult to believe that a thinker of Mencius' calibre and reputation could have indulged consistently in what appears to be pointless argument or that his opponents were always effectively silenced by non sequiturs. The fault, we suspect, must lie with us. We must have somehow failed to understand these arguments. There are extenuating circumstances. In every case the bare bones of the argument alone are recorded, the background necessary to its understanding being tacitly assumed. There is no doubt that a good deal could be assumed to be familiar to the readers of Mencius' day, including assumptions accepted alike by Mencius and his opponents as well as the philosophical views peculiar to each side and also, of course, the method of analogy as used in argument. But for the modern reader, however, at least some of these things may be unfamiliar, and we can understand the difficulties he finds in these arguments. The purpose of this paper is to examine the passages containing such arguments afresh, making explicit as much of the available background as is useful, and then to see if we could gain a better understanding of the way the method of analogy works and judge whether, by the standards of the time, Mencius was not an honest and skilful exponent of the method. The passages we shall examine are the first five chapters of Part I of Book VI and Chapter 17 of Book IV, Part I.

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VI.A.1. Kao Tzu said, "Human nature is like the willow. *Yi*¹ is like cups. To make morality² out of human nature is like making cups out of the willow."

¹ I have deliberately left the word *yi* 義 untranslated in all these passages from *Mencius*, because in some cases it is not possible to retain the continuity of the argument if the word is translated, as there is no one English equivalent which will do in all contexts. The reader can substitute "right", "righteous", "rightness", "duty" or "dutiful", according to the demands of English usage in each case.

² "*jen yi*" has been translated as "morality" and not as "benevolence and *yi*" for two reasons. Firstly, by Mencius' time *jen yi* was almost always used as a single term meaning "morality". Secondly, in his opening statement Kao Tzu said only of *yi* that

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Mencius said, "Can you make cups by following the nature of the willow? Or must you do violence to the willow before you can make it into cups? If the latter is the case, must you, then, also do violence to a man before you can make him moral? It is these words of yours that will lead men in this world in bringing disaster upon morality."

VI.A.2. Kao Tzu said, "Human nature is like whirling water. Give it an outlet in the east and it will flow east; give it an outlet in the west and it will flow west. That human nature shows no preference for either becoming good or becoming bad is like water showing no preference for either flowing east or flowing west."

Mencius said, "It is certainly the case that water shows no preference for either flowing east or flowing west, but does it show the same indifference to flowing upwards and flowing downwards? Human nature being good is like water seeking low ground. There is no man who is not good just as there is no water that does not flow downwards."

"Now with water, by splashing it one can make it shoot up higher than one's forehead, and by forcing it one can make it stay on a hill. But can that be said to be the nature of water? It is the special circumstances that make it behave so. That man can be made bad shows that his nature is open to similar treatment."

These two arguments are best taken together as they constitute different attempts on the part of Kao Tzu at elucidating, by means of different analogies, a basic thesis which is capable of varying interpretations. In VI.A.6, Kung-tu Tzu quotes Kao Tzu as saying, "There is in human nature neither good nor bad". In our first passage, the analogy put forth by Kao Tzu is that human nature is like the willow and morality like cups, and that to make morality out of human nature is like making cups out of the willow. The point of the analogy is this. The willow is the raw material out of which cups can be made, but this possibility has no basis in the original nature of the willow. It is no part of the nature of the willow to be made into cups. Similarly, not only is morality not in original human nature, it is something alien to it. Thus to make man moral is as arbitrary and artificial as making the willow into cups. By means of his analogy, Kao Tzu is interpreting his thesis as meaning that man is naturally a-moral.

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it was like cups; benevolence was not mentioned. In VI.A.4, as we shall see, Kao Tzu was explicit on the point. "Benevolence", he said, "is internal, not external; *yi* is external, not internal". This, as we shall also see, can only mean that in Kao Tzu's view benevolence was part of original human nature while *yi* was not. When he said that human nature was like the willow and that *yi* was like cups, he was making the same point. If, in the next sentence, he were to say that making "benevolence and *yi*" out of human nature was like making cups out of the willow, he would not only be inconsistent with what he had just said, but also contradicting what he said in VI.A.4.

Mencius' basic objection to this is that human beings are in fact not a-moral. They have a natural tendency towards moral behaviour, though this tendency is weak and often submerged by the habit of egoistic behaviour. This is a point to which we shall return. For the time being, let us concentrate on Mencius' objection to the analogy itself. On the one hand, it is obvious that we cannot make cups out of the willow by following its nature and that we have to do violence to its nature in order to do so. On the other hand, were we to draw the parallel conclusion that we cannot make man moral except by doing violence to his nature this would have disastrous consequences for the authority and prestige of morality.

There are two points which Mencius does not state but which are implicit in his objection. It is perhaps legitimate to deal with them as if they had been made by Mencius. Firstly, when we say that it is necessary to do violence to man's nature in order to make him moral, we are in fact making a moral judgment. We are saying that it is bad to make men moral. But if man is by nature a-moral, moral judgments are artificial and unnatural things for him to make. Yet the paradox is that in stating this it is natural for us to make it in the form of a moral judgment. This would seem to show that the making of moral judgments is inescapable and so cannot be artificial and unnatural. Hence given a position like Kao Tzu's we have no right to say that it is bad to make man moral and yet this seems the natural thing for us to say.

Secondly, if man is by nature a-moral, it is as much a violation of his nature to make him immoral as to make him moral. Kao Tzu should have said that to make man immoral, no less than to make him moral, was like making cups out of the willow. As he omitted to do this, it is very easy for anyone hostile to morality to draw the one-sided and therefore wrong conclusion that it is only making man moral which involved doing violence to his nature. The next step would be to argue falsely that since it is unnatural for man to be moral it must be natural for him to be immoral. That is why Mencius said to Kao Tzu, "It is these words of yours that will lead men in this world in bringing disaster upon morality".

As no comment by Kao Tzu on Mencius' objection to his analogy is recorded and no linking passage between the two chapters is supplied, we can only conjecture that Kao Tzu must have accepted Mencius' objection as valid. He, then, puts forth a new analogy, *viz.*, that human nature is like whirling water which will flow indifferently east or west as an outlet offers itself. In so doing Kao Tzu is giving up his earlier interpretation of his thesis that there is neither good nor bad in human nature, an interpretation capable of being misrepresented as meaning that morality runs counter to human nature, in other words, that man is naturally immoral. Instead, he accepts that morality is not alien to human nature, though he still wishes to maintain that man shows no preference for either the good or the bad. Man becomes good or bad as he happens to be guided one way or the other.

