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A Root Split in Two: *Mengzi* 3A5 Reconsidered

The Master said, “He is not one of my followers.
Little ones, I give you leave to strike the drum
and assail him.” 子曰非吾徒也小子鳴鼓而攻之可也

Lunyu 論語 11.16

A snake most certainly has no legs.
How then can you, sir, provide it
with legs? 蛇固無足子安能爲之足

Zhanguo ce 戰國策, Book 9

INTRODUCTION

The antagonism between the Ru 儒 and the Mo 墨 is a prominent motif that runs through the history of pre-Qin philosophical literature. Mo school philosophers found the Ru advocacy of ritual excessive and their emphasis on the family selfish. For their part, Ru school thinkers argued that the Mo school promotion of frugal policies disastrous and their support of altruism a denial of the filial respect owed to parents. Among the several texts that attest to the verbal attacks by the followers of one against the doctrines and even the adherents of the other, *Mengzi* 3A5 is especially noteworthy since it records an exchange in which the Ruhist Mengzi 孟子 and the Mohist Yi Zhi 夷之 make claims and respond to one another’s statements in a way that comes close to a debate.¹

¹ See Jiao Xun 焦循, *Mengzi zhengyi* 孟子正義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987; hereafter *MZ*) 11, pp. 401–8. In its opening line the text refers to Yi Zhi as a *Mo zhe* 墨者, a “Mohist,” and at a later point in the text, Yi Zhi refers to a *Ru* 儒, “Ruhist” or “Confucian,” teaching that he believes Mengzi should acknowledge as part of the body of learning he esteems. Exchanges between Mozi 墨子 and what appear to be followers of the way of the Ru are found in some of the so-called “Analects” chapters of the *Mozi* 墨子, i.e., chapters 46 to 49. See John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel, *Mozi: A Study and Translation of the Ethical and Political Writings* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 2013), pp. 326–86. I first presented this paper at the World Philosophy Congress in Athens in August, 2013, as part of a panel organized by the Institute of Philosophy of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. I subsequently gave revised versions of the paper at a workshop on Mohism organized by Professor Huang Kuan-yun at the National Tsinghua University in Taiwan and at an article-reading workshop organized by the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Sydney. I am grateful to all the participants of these meetings for their comments.

If one hesitates to label the exchange a debate – or even an argument – that is because it is not a face-to-face confrontation but takes place through an intermediary named Xu Bi 徐辟, who was probably one of Mengzi's disciples.² Another reason is that, in terms of the lengths of the statements made by each side, the conversation is heavily lopsided in favor of Mengzi: he begins and ends the substantive part of the exchange, and the texts sandwiched in between his remarks comprise the small space afforded Yi Zhi for his reply to Mengzi's initial attack.³ Indeed, though the passage is significant as a moment when representatives of the Ru and the Mo have a go at each other's claims, in relatively recent times *Mengzi* 3A5 has most attracted the attention of those interested in understanding Mengzi's moral philosophy and the nature of his disagreement with Mohist doctrines.⁴

² Zhao Qi 趙岐 (d. 201), author of the earliest surviving commentary to the text of *Mengzi*, identifies Xu Bi as Mengzi's disciple; *MZ* 11, p. 401.

³ By comparison with the account of Mengzi's famous Book 6 face-to-face debate on human nature with Gaozi 告子, who was quite possibly in his youth a first-generation disciple of Mozi, *Mengzi* 3A5 reads like a crafted literary piece. It provides the circumstances of the exchange, characterizes Mengzi's opponent, and notes in its conclusion his reactions to Mengzi's statements. For Gaozi, see David Nivison, "Philosophical Voluntarism in Fourth-Century China," *The Ways of Confucianism* (Chicago: Open Court, 1986), pp. 121, 130–32, and Knoblock and Riegel, *Mozi*, pp. 338, 350, 352, and 366.