This analogy is worth more serious consideration because it represented more accurately Kao Tzu's true position. Perhaps Kao Tzu never meant his first analogy with the willow to be taken seriously. It was simply an opening gambit which allows him to give some concessions to his opponent without retreating beyond his real position. Whether this conjecture as to Kao Tzu's motive is justified or not, Mencius certainly takes the new analogy seriously and gets down to providing an alternative analogy which represents his own position and, in his view, better fits the facts of the case.

In VI.A.6, apart from quoting Kao Tzu's view on human nature, Kung-tu Tzu attributes to an unnamed person the view that human nature can become either good or bad. Now this is a view which was likely to have been accepted by both Kao Tzu and Mencius, because it is no more than a description of the undeniable fact that human beings sometimes become good and sometimes become bad. But just as the fact itself admits of different interpretations, so does the description. The views of both Kao Tzu and Mencius can be looked upon as different interpretations of the fact and so also of the description. At any rate, the way Mencius criticised Kao Tzu's second analogy shows that he at least looked upon it as an elucidation of this ambiguous thesis of anonymous authorship. What Kao Tzu was doing was to interpret the statement that human nature can become either good or bad as meaning that human nature shows no preference for becoming good or bad and so as meaning that it is equally easy for it to become good or bad. And this is, presumably, also the meaning to be given to his own thesis that there is neither good nor bad in human nature. Whether the analogy with the indifference water shows to flowing east or west is acceptable or not depends on whether one accepts or rejects the view of human nature it is meant to illustrate.

Mencius rejects the analogy because, for him, to say that man can be made either good or bad does not imply either that it is equally difficult to make him good or bad, or that it is equally natural for him to become moral or immoral. For Kao Tzu's analogy he substitutes one of his own. It is true, human nature is like water, but it is, in its preference for the good, like water in its tendency to flow downwards. This, in Mencius' view, was a better analogy, because though water shows a definite preference for low ground, it is possible to make it go upwards—say by splashing or forcing it—and it is certainly not the case that it is as easy to make it go up as to make it go down. It is more natural for water to flow downwards, and this means that it is more difficult to make it go upwards. Far from its being the case that to make man moral is to go against his nature, as Kao Tzu's first analogy with the willow can be taken to imply, Mencius wanted to say that the contrary is the case. It is more natural for man to be moral and so easier to make him good. "There is no man who is not good just as there is no water that does

not flow downwards." Though Mencius does not produce arguments in support of his view here, elsewhere he does try to produce evidence for the goodness of human nature. Briefly it is this. We all have the beginnings of morality in us. We all feel pity, spontaneously and without ulterior motive, at the sight of a baby creeping towards a well. We all have the *shih fei chih hsin* 是非之心 which distinguishes right from wrong and approves of the right, irrespective of what we in fact choose. If we happen to choose the wrong, we disapprove of our own action and feel a sense of shame.³ In the argument under consideration Mencius is content to work Kao Tzu gradually round to his view. Firstly, he shows that the analogy with the willow is likely to be misrepresented as meaning that it is difficult to make man good because it is natural for him to be immoral and that this is unacceptable even to Kao Tzu and probably never intended by him. When Kao Tzu shifts his position to the analogy with whirling water, Mencius goes on to show that this is still not a satisfactory analogy because Kao Tzu was mistaken in thinking that this was based on the thesis that human nature can become either good or bad. The mistake lies in thinking that to say that man can become either good or bad implies that it is equally difficult or easy for him to become either. This is not the case. It is easier to make man good because it is, in a legitimate sense, more natural for him to be moral. What Mencius has done is, in fact, to turn Kao Tzu's first analogy upside down. It is making man immoral that is analogous to making cups out of the willow, because it is natural for man to become moral just as it is natural for water to flow downwards.

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VI.A.3. Kao Tzu said, "That which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'.⁴"

Mencius said, "Is that the same as 'white is what is meant by 'white' '?"

"Yes."

"Is the whiteness of white feathers the same as the whiteness of white snow and the whiteness of white snow the same as the whiteness of white jade?"

"Yes."

"In that case is the nature of a dog the same as the nature of an ox and the nature of an ox the same as the nature of a man?"

³ For a fuller treatment of Mencius' theory that human nature is good, see my "Theories of human nature in Mencius and Shyuntzzy" (*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1953, Vol. XV, pp. 541-565).

⁴ Although the present text reads "*sheng chih wei hsing* 生之謂性", there is good reason to believe that originally 性 was simply written 生. (For a discussion of this point see Yü Yüeh 俞樾 *Ch'ün ching p'ing yi* 羣經平議, *Huang Ch'ing ching chieh hsü pien* 皇清經解續編 chüan 1394, pp. 16b-17a.) The two words, though cognate, were most probably slightly different in pronunciation, but the statement "*sheng chih wei hsing*" was at least tautologous in its written form and an exact parallel to "*pai chih wei pai*".

This is an interesting example of the use of analogy, because there are two features not met with in the examples we have seen. Firstly, it is not an analogy between two things but an analogy between two states of affairs which are described by statements of overtly identical form. "That which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'" and "white is what is meant by 'white'" are both tautologous in form. The second feature is that the analogy was in fact suggested by Mencius in an attempt to elucidate Kao Tzu's initial statement. Kao Tzu accepted the suggestion, presumably not realising that Mencius was going to show that the two statements were in fact not comparable. This meant that Kao Tzu was not, in the first instance, at all clear as to the implications of his own statement.

Mencius shows the difference between the two statements by saying that it follows that if white is what is meant by "white" then the whiteness of white feathers is the same as the whiteness of white snow which in turn is the same as the whiteness of white jade. By the same token, it follows that if that which is inborn is what is meant by "nature" then the nature of a dog is the same as the nature of an ox which in turn is the same as the nature of a man. But this was not acceptable, presumably even to Kao Tzu. What Kao Tzu's reaction was we are not told; neither are we given any explanation of why the analogy fails to hold. The former we can only conjecture, but towards making good the latter omission we can make some attempt.