⁴ See David Nivison, "Motivation and Moral Action in Mencius," *The Ways of Confucianism*, pp. 101–4; David Nivison, "Two Roots or One," *The Ways of Confucianism*, 133–48; Kwong-loi Shun, "Mencius' Criticism of Mohism: An Analysis of 'Meng Tzu' 3A:5," *Philosophy East and West* 41.2 (1991), pp. 203–14; idem, *Mencius and Early Chinese Thought* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1997), pp. 127–35; David B. Wong, "Reasons and Analogical Reasoning in Mengzi," in Xiusheng Liu and Philip J. Ivanhoe, eds., *Essays on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), pp. 203–4; Kim Myeong-seok, "What *Ceyin zhi xin* (Compassion/Familial Affection) Really Is," *Dao* 9 (2010), pp. 407–25; and Jeffrey Riegel, "Master Yi versus Master Meng," in Knoblock and Riegel, *Mozi*, pp. 396–99. Mengzi's exchange with Yi Zhi probably occurred during what Watanabe Takashi 渡邊卓 has identified as the middle period in the development of pre-Qin Mohist thought; *Kodai Chūgoku shisō no kenkyū* 古代中國思想の研究: *Kōshi den no keisei to Ju Boku shūdan no shisō to kōdō* 孔子傳の形成と儒墨集團の思想と行動 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1973), pp. 514–18, 545. The comments that follow should be read primarily against the contributions of Nivison and Shun. Though Nivison offers important interpretations of problematic passages in *Mengzi* 3A5, he is less concerned with the language and structure of the passage than he is in using it as a springboard for a discussion of the problems involved in how both Mengzi and Yi Zhi develop an emotion like love into a means of fulfilling moral obligations. Shun builds on Nivison's work but is much more concerned with addressing what he takes to be instances of inconsistency and incoherence in *Mengzi* 3A5. Some of the conclusions I reached in my earlier study – published as a brief appendix to my work on the *Mozi* – are mistaken and my purpose in this paper is as much about correcting myself as it is about suggesting the problems with the interpretations and analysis of predecessors whose work I respect. Although they are not specifically related to interpreting *Mengzi* 3A5, two other scholarly studies provide a good background for understanding the issues at stake in the passage: David B. Wong, "Universalism versus Love with Distinctions: An Ancient Debate Revived," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 16.3–4 (1989), pp. 251–72; and Dan Robins, "Mohist Care," *Philosophy East and West* 62.1 (2012), pp. 60–91.

Nothing further beyond *Mengzi* 3A5 is known about Yi Zhi, and why he had requested an audience with Mengzi is unclear. Most likely he was imitating Mozi 墨子 (active in the fifth century BC) and his first-generation disciples in attempting to persuade an opponent, through force of argument, to cast aside his own learning and adopt Mohist doctrines. Mengzi may have been an attractive target, having as he did a reputation for being *hao bian* 好辯, “fond of disputation,” especially when it came to confronting the followers of Mozi and of Yang Zhu 楊朱 (ca. 350 BC).⁵ In 3B9, for example, Mengzi condemns the Mohist doctrine of “impartial love” (*jian'ai* 兼愛) as a denial of one’s father and Yang Zhu’s selfish formulation “I do it for me” (*wei wo* 爲我) as a denial of one’s ruler.⁶

When exactly Mengzi’s indirect exchange with Yi Zhi took place cannot be determined with certainty. It is possible that it occurred late in Mengzi’s life – that is, in the last few decades of the fourth century BC – and that a more junior Yi Zhi had sought out Mengzi because he was a senior, well-established philosopher. Upon learning of Yi Zhi’s request for an audience, Mengzi initially put him off by claiming illness: “When I have recovered I will go to see him. Master Yi should not come here.”⁷ (It is doubtful that Yi Zhi was a figure of great significance in his own right or that Mengzi knew much about him beyond his Mohist leanings; otherwise he might have immediately granted Yi Zhi an audience.) Undeterred by what others might have seen as a rebuff, Yi Zhi persisted and visited again on another day.⁸ After some com-

⁵ In his commentary to *Mengzi* 3A5, Zhao Qi notes that Yi Zhi wished an audience with Mengzi in order to engage in disputation with him. Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Mengzi jizhu* 孟子集註, *Siku quanshu huiyao* 四庫全書書要 edn., vol. 72 (rpt. Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1988), p. 135, sees Yi Zhi less as an opponent and more as someone uneasy about his own learning. Zhu thinks this may account for why, at the conclusion of the exchange, Yi Zhi appears to acknowledge the superiority of Mengzi’s argument.

⁶ For Mengzi’s reputation as someone fond of arguing, see *Mengzi* 3B9; *MZ* 13, pp. 456–57. Mengzi denies that he is “fond of disputation” and says he engages in arguments only in order to ensure that the Way of Kongzi will flourish in the face of attacks by Mo and Yang. For Yang Zhu, see A. C. Graham, *Later Mohist Logic, Ethics, and Science* (Hong Kong: Chinese U.P., 1978), pp. 15–18. Some have argued that *jian'ai* is best translated as “inclusive care.” See, for example, Dan Robins, “Mohist Care.” I find “care” too narrow a translation to cover all the contexts in which the term *ai* occurs. “Inclusive” is clearly a possible translation for *jian* but the problem with it is that opponents of the Mohists, such as Mengzi, did not hold that love should be exclusive but rather that it should be partial to one’s own parents and family. See below, n. 15.

⁷ *MZ* 11, pp. 401–2: 病愈，我且往見。夷子不來。Jiao Xun reads the second sentence as part of Mengzi’s instructions to Xu Bi.

⁸ Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, p. 135, suggests that Mengzi used being ill as an excuse to test the sincerity of Yi Zhi’s intentions. It is more likely that Mengzi genuinely did not wish to meet Yi Zhi in person finding his philosophy offensive. (If Yi Zhi dressed in the usual Mohist uniform of wooden clogs and hempen robes Mengzi would no doubt have found meeting him

ments by Mengzi about the need to set Yi Zhi straight so that the Way he advocated – that is, the Way of Kongzi 孔子 (551–479 BC)⁹ – will flourish, Mengzi aggressively launched into an assault on the Mohist doctrine that advocated frugal burials.

There are basically two problems that are addressed in the following notes on the passage. The first is the two-fold question of what Mengzi says about Yi Zhi's adherence to the Mohist doctrine of frugal burials in his forceful opening attack and why Yi Zhi responds as he does. Some have claimed that Yi Zhi does not fully address Mengzi's claims; I argue that, when Mengzi's claims are properly understood, Yi Zhi does fully respond to the verbal challenge that Mengzi poses, and find that this part of the text is as coherent and carefully structured as the remainder. The second problem involves the meaning of the key two-word phrases *yi ben* 一本 and *er ben* 二本 that occur in Mengzi's final rebuttal to Yi Zhi. I argue that earlier studies – including my own – have failed to interpret them correctly and as a result have not quite grasped what *Mengzi* 3A5 tells us about Mengzi's moral thought and his specific objections to Mohists such as Yi Zhi. In a sense both of the issues on which this reconsideration of the passage focuses involve problems of translation. Unless it is based on accurate renderings of the original Chinese text, the most nuanced philosophical analysis is of limited use in increasing our understanding of early Chinese thought.¹⁰

Closely connected to the solutions to the two problems of interpretation offered in this paper is the argument that Mengzi's major purpose in disputing Yi Zhi's views is not simply to point out the latter's hypocrisy, to identify him as a lapsed Mohist, or to ridicule contradictions in his claims. Mengzi disputes Yi Zhi in order to launch what he intends as devastating attacks on the fundamental Mohist doctrines of

even more distasteful.) Since Yi Zhi persisted, Mengzi had no choice, though he still avoided having to meet him in person by conducting the interview through Xu Bi.

⁹ Compare *Mengzi* 3B9, *MZ* 13, pp. 456–57. Mengzi's comments about the need to set Yi Zhi straight so that his own Way will flourish may seem a formulaic justification for why Mengzi is willing to argue with Yi Zhi but I take them as a genuine expression of Mengzi's intentions and of his own sense of mission.

¹⁰ I have consulted the translations of James Legge, *The Works of Mencius*, in *The Chinese Classics*, Volume II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 257–60; Uchino Kumaichirō 内野熊一郎, *Mōshi* 孟子 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1965) pp. 192–97; W. A. C. H. Dobson, *Mencius: A New Translation Arranged and Annotated for the General Reader* (Toronto: U. Toronto P., 1966), pp. 106–7; D. C. Lau, *Mencius: Translated with an Introduction and Notes* (London: Penguin Books 1970), pp. 62–63; Bryan W. Van Norden, *Mengzi: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), pp. 73–75; and Irene Bloom, *Mencius: Edited and with an Introduction by Philip J. Ivanhoe* (N.Y.C.: Columbia U.P., 2009), pp. 59–60. The studies of *Mengzi* 3A5 by Nivison and Shun referred to in n. 4 also involve translating it.

frugal burials and impartial love. Chief among these is Mengzi's claim that his practice of the impartial love of others has caused Yi Zhi to divide – and hence diminish and destroy – the emotions of care and concern that properly deployed can be extended and amplified so that they protect first and foremost one's own kin and, to a lesser degree, others and their kin.