The reason for the failure of the analogy is this. The term "nature" is a formal, empty term. We cannot know, in specific terms, what precisely "nature" is, unless the thing of which it is the nature is first specified. On the other hand, the term "white" has a minimum specific content. We can know, up to a point, what white is without having to be told what it is the whiteness of. What is even more important is that when we specify the thing which is white—say, feathers or snow or jade—we may know more about its characteristics, but these must include the minimum specific content that we know from the term "white" *per se*. If this condition is not fulfilled, then the thing is not really white. To put this whole point in another way. The "nature" of a thing depends entirely on what the thing is, while whether a thing is "white" or not depends on whether it includes the character which we define as whiteness independently. In other words, in the expression "the nature of x", the term "nature" is a function of the term "x", while in the expression "the whiteness of white feathers", the term "whiteness" is not a function of the term "feathers" but has an independent value of its own.⁵

⁵ There is also a formal difference between the two expressions which is a result of this distinction. In the expression "the whiteness of white feathers", the term "white" is a constituent of the term "white feathers". This is because whiteness is not included in the essence of feathers but is an independent character which has to be explicitly mentioned if it is "white feathers" and not simply "feathers" that we wish to mean. The same is not true of the expression "the nature of a dog".

It is not indicated how Kao Tzu made use of his thesis that "that which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'." One suspects that this may well be connected with his view that appetite for food and sex is human nature. (VI.A.4) He might have argued that all living creatures are born with appetite for food and sex and that therefore this is "nature" and so also "human nature". If he had argued thus, he would certainly have been helped by the practice, current by the time of Mencius, of using the word "nature" to mean specifically "human nature" when the context did not demand greater than usual precision. (When there was need for precision, the term "the nature of man" was used, as we have seen in VI.A.3 above.) If in meaning "human nature" one says only "nature", it is easy to assume that "human nature" shares with the nature of other animals characteristics which go to make up the essence of "nature" *sans phrase*.

Mencius' argument was designed to expose this unconscious assumption and to show that it was mistaken. He exposed it by explicitly asking the question, "In that case is the nature of a dog the same as the nature of an ox and the nature of an ox the same as the nature of a man?" No one could return a positive answer who was not prepared to go all the way and say that the nature of all animals is identical in every respect. In this way, Mencius shows that what the nature of x is depends on what x is. That man shares with animals the appetite for food and sex is not sufficient grounds for equating this with the whole of "nature", much less the whole of "human nature". There may be something else peculiar to human beings which is the essence of human nature, and in Mencius' view there is, and this is morality. Morality is peculiar to man, and distinguishes him from animals. It is worth mentioning that nowhere does Mencius deny that appetite for food and sex is human nature. All he asserts is that it is not the whole of human nature nor even the most important part, precisely because, being shared with all animals, it fails to mark him from the brutes. If we insist on saying that this constitutes the whole of human nature then we will have to accept the logical conclusion that the nature of a man is no different from that of a dog or an ox and this not even Kao Tzu was prepared to accept.

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IV.A.17. Ch'un-yü K'un said, "Is it required by the rites that, in giving and receiving, man and woman should not touch each other?"

Mencius said, "It is".

"When one's sister-in-law is drowning, does one stretch out a hand to help her?"

"Not to help a sister-in-law who is drowning is to be a brute. It is required by the rites that, in giving and receiving, man and woman should not touch each other, but to stretch out a hand to help the drowning sister-in-law is to use one's discretion (*ch'üan* 權)."

"Now the Empire is drowning, why do you not help it?"

"When the Empire is drowning, one helps it with the Way; when a sister-in-law is drowning one helps her with one's hand. Would you have me help the Empire with my hand?"

This argument is puzzling at first sight. Mencius' final question seems totally irrelevant. Yet one cannot help feeling that there is more to it than meets the eye. When we examine the analogy in detail, we find that this feeling is fully justified, for the argument turns out to be of considerable complexity, and it is this complexity that hides the point from us on a casual reading.

The question raised by Ch'un-yü K'un concerns the salvation of an Empire in disorder. He draws an analogy between this and the rescue of a drowning woman. The point Ch'un-yü K'un makes is that just as one ought to use one's hand to rescue a sister-in-law who is drowning, though this involves a breach of the rule that man and woman should not, in giving and receiving, touch each other, so ought one to be prepared to make some concessions in one's attempt to save a drowning Empire. The means for rescuing a drowning person is the hand, while the means for saving the Empire is, as Mencius points out, the Way. In either case the end is not in question; what is in question is whether one is justified in using any means that involves a breach of the ethical code in order to realise the end. To understand this argument, it is therefore necessary to say something about the nature of the means mentioned in each case.

Let us first take the case of the rescue of the drowning woman by the use of one's hand. The hand is useful purely as an instrument to the realisation of the end, but does not affect its nature. After the person is rescued, we would not know, unless we are told, by what means the rescue was effected, and what is more, it does not matter. We shall call this "instrumental means". If we turn to the salvation of the Empire, we find the case to be different. But first let us see how the salvation of an Empire in disorder was understood by Mencius and Ch'un-yü K'un. In their time, the common way of describing an Empire in disorder was to say that it lacked the Way (*wu tao* 無道). Hence to save the Empire is to provide it with the Way. When the Empire has attained order it would be in possession of the Way (*yu tao* 有道). We can see from this that the Way is a different kind of means. It becomes part of the end it helps to realise, and the end endures so long as the means remains a part of it. Remove the Way at any subsequent time, and the Empire will revert to disorder. We shall call this "constitutive means".⁶

⁶ I am aware that the distinction between instrumental and constitutive means is a crude one. Both form and matter would come under the latter term—and the Way is in fact form, as it furnishes the Empire with a regulative principle. I have not taken the discussion further, partly because this rough distinction is more or less adequate for my limited purpose of elucidating the argument we are considering, and partly because a more detailed discussion will take us too far afield.

There is another difference between the hand and the Way. The hand is only one of a number of possible means for rescuing a drowning person. One could equally use a stick or a rope. Furthermore, one's hand is as adequate a means for the purpose as any other. The Way, on the other hand, is a unique means for the realisation of the desired end of saving the Empire. One could, of course, use a watered down version of the Way instead, but then the end realised would be less perfect. This difference between the hand and the Way, though it does not follow from the distinction between them as instrumental and constitutive means, is not unconnected with it. The less any specific technique is required in the realisation of an end, the less specific the instrumental means. For instance, few things other than a screw-driver will drive in a screw, but almost any blunt object can be used to hammer in a nail. The rescue of a drowning person involves no specific technique. Hence the variety of possible means. On the other hand, in a sense constitutive means are always unique. Vary the means and you vary the end as well. This is particularly true where the constitutive means furnishes the principle of organisation. For instance, if one varies a mould slightly the resulting shape will, accordingly, be different. The Way is a regulative principle, and as such it is unique.

Now the use of the hand is in itself morally neutral. In the case under consideration this is wrong only because there is a rule against man and woman touching each other and because the drowning person happens to be a woman and the rescuer a man. All the same we are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand we have a duty to save life. On the other we also have a duty to observe accepted rules of conduct. The situation is such that there is no way of saving the life of the drowning woman except by the breach of a rule of conduct. We weigh up (*ch'üan*) the relative stringency of the conflicting claims and come to the conclusion that the duty to save life far outweighs the duty to observe rules of conduct. This weighing up is possible because we can appeal to basic moral principle. The Way, however, is not morally neutral. It *is* basic moral principle. It is therefore impossible for the use of the Way to be wrong in the manner the use of the hand can be wrong. And even if, for argument's sake, we were to grant that in using the Way we may be breaking some rule of conduct, we cannot see how this is to be justified: there is no moral principle more basic to which we can appeal for justification.

We can now turn to the analogy. The main difficulty with this analogy is to see how it is meant to hold. For the moment let us leave aside the difference between instrumental and constitutive means and look upon both the Way and the hand simply as means. If we are to interpret the analogy exactly, we have to take it in the following way. Just as we have to use our hand to rescue our sister-in-law, though this involves the breach of a rule of conduct, so must we use the Way to save the Empire, though in so doing

we err in a similar manner. This as we have just seen is both an impossibility and an absurdity. Moreover, this interpretation of the analogy renders it trivial, and was unlikely to have been what was intended by Ch'un-yü K'un.

A more likely interpretation is this. In using one's hand, when this involves the breach of a rule, one is resorting to a compromise. In saving the Empire, if need be, we should also be prepared to compromise. If the Way is too lofty for the ruler, we should offer him a watered down version of it. This, as we have seen, is different in kind from the compromise in using one's hand, for in adopting the use of the hand we have chosen a means perfectly adequate to the realisation of the end, while in adopting a watered down version of the Way we are compromising on the end as well. To the extent the Way is watered down, to that extent the end we realise will fall short of the perfection we aimed at in the first place. Furthermore, this is a double compromise. Firstly, one is compromising on the Way. Secondly, one is compromising on one's own standards. On our analogy, the compromise of the Way is to be justified, as we have seen, paradoxically by an appeal to the Way itself. Even leaving this aside, Mencius shows clearly that in his view there can be no justification for compromising on the Way at all. He thinks that as soon as one realises that what one has been doing is wrong one should rectify the wrong immediately and completely. Difficulty cannot be used as a pretext for allowing an injustice to go on unredressed.

Tai Ying-chih said, "In the present year we are unable to change over to a tax of one in ten and to abolish custom and market duty. What do you think if we were to make some reductions and wait for next year before we put the change fully into effect?"

Mencius said, "Here is a man who appropriates one of his neighbour's chickens every day. Someone tells him, 'This is not the way of the gentleman'. He answers, 'May I reduce this to one chicken a month and wait for next year before stopping altogether?'"

"If one realises that something is morally wrong, one should stop doing it as soon as possible. Why wait for next year?" (III.B.8)

This shows clearly that Mencius would not approve of watering down the Way in face of difficulties. Mencius feels equally strongly about not compromising on one's own standards, because he thinks that a man who is willing to do so is not the man to put others right. He says, "One who is willing to bend himself will never be able to straighten others", (III.B.1) and again, "I have never heard of anyone who can bend himself and rectify others". (V.A.7)

If we take the compromise on the Way in this fashion, the analogy with

the use of the hand is not an exact one. Firstly, in the case of the rescue of the drowning woman there is no constitutive means corresponding to the Way in the salvation of the Empire. Secondly, in deciding on the use of one's hand one is not accepting something less than the rescue of the drowning person. The hand is a perfectly adequate means for the realisation of that end. But in using a watered down version of the Way one is accepting as one's end something less than restoring the Empire to perfect order. If we wish to make the analogy more exact, we have to modify the facts of the situation concerning the rescue of the drowning person and to envisage something like this. We have no means of rescuing the drowning person outright and as a second best we decide to throw him a plank for him to hold on to for the time being. Even in this revised form the analogy does not hold completely. Whether we have the means to rescue a drowning person or not is a matter of fact, but whether we insist on the Way as means seems to be a matter of choice which depends more on our moral standards than on external circumstances.⁷

There is another way of revising the analogy to make it more exact, and that is by introducing the element of instrumental means into the case of the salvation of the Empire. In the time of Mencius, when philosophers travelled from one state to another, trying to gain a hearing, they had often to rely upon courtiers and favourites for access to princes. The temptation must have been at times great to enlist the help of those who were far from being men of honour. It is easy to argue that association with an unsavoury character was a cheap price to pay if in return a prince could be persuaded to adopt the Way in the government of his state. This would be parallel to the argument for using one's hand to rescue a drowning person though this involves the breach of a rule of conduct. We have seen that the general objection to this is that one can never hope to straighten others by first bending oneself, but Mencius has in fact something more specific to say about this problem. There were certain traditions about Confucius' behaviour in just such circumstances. In the *Analecets* there is an account of Confucius having an audience with Nan Tzu, the notorious wife of the Duke of Wei. Tzu-lu did not hide his displeasure and to placate him Confucius had to swear that there was nothing improper in what he did. (VI.28) There must have been other traditions concerning incidents of a similar nature, for we find Mencius expressing incredulity at these traditions which he took to be totally unfounded.

⁷ Mencius thinks that a prince should not look upon himself as incapable of adopting the Way in his government. This can be seen from his remark to King Hui of Liang, "For this reason, that Your Majesty fails to become a true King is a case of not doing so and not a case of not being able to do so". (I.A.7) Of the subject who thinks of his prince as incapable of becoming a good ruler, Mencius has this to say, "To say 'My prince will never be able to do it' is to do him harm". (IV.A.1)

Wan Chang asked, "According to some, when he was in Wei Confucius had as host Yung Chü and in Ch'i he had the royal attendant Chi Huan. Is this true?"