MENGZI'S OPENING ATTACK AND YI ZHI'S REPLY

Mengzi's initial criticism of Yi Zhi runs as follows: "I have heard that Master Yi is a Mohist. In their regulating funerals, Mohists regard frugality as the proper way. Since Master Yi wishes to use this doctrine to change the world, how could he take it to be wrong or disreputable? This being so, were Master Yi to bury a parent lavishly, he would be serving that parent in a manner he himself demeans."¹¹ Mengzi is claiming that as a devoted Mohist who accepts the Mohist doctrine of frugal burials, were Yi Zhi to provide his own parents with a lavish burial, he could find himself in the ludicrous position of having his generous treatment of a parent regarded as demeaning and hence unfilial. Mengzi is being more than a little mischievous in offering such an ironic – perhaps even outlandish – hypothesis for Yi Zhi's consideration.¹² But he is nonetheless leveling the serious charge that those who adopt doctrines that, according to the Mohists, will improve the lot of the world at large will, in one way or another, find themselves hindered in their capacity to treat their own parents in the proper fashion.

As early as the commentaries of Zhu Xi (1130–1200), many readers of the text – including all the authors of the various studies and translations I have consulted in preparing these notes – have understood Mengzi to have claimed that Yi Zhi actually ignored Mohist doctrine on frugal burials and buried his own parents lavishly.¹³ Zhu Xi concludes from this that Mengzi was accusing Yi Zhi of being not fully committed to Mohism and that the balance of Mengzi's criticism of Yi Zhi was based upon this. But Zhao Qi, who died in 201 AD, long ago identified this part of Mengzi's criticism of Yi Zhi as a hypothetical argument.¹⁴ Quite apart from whatever authority one wishes to attri-

¹¹ *MZ* 11, p. 402: 吾聞夷子墨者。墨之治喪也以薄爲其道也。夷子思以易天下豈以爲非是而不貴也。然而夷子葬其親厚則是以所賤事親也。

¹² One can almost sense Mengzi smiling to himself as he assembles the suppositions and claims that make up his opening sarcastic remarks.

¹³ Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, p. 135. For the studies and translations to which I allude see above, nn. 4 and 10.

¹⁴ Zhao Qi's use of *shi ru* 使如, "if it were the case that . . .," in his commentary quoted

bute to Zhao Qi by virtue of the antiquity of his commentary, it seems highly unlikely that Yi Zhi – already characterized by Mengzi to have been a devoted missionary of the Mohist cause – would have according to Mengzi disregarded fundamental Mohist laws on frugal burials; and that, if he had, Mengzi could have known of it. What bothered Mengzi about Mohism were its doctrines not the reputed hypocrisy of its adherents. And if Mengzi had leveled this charge against Yi Zhi as concerning a fact, then one could reasonably expect Yi Zhi to address it. That Yi Zhi does not is proof that he did not understand Mengzi’s statement to have been a real claim.

Yi Zhi replies to Mengzi’s actual criticism – that to embrace Mohist doctrine inevitably limits one’s capacity to care for one’s own parents – and he does so by referring to “love without gradations” (*ai wu cha deng* 愛無差等), Yi Zhi’s way of labeling the doctrine known elsewhere as “impartial love.”¹⁵ He responds to Mengzi (via Master Xu): “According to the Way of the Ru, ‘the men of antiquity [treated others] as if they were protecting a newborn child.’¹⁶ What does this mean? I, Zhi, take it to refer to love without gradations that I distribute beginning first with my own kin.”¹⁷ Yi Zhi makes two points about

at *MZ* 11, p. 402, signals that he takes Mengzi to be speaking hypothetically. For the proper reading of Zhao Qi’s explanation see the commentary of Jiao Xun 焦循 (1763–1820) at *MZ* 11, p. 403. Jiao says that Zhao reads the line in question as a hypothetical (*she ci* 設辭). Jiao notes that other “recent” scholars – by which he presumably meant Zhu Xi and those who followed him – take the line to be not a hypothetical but a statement of fact, an interpretation that Jiao himself allows as a possibility. Since Zhao Qi regards Mengzi’s statement about frugal burials as a hypothetical, one should not expect to find in his commentary an explanation of why Yi Zhi does not address that statement in his reply. Commentators who have concluded that there is a lacuna in Yi Zhi’s reply do not understand Mengzi’s statement as hypothetical but rather as a factual claim.