Mencius said, "No. That is not so. These were fabrications by busy-bodies. In Wei Confucius had as host Yen Ch'ou-yu. The wife of Mi Tzu was a sister of the wife of Tzu-lu. Mi Tzu said to Tzu-lu, 'If Confucius would have me for a host, he can attain high office'. Tzu-lu reported this to Confucius who said, 'There is the Decree'. Confucius advances in accordance with the rites and withdraws in accordance with *yi*, and in matters of success or failure says, 'There is the Decree'. If in spite of this he had had as hosts Yung Chü and the royal attendant Chi Huan, then he would be ignoring both *yi* and the Decree. . . .

"I have heard that one judges courtiers who are natives of the state by the people to whom they play host, and those who have come to court from abroad by the hosts they choose. If Confucius had had as hosts Yung Chü and the royal attendant Chi Huan he would not be Confucius." (V.A.8)

We can see from this passage that to Mencius the choice of one's associates is a vital matter. One may deceive oneself and think that association with influential but disreputable courtiers is only a means to a worthy end, but what is likely to happen is simply the degradation of one's own moral character to no purpose, as such people will never permit the Way to prevail for should such a thing happen they would be the first to suffer.

This last interpretation of the analogy is most likely to be the one that Mencius had in mind, and we can see that Mencius' final question "Would you have me help the Empire with my hand?" was an expression of exasperation. Ch'un-yü K'un, in suggesting that Mencius should make a compromise in order to save the Empire, did not realise that the price for such a compromise was so high as to defeat its very purpose.

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VI.A.4. Kao Tzu said, "Appetite for food and sex is nature. Benevolence is internal, not external; *yi* is external, not internal".

Mencius said, "Why do you say that benevolence is internal and *yi* is external?"

"He is old and I treat him as elder. He owes nothing of his elderliness to me, just as in treating him as white because he is white I only do so because of his whiteness which is external to me. That is why I call it external."

"The Case of *yi* is different from that of whiteness. The 'treating as white' is the same whether one treats a horse as white⁸ or a man as white.

⁸ Following Yü Yüeh I read 異於白馬之白也, repeating *pai*. See *op. cit.*, pp. 17a-17b. The same comment is also to be found in his *Ku shu yi yi chü li* 古書疑義舉例 (*Ku shu yi yi chü li wu chung* 五種, Shanghai, 1956, pp. 19-20).

But I wonder if you would think that the 'treating as old' is the same whether one is treating a horse as old or a man as elder? Furthermore, is it the one who is old that is *yi*, or is it the one who treats him as elder that is *yi*?"

"My brother I love, but the brother of a man from Ch'in I do not love. This means that the explanation lies in me. Hence I call it internal. Treating a man from Ch'u's elder as elder is no different from treating my own elder as elder. This means that the explanation⁹ lies in their elderliness. Hence I call it external."

"My relishing the roast provided by a man from Ch'in is no different from my relishing my own roast. Even with inanimate things we can find cases similar to the one under discussion. Are we, then, to say that there is something external even in the relishing of roast?"

VI.A.5. Meng Chi Tzu asked Kung-tu Tzu, "Why do you say that *yi* is internal?"

"It is the putting into practice of the respect that is in me. That is why I say it is internal."

"If a man from your village is a year older than your eldest brother, which do you respect?"

"My brother."

"In offering wine, which would you give precedence to?"

"The man from my village."

"The one you respect is the former; the one you treat as elder is the latter. This shows that it is in fact external and not internal."

Kung-tu Tzu was unable to find an answer to this and gave an account of the matter to Mencius.

Mencius said, "[Ask him,] 'Which do you respect, your uncle or your brother?' He will say, 'My uncle'. 'When your younger brother is acting the part of an ancestor at a sacrifice, then which do you respect?' He will say, 'My younger brother'. You ask him, 'What has happened to your respect for your uncle?' He will say, 'It is because of the position my younger brother occupies'. You can then say, '[In the case of the man from my

⁹ In translating *yüeh* 悅 in both instances as "explanation", I am reading it as *shuo* 說. In classical works the common form of the character was 說, whether the meaning is "to please" or "to explain". *Mencius* is exceptional in that the distinction between the two forms is generally observed in it. But even in *Mencius*, the character is not always written 悅, when it means "to please". It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the form used in any passage reflects no more than the reading adopted by some editor in the course of the transmission of the text. There is no reason why we should not depart from the existing reading when the sense of the text demands it, as in the present case. Dr. A. Waley has also expressed dissatisfaction with the reading. In his *Notes on Mencius*, he writes, "The 悅 is unintelligible. The sense seems to be 'make me the determining factor'." (*Asia Major*, New Series, Vol. I, p. 104). However, he made no suggestion as to the emendation of the reading of the character.

village] it is also because of the position he occupies. Normal respect is due to my elder brother; temporary respect is due to the man from my village.'"

When Meng Chi Tzu heard this, he said, "It is the same respect whether I am respecting my uncle or my younger brother. It is, as I have said, external and does not come from within."

Kung-tu Tzu said, "In winter one drinks hot water, in summer cold. Does that mean that even food and drink can be a matter of what is external?"

As these two arguments deal with the same problem, whether *yi* is internal or external, they are best taken together. There are some preliminary points which must be made if we are to understand these arguments.

Firstly, Kao Tzu begins by saying that appetite for food and sex is nature, and although this is not discussed in the sequel it is of some importance. The fact that Kao Tzu states this before raising the problem about *yi* shows that Kao Tzu looks upon the problem as one concerning human nature as well. To say that *yi* is external though benevolence is internal is to say that benevolence is part of human nature but *yi* is not. This implies that to say something is internal is to say that it is part of human nature. That this implication is accepted by Mencius can be seen from one remark he made in VI.A.6. Mencius says there, "Benevolence, *yi*, observance of the rites and wisdom, are not welded into me *from the outside*. I had them from the very beginning. It is simply that I never reflected upon the matter". Here Mencius implies that if something is welded into me from the outside, then it is not inherent in my nature. Conversely, whatever is inherent in my nature is internal and not external to me. Another point worth remembering is that with Kao Tzu's statement that appetite for food and sex is nature and that benevolence is internal Mencius has no quarrel. What Mencius objects to specifically is the position that *yi* is external. Mencius' view is that *yi*, no less than benevolence, is internal.