¹⁵ Yi Zhi’s referring to the doctrine of “impartial love” as “love without gradations” reminds us that the Mohist disagreement with the Ru did not have to do with a claim that love shown to others ought to be more inclusive but rather that it ought to be provided equally to parents and others to whom one is not related. The Ru did not claim that people naturally love parents exclusively but that they love them more. That position is represented, for example, by Mengzi’s subsequent rhetorical question, “Does Master Yi truly regard someone’s affection for the child of his older brother as equal to his affection for a neighbor’s child?” The Mo take the position that in spite of this natural tendency to favor one’s own family – which they themselves appear to accept as fact – people ought to care for all equally and impartially.

¹⁶ Yi Zhi is quoting from an old Zhou document that may or may not have been transmitted in its entirety in the *Book of Documents*. The passage is now found in *Shangshu zhushu*, “Kang gao” 康誥, in *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏, ed. Ruan Yuan 阮元 (rpt. Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1973) 14, p. 202.

¹⁷ *MZ* 11, p. 403: 徐子以告夷子。夷子曰儒者之道古之人若保赤子。此言何謂也。之則以為愛無差等。施由親始。It is probable that Mengzi’s ironic suggestion that practicing Mohism might put Yi Zhi in the position of treating his parents with disrespect was intended to provoke Yi Zhi into talking about impartial love, since elsewhere in his text Mengzi criticizes the doctrine and, in the Mohist context, impartial love is the doctrine that most explores the Mohist calculus for equally balancing concern for one’s own family with concern for others.

the doctrine of “impartial love”: first, he says that the old Ru teaching about how rulers in antiquity protected all their people as they would a child shows that maxims the Ru esteem advocate the impartial love of others; second, Yi Zhi claims that the love he shows to his own parents is the starting point for the ungraded love of others and so he cannot possibly neglect his parents: his love for them is part of his practice of the doctrine.

More noteworthy than Yi Zhi’s contention that a Ru teaching on loving others as one would a newborn child is actually about love without gradations – a claim that Mengzi will easily knock back in his subsequent rebuttal – is the claim that he “distributes” (*shi* 施) this love starting with his own parents. The transitive verb *shi* is closely related to – perhaps even derived from – its intransitive sense of describing how things spread and branch out, for example creepers and invasive vines like kudzu.¹⁸ Saying that he “distributes” *ai* 愛 suggests that Yi Zhi (and others) conceived of it as comparable to a material thing that one spreads around. This is not surprising. For Mengzi as well as the followers of Mozi, one’s love, care, and concern for others were not simply matters of possessing certain capacities or feeling particular sentiments; they were the acts of providing food, clothing, and shelter to family members using resources that most people possessed in limited quantities. How early thinkers like Mengzi reckoned that the natural performance of such acts could be transformed into a genuine moral sensibility – whereby one did not only what one felt like doing but what one ought to do – has been a question asked by scholars of Mengzi and thus looms large, for example, in the work of David Nivison.¹⁹

Maintaining, as Yi Zhi did, that his love for others recognizes “no gradations” would mean that his distributing it consisted of dividing it in equal portions, like a lump of clay or dough, splitting it in two so that he could supply his parents as well as the parents of others. Thus Yi Zhi’s choice of words reveals that while his practice of impartial love may begin with his own parents, it inevitably diminishes the amount of love that remains for them.²⁰

¹⁸ Instances of *shi* in the meaning of “spread” or “branch out” are found in the ancient *Shi-jing* 詩經 or *Book of Songs*. See, for example, the opening line of “Ge tan” 葛覃 (Mao no. 2), *Maoshi zhushu* 毛詩注疏, 1B.2: 葛之覃兮, 施于中谷. “The kudzu, so expansive, it spreads into the valley.” Another example is “Kui bian” 頽弁 (Mao no. 217), *Maoshi zhushu* 14B.44: 蔦與女蘿, 施于松柏. “The mistletoe and dodder spread over the pine and cypress.”

¹⁹ See Nivison, “Motivation and Moral Action in Mencius” and “Two Roots or One.” Nivison’s work on moral cultivation in *Mengzi* has spawned a host of other works on the subject. For examples see some of the articles included in Liu and Ivanhoe, eds., *Essays on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi*.