Secondly, neither Kao Tzu nor Mencius liked arguing in the abstract about benevolence and *yi*. They preferred to deal with concrete acts and situations which exemplify these abstract qualities. Mencius says elsewhere, "The content of benevolence is the serving of one's parents; the content of *yi* is obedience to one's elder brothers", (IV.B.27) and again, "There is no child who does not know love for his parents, and, when he grows up, respect for his elder brothers. The love for one's parents is benevolence; the respect for one's elder brothers is *yi*". (VII.A.15) We can paraphrase Mencius' words by saying that to love one's parents is the typical benevolent act, while to show respect for one's elders is the act which is typically *yi*. We can, then, understand why Kao Tzu and Mencius should choose to conduct their arguments in terms of the concrete examples they used.

Thirdly, when the word *yi* is translated, the argument may seem forced and artificial, for in Chinese the same word *yi* can be applied to an act which is right as well as to the agent who does the right act, while in English if we use the word "right" for the act, some other word like "righteous" or "dutiful" has to be used for the agent. The use of two different words in translating a single word in the original destroys the apparent continuity of the argument.

Furthermore, the dichotomy between "internal" and "external" is too simple for the statement or the solution of the problem. Kao Tzu and Mencius both start from the position that benevolence is internal and part of human nature, because benevolence is the outward manifestation of love which, without any doubt, is part of the original make-up of man. The question is whether *yi* is equally well-rooted in human nature. In the case of benevolence, we can decide whether an act is benevolent or not by referring to the motive. If it is motivated by love, then it is benevolent. But in the case of *yi*, the facts of the situation are more complicated. Whether an act is *yi* does not depend only on the motive, but also on whether it is fitting in the situation.¹⁰ What makes the position worse is that the very existence of a specific motive for acts that are *yi* is, at times, challenged.

This problem, however muddled it may seem to us, must have appeared to be of crucial importance to Mencius. By Mencius' day the opposition between *hsing* 性 "human nature" and *ming* 命 "the Decree of Heaven" must have become acute. The sort of view that Mencius was trying to combat must have been something like this. In human nature there are simply appetites—for food and sex, for instance—and emotions like love, and it is unnatural for man to do anything for which his nature does not equip him with a motive. It is all very well to say that it is the Decree of Heaven that man should be moral, but if it is unnatural for him to be moral it would be unreasonable to expect him to obey the Decree. For this reason the question whether *yi* was internal or external was a vital one for Mencius and his contemporaries.

Let us now examine the first argument. The starting point is the act which is typically *yi*, viz.,

- (1) the act of treating someone old as elder.

The analogy is then drawn by Kao Tzu between this and

- (2) the act of treating someone white as white.

It is argued that in (2) I treat someone white as white solely because of his whiteness which is external to me. That is to say, whether I treat him as white or not depends solely on external circumstances. There is nothing in

¹⁰ In the *Chung yung* 中庸 (ch. 14), "*yi*" is defined as "fitting" (義者宜也). This is more than just a meaning gloss by a near homophone, because the character was originally written 誼, thus showing that it was cognate with the character 宜.

my nature which can have any bearing on my act. Similarly, whether I treat someone old as elder depends solely on his age which is external to me. There is nothing in my nature which can have any bearing on this act of mine either. Therefore *yi*, of which (1) is a typical example, is external.

Mencius answers by pointing out that the analogy fails to hold. This he does by producing two parallel statements, one about (2) and one about (1), and showing that though both are true one is positive and the other negative:

(2.1) To treat a white horse as white is *no different* from treating a white man as white;

(1.1) To treat an old horse as old *is different* from treating an old man as elder.

The failure of the analogy rests on two points of difference. In treating an old man as elder, respect is evinced, but not in treating an old horse as old. In (2.1), the question of internality does not arise in either of the two cases because respect does not come in, but in (1) it is not true that nothing except circumstances external to the agent is relevant. Respect is relevant and respect is internal to the agent. Furthermore, the term *yi* applies to the agent as well as to the act. (In this respect *yi* is like benevolence.) Kao Tzu's position is unsatisfactory on two counts. Firstly, it is based on *yi* only as applied to an act. Secondly, even there, he has failed to take into account the fact that an act which is *yi* involves respect which is a quality of the agent.

Having failed in his analogy between an act which is *yi* and an act which is indubitably external, *i.e.*, between (1) and (2), Kao Tzu then tries to show that there are differences between an act which is *yi* and a benevolent act. For this purpose he brings in

(3) the act of loving one's brother.

He makes two parallel statements, one about (3) and one about (1), and shows that though one is positive and the other negative both are true:

(3.2) I love my brother but I do not love the brother of a man from Ch'in;

(1.2) I treat the elder of a man from Ch'u as elder in the same way as I treat my own elder as elder.

Since (3) is agreed by both parties to be a typical benevolent act and benevolence is indubitably internal, this discrepancy between (1) and (3), in Kao Tzu's view, shows that *yi* is not internal. In fact, Kao Tzu goes on to say, it shows more. It shows positively that *yi* is external. Why do I love my brother and not the brother of a man from Ch'in? The explanation lies in his being *my* brother. In other words, I love him because of his relation to me. "The explanation lies in me." On the other hand, I treat the elder of a man from Ch'u as elder just as I treat an elder who is my own kith and kin as elder, because in either case my treatment is due to his age and this is a

circumstance external to me. If my treatment of an elder as elder depends solely on external circumstances, then, it is concluded, *yi* is external.

Again, Mencius accepts what Kao Tzu has said about the facts as true but tries to show that it does not prove what Kao Tzu claims that it proves. In order to do this, Mencius brings in a fourth kind of act,

(4) the act of relishing roast.

Of this there can be no doubt as to its internality on the part of Kao Tzu, because he has said at the outset that appetite for food is nature. Yet of this one can make precisely the same statement as about (1), a statement which is supposed to prove that *yi* is external:

(4.2) I relish the roast provided by a man from Ch'in in the same way as I relish my own roast.

Thus Kao Tzu failed to establish the externality of *yi* either through the similarities (1) shows to (2) or through the dissimilarities (1) shows to (3). Mencius refuted the former by showing that there are dissimilarities between (1) and (2) overlooked by Kao Tzu, and the latter by showing that there are dissimilarities between (4) and (3) of the same kind as between (1) and (3), though there is no question of acts of relishing food being external.

The second argument opens with Kung-tu Tzu's statement that he considered *yi* to be internal because in performing acts which are *yi* he was putting into practice his respect. However, it consists mainly of Meng Chi Tzu's attempt to establish the externality of *yi*. Meng Chi Tzu's argument is as follows. There is a man from my village who is a year senior to my eldest brother. Although under normal circumstances I respect my brother, in offering wine I give precedence to the man from my village. My treatment of the latter is determined by external circumstances. As this is an act which is *yi*, *yi* is external. Apart from this, there is a further point which Meng Chi Tzu seems to be making by implication. By his careful wording he seems to imply that there is a distinction between showing respect and treating as elder: "The one you *respect* is the former; the one you *treat as elder* is the latter." The line of reasoning appears to be as follows. Respect is a quality of the agent and so any action which evinces respect is internal. But whether I treat the man from my village as elder depends on the occasion, and since this is the case my treatment varies according to external circumstances. It, therefore, cannot evince respect which is a permanent disposition. If respect is not involved in all acts which are *yi* then it cannot be the basis of the internality of *yi*.

Mencius replies by providing a new example. One respects one's uncle, but when one's younger brother is acting the part of an ancestor at a sacrifice then one respects one's younger brother. On the surface, Mencius seems to be providing an example of his own which reinforces Meng Chi

Tzu's case, but in fact he was undermining the distinction between respecting and treating as elder that Meng Chi Tzu was trying to establish. In his own example Mencius has substituted the younger brother for the fellow villager. There is no question of treating one's younger brother as elder, for even when he is acting the part of an ancestor he is still one's junior. What is due to him in his special position is respect. Thus in Mencius' example, though one's act is still determined by external circumstances, it nevertheless evinces respect. This Mencius explains by the distinction between normal and temporary respect. That the act of treating the man from my village as elder is determined by external circumstances, instead of showing that it does not evince respect, shows only that it evinces temporary respect. Meng Chi Tzu seems willing to accept this distinction between normal and temporary respect but argues that, in that case, acts which are *yi* are external in spite of the fact that they evince respect because they depend on external circumstances. Mencius' reply is that even of

(5) the act of drinking

it is true that it is conditioned by external circumstances:

(5.3) In winter one drinks hot water, in summer cold.

Of (1) which is also conditioned by external circumstances we can equally say:

(1.3) Normally I respect my eldest brother, but in offering wine I give precedence to the man from my village.

Again, by showing that (5.3) can be said of (5) which is indubitably internal, Mencius argues that the fact that (1.3) can be said of (1) does not show that *yi* is external. Furthermore, by drawing an analogy between (1) and (5), Mencius is returning to Kung-tu Tzu's opening remark: "I put into practice my respect." As in an act which is *yi* one puts into practice one's respect, so in an act of drinking one is motivated by one's thirst.

The arguments are obviously not conclusive, but this is in part due to Mencius' limited purpose. All he set out to do, in both cases, was to show that his opponents failed to establish the externality of *yi*. He did not attempt to go beyond this and to establish positively that *yi* was internal. The main reason for the inconclusiveness is, however, one we have already touched upon. The dichotomy between internal and external was too simple for the facts of the situation. Such a dichotomy could only work if there was only one characteristic or one set of characteristics which is to be found in one kind of act but not in another. In the present case, there are a number of characteristics, some of which are sometimes present and sometimes absent in acts of the same kind. In the course of the arguments, three such characteristics are mentioned. (1) The motive. In the case of benevolent acts, it is assumed that this is love. In the case of eating and drinking it is assumed to be appetite. According to Mencius, the motive is respect in the

case of all acts which are *yi*, and this his opponents either deny or deny to be significant. (2) There are the external circumstances. These are irrelevant to benevolent acts. But in the case of acts which are *yi* these determine the matter of precedence in particular situations. In the case of drink, these decide what we want in different seasons. (3) The relation which the object of respect has to the agent. In the case of benevolence, the patient is a relative of the agent. In the case of *yi*, there need be no special relationship at all. In the case of food, there is no special relationship either. As acts which stem indubitably from what is internal show no uniformity in the possession or otherwise of these characteristics, so acts which are *yi* display an ambivalence in the similarity and dissimilarity they show to these acts. The result is that no conclusion can be drawn from the success or failure of these analogies.

The problem whether *yi* is external in contrast to benevolence which is internal must have been an issue of some importance, as we find that the later Mohists were also interested in it. In the logical chapters of *Mo tzu*, viz., chapters 40 to 45, there are three places where this problem is discussed. I shall quote only the longer passage from the *Ching shuo hsia* chapter, because this is comparatively free from textual difficulties and is a lucid statement of the Mohist position:

Benevolence is loving; *yi* is benefiting. He who loves and he who benefits are here; he who is loved and he who is benefited are there. Of the one who loves and the one who benefits we cannot say that one is internal and the other external. Neither can we say this of the one who is loved and the one who is benefited. To say¹¹ that benevolence is internal and *yi* is external is to select the one who loves and the one who is benefited. This is selection with no consistent basis. It is like saying that the left eye goes out and the right eye comes in. (*Ssu pu ts'ung k'an* 四部叢刊 ed., 10.21a-21b).

At first sight the Mohists seem to have brought order to an otherwise untidy problem, but on closer examination one sees that this is achieved only by ignoring certain factors that Kao Tzu and Mencius took into account. In defining *yi* in the way they do, the Mohists are looking upon it as exactly parallel to benevolence. As benevolence is a disposition to love, so is *yi* a disposition to benefit, others. Both are relations obtaining between an agent and a patient. In respect of the agent both benevolence and *yi* are internal; in respect of the patient both are external. In the view of the Mohists, whoever says that *yi* is external though admitting that benevolence is internal must be guilty of inconsistent selection. He must be taking the patient in the case of *yi* and the agent in the case of benevolence. Though the Mohists were defending the same position as Mencius, the basis for their defence is

¹¹ Read 爲 as 謂.

certainly unacceptable to Mencius. Mencius was quite clear that *yi* was an attribute of the agent and could not possibly be applied to the patient. "Is it the one who is old that is *yi* or is it the one who treats him as elder that is *yi*?" Mencius knew full well that when both benevolence and *yi* were applied to the agent there was no problem. But he was also aware of the fact ignored by the Mohists that *yi* applied equally to actions, and it was here that a case could be made out for challenging its internality. Part of the conditions for an action being *yi* is that it should be "fitting", and this means that whether an action is *yi* depends, to no small measure, on external circumstances. It is from this that Kao Tzu and others argued that *yi* was external, and it is also with this that Mencius grappled when he defended the internality of *yi*. For the Mohists to say that the problem rested on the failure to distinguish between agent and patient is both to misrepresent Mencius and his opponents and to distort the usage of the word *yi*. This misrepresentation is due to the refusal on the part of the Mohists to take into account certain factors involved in the problem of *yi* and this refusal is, in turn, due to two features of the Mohist position. Firstly, they define *yi* as benefiting, and by so doing render it independent of the ethical code. A "fitting" action depends on external circumstances in a way a "benefiting" action does not. This definition of *yi* is certain to be unacceptable to either Mencius or Kao Tzu. Secondly, by rendering *yi* similar to benevolence, the Mohists were ignoring its applicability to actions and looked upon it solely as an attribute of agents. This emphasis on the agent to the exclusion of actions is a marked feature of Mohist moral thinking. Here are some passages from the logical chapters in which this feature can be clearly seen:

Canon: *Yi* is benefiting. (10.1a.6)

Explanation: The will takes the Empire as its responsibility¹² and the ability is capable of benefiting it. There is no need to be in office¹³. (10.6b.6)

Some live long, some die young, but they benefit the Empire to the same extent.¹⁴ (11.7a.2)

Even when a man is in as exalted a position as that of an emperor, he does not benefit the Empire to a greater extent than a common man.¹⁵ If two sons serve their parents and one meets with a good year while the other meets with a bad, then the one benefits¹⁶ his parents to no greater extent

¹² Emend 芬 to 分.

¹³ Cf. Canon: To be filial is to benefit one's parents. (10.1b.1) Explanation: One takes one's parents as one's responsibility (see previous note), and one's ability is capable of benefiting them. There is no need to succeed. (10.7a.2-3)

¹⁴ Emend 指若 to 相若.

¹⁵ Emend 正夫 to 匹夫.

¹⁶ Emend 其親也 to 其利親也.

than the other. As it is not through his action that more has resulted, this does not add to his merit.¹⁷ External circumstances¹⁸ are powerless to add to the benefit for which I am responsible. (11.6a.2-5)

All these passages show that in the view of the later Mohists external circumstances are irrelevant to the moral assessment of the character of the agent. So long as a man has both the will and the capacity to benefit the world or his parents, whether in fact he succeeds or not is immaterial, because success—and even opportunity—depends on favourable conditions over which he has no control and for which he can take no credit.¹⁹ Thus *yi* is removed from the contaminating influence of external circumstances only through denying it application to actions. In this way the problem with which Mencius and his opponents were concerned was by-passed by the Mohists. This hardly justifies their claim that the problem itself rested on confusion and inconsistency.

* * * *

Not only is one of the problems discussed between Mencius and Kao Tzu also discussed by the later Mohists but the method of argument as well. In the *Hsiao ch'ü* chapter²⁰ we find logicians of the Mohist school writing on the different methods of argument amongst which is to be found the method of analogy:

Analogy is to put forth another²¹ thing in order to illuminate this thing. Parallel is to set [two] propositions side by side and show that they will both do. (11.8a.3-5)

Here an analogy drawn between two things is distinguished from one drawn between two statements. We have seen that both methods were used by Mencius. The analogy between "That which is inborn is what is meant by 'nature'" and "White is what is meant by 'white'" is an analogy between two statements and would come under "parallel" in the Mohist classification.

The Mohist chapter goes on to discuss the method:

¹⁷ This sentence is obscure, as the text is almost certainly corrupt.

¹⁸ Emend 執 to 執.

¹⁹ The Mohist position that in moral assessment it is the agent and not the actions that should be emphasised seems to have some relevance to a problem concerning moral goodness in Western philosophy. If we define moral goodness as goodness which is realised only when an agent chooses to do his duty from the motive of dutifulness the question arises whether a man who acts dutifully more often than another necessarily realises more moral goodness. Those who feel uneasy about returning an affirmative answer may find a certain appeal in the Mohist position.

²⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the *Hsiao ch'ü* see my *Some logical problems in ancient China* (*Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. LIII, 1952-53, pp. 189-204).

²¹ Read 也 as 他.

Things may have similarities, but it does not follow that therefore they are completely similar. When propositions are parallel, there is a limit beyond which this cannot be pushed.²² (11.8a. 7-8)

This is a very good description of the method as it was used by Mencius. In his hands the method of analogy was used to throw light on things which were otherwise obscure. It is by proposing analogies and showing in what way they broke down that this was achieved. That the aim was to arrive at the truth can be seen from the fact that it was not always analogies proposed by his opponents that were shown to be inadequate in this way. We have seen a case of Mencius suggesting an analogy to illustrate his opponent's thesis, and this was criticised after his opponent accepted it.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that the use of analogy is often the only helpful method in elucidating something which is, in its nature, obscure. Two examples come readily to mind. Theories about the mind are often presented through the medium of models, and so are physical theories of the atom. In either case the models are not only helpful in enabling us to see something of the "structure" of the mind or the atom which is not open to inspection by the senses, but also instructive in the way they break down.

I hope enough has been said to show that in the fourth and third centuries B.C. in China the method of analogy, indispensable for certain types of philosophical problems, was in wide use,²³ so much so that the only surviving treatise on the methods of argument deals with it in some detail. Seen in the light of the Mohist treatise, Mencius was, indeed, a very skilful user of this method, who never failed to throw light on philosophical issues that were discussed. This is an impression somewhat different from the ineffective debater that he is sometimes made out to be.

²² Emend 正 to 止.

²³ There is a story about the famous sophist Hui Shih in the *Shuo yüan* which illustrates this point:

Someone said to the King of Liang, "Hui Tzu is very good at using analogies when putting forth his views. If your Majesty could stop him from using analogies he will be at a loss what to say".

The King said, "Very well. I will do that".

The following day when he received Hui Tzu the King said to him, "If you have anything to say, I wish you would say it plainly and not resort to analogies".

Hui Tzu said, "Suppose there is a man here who does not know what a *tan* is, and you say to him, 'A *tan* is like a *tan*', would he understand?"

The King said, "No".

"Then were you to say to him, 'A *tan* is like a bow, but has a strip of bamboo in place of the string', would he understand?"

The King said, "Yes. He would".

Hui Tzu said, "A man who explains necessarily makes intelligible that which is not known by comparing it with what is known. Now Your Majesty says, 'Do not use analogies'. This would make the task impossible".

The King said, "Well said". (SPTK ed., 11.6b-7a)

Hui Shih's explanation of the function of analogy can be seen to be similar to that given in the *Hsiao ch'ü*.