²⁰ Zhu Xi levels the additional charge that, though Yi Zhi tailored his claim that his im-

MENGZI'S REBUTTAL

When Xu Bi (on whom, see above) communicates Yi Zhi's words to Mengzi, the latter replies first with a rhetorical question that picks up on the image of a newborn child used in Yi Zhi's remarks and scoffs at the notion that a person would under ordinary circumstances regard the child of a neighbor with exactly the same amount of affection and concern that he does the child of his older brother: "Does Master Yi truly regard someone's affection for the child of his older brother as equal to his affection for a neighbor's newborn child? He is selecting a case like the following: a newborn child, crawling about, is on the verge of falling into a well; this is not due to any fault of the child."²¹ Mengzi counters Yi Zhi's quote of a Ru teaching on loving others as one does a newborn child by referring to the example of a child about to fall into a well. In the philosophical discourse of Mengzi's time, mention of a "neighbor's child" was evidently understood as a sort of shorthand reference to the paradigmatic question of what one does upon seeing a neighbor's child crawling towards a well and thus in mortal danger not through any fault of its own.²² Mengzi's reference to it in 3A5 is meant to illustrate the point that, while there are extraordinary circumstances in which one should be intensely concerned for a stranger – as intense as the concern one has for a parent – one ought not confuse such mo-

partial love of others begins with his own parents as a reply to Mengzi's initial attack, the fact that he said that he began with his own parents betrayed the fact that his love was in fact not impartial or ungraded but favored his parents. Throughout his interpretation of the passage, Zhu Xi is concerned with portraying Yi Zhi as a weak Mohist, not genuinely committed to Mohist doctrine and hence hypocritical in his practice of it. See Li Jingde 黎靖德, ed., *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), vol. 4, j. 55, p. 1313. See the Appendix, below, for a fuller treatment of Zhu Xi's interpretation.

²¹ *MZ* 11, p. 403: 夫夷子信以爲人之親其兄之子爲若親其鄰之赤子乎。彼有取爾也。赤子匍匐將入井非赤子之罪也。

²² Mengzi uses the same example of a child about to fall into a well at *Mengzi* 2A6, *MZ* 7, p. 233, as an illustration of his claim that all people possess a heart that commiserates with others and cannot bear to witness their suffering. In *Mengzi* 1A7 (*MZ* 3, p. 80), he uses as another illustration the case of king Xuan of Qi 齊宣王, who freed an ox bound for sacrificial slaughter because he could not stand to see its fearful shivering "like an innocent man being led off to execution." These are extraordinary circumstances – the utter innocence of the other being is crucial – when our concern for others does not depend on their relationship to us; indeed it may extend even to animals. Mengzi points out that we naturally feel humane emotions – irrespective of public approbation or any other consideration of what we ought to do – when we are confronted by the suffering of the completely innocent. In 2A6, Mengzi labels these impulses *ren zhi duan* 仁之端 "the start of humaneness," and in 1A7 he characterizes their manifestations as *ren shu* 仁術 "the workings of humaneness"; see *MZ* 7, p. 234 and 3.83. For more on *Mengzi* 1A7, see Jeffrey Riegel, "A Passion for the Worthy," *JAO* 128.4 (2008), p. 713. The story of a child falling into a well is mentioned not only in *Mengzi*; it is also found in *Mozi*. See Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, *Mozi xiangu* 墨子閒詁 (Xinbian zhuji jicheng edn., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986) 1, p. 27; Knoblock and Riegel, *Mozi*, p. 64.

ments of spontaneous and involuntary sympathy for the plight of an endangered innocent with proof that one's concern for others is, under ordinary circumstances, equal to his love of kin.²³ If Yi Zhi takes that to be the meaning of the Ru teaching then he is simply mistaken.

Yet Mengzi's rhetorical question, with its use of "love, concern, affection" (*qin* 親) – a term that in this context Mengzi clearly prefers over its near synonym *ai*²⁴ – to refer to the affection one has for both a neighbor's child and one's nephew or niece, signals that, while Mengzi cannot accept that someone would normally dispense equal portions of *ai* to relatives and strangers alike, as Yi Zhi claims to do, one can and does stretch *qin* – such is its elasticity in Mengzi's hands – so that one has an abundance of it for relatives and some as well for a helpless stranger caught in a predicament not of his own making. Elsewhere in the Mengzi, the philosopher uses the terms *tui* 推 "push," *ji* 及 "extend," *kuo* 擴 "broaden," and *chong* 充 "expand" – all of which share a common semantic field – to suggest how one should enlarge and amplify concern and affection for others as well as other emotions without dividing or portioning them out.²⁵ Imagine again a lump of dough or clay:

²³ For Mengzi and other early followers of Ru teachings the concern one has for the child in its moment of danger should be no less intense than the love one ordinarily has for one's father; that is, it should not be a grade or step lower in intensity as would be the case were one simply extending one's affection for parents to others in ordinary circumstances. In the manuscript assigned the title *Wuxing* 五行 discovered at the archaeological sites of Mawangdui 馬王堆 and Guodian 郭店, there occurs a line of text that can be transcribed as: 愛父其殺愛人仁也 "To love one's father and to a lesser degree to love others is what is meant by humaneness." For the Mawangdui version, see Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, *Maotai Kanbo hakusho gogyōhen kenkyū* 馬王堆漢墓帛書五行篇研究 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1993), p. 301; for the Guodian version, see Liu Jian 劉劍, *Guodian Chu jian jiaoshi* 郭店楚簡校釋 (Fujian: Renmin chubanshe, 2003), p. 71, strip 33. This line is consistent with what Mengzi says in 1A7: "I respect my elders and extend it to the elders of others; I cherish my young and extend it to the young of others." (See below, n. 25.) In the part of the Mawangdui version of the manuscript identified by modern editors as the text's "commentary" (or *shuo* 說) – a part of the text that does not occur in the earlier Guodian version – this line is explained as follows: 言愛父而後及人也。愛父而殺其鄰之子未可謂仁也。 "This is saying that one should first love one's father and afterwards extend it to others. To love one's father and to a lesser degree the child of a neighbor may not be called humaneness." (See Ikeda, *Maotai Kanbo*, p. 308, for the passage, though not for the interpretation presented here.) The *Wuxing* "commentary" is noting that, in the extraordinary circumstance of a child about to fall into a well, it is not right – it "may not be called humaneness" – to act with less concern for the child than one would a parent. I am grateful to Huang Kuan-yun for sharing with me his thoughts on the proper reading of the Mawangdui text.

²⁴ Zhao Qi defines *qin* as *ai* in his *Mengzi* 3A5 commentary; *MZ* 11, p. 403.

²⁵ In *Mengzi* 1A7, *MZ* 3, pp. 86–87. Mengzi says that one "pushes outwards" (*tui*) one's "kindness" (*en* 恩) so that it reaches others. Like *qin* ("love, concern, affection"), *en* is elastic and so, Mengzi points out, "If you push kindness outwards it will envelop all within the four seas; if you do not it will not even envelop your wife and children." He also says in 1A7: 老吾老以及人之老，幼吾幼以及人之幼。 "I respect my elders and extend it to the elders of others; I cherish my young and extend it to the young of others." Though he does not say so explicitly in *Mengzi* 3A5, it is probable that Mengzi regarded *qin* and *ai* as things that should – like *en*,

Yi Zhi “distributes (*shi*)” it in equal pieces; Mengzi stretches it even though it may become thin at the edges.²⁶ In either case, called *ai* or *qin*, a concern for others was something both measurable and limited. Other early cultures may have conceived of a love that was infinite; the Ruhists and Mohists of early China did not.

Mengzi continues by reducing his opposition to Yi Zhi’s way of practicing the Mohist doctrine of impartial love to a line that is almost epigrammatic in its economy and incisiveness: “Moreover, it is the case that, while Heaven in creating things causes them to be single-rooted, Master Yi is dual-rooted.”²⁷ Before exploring more fully the meaning and implications of Mengzi’s criticism, a few words on the translation suggested here – one that is almost, but not quite, unprecedented when one examines the standard translations of *Mengzi* and studies that focus on 3A5.²⁸

lao 老 “respecting elders,” and *you* 幼 “cherishing the young” – be “pushed outward” or “extended” but never “distributed” in equal portions as Yi Zhi did with regard to love. Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, p. 135, paraphrasing the position that Mengzi favors in 3A5, says that *ai* “love,” once established on the foundation of one’s natural affections for parents, is *tui* “pushed outward” toward others and thus has distinctions and gradations. Nivison, “Motivation and Moral Action in Mencius,” pp. 96–97, says that, in 1A7 as well as other occurrences of the term, Mengzi is “consciously appropriating” the technical use by later Mohist dialecticians of the term *tui* in the phrase *tui qi lei* 推其類 “pushing outwards its category” which refers to a type of analogical inference in which one insists that an opponent who has made a judgment in one situation make an identical judgment in another situation because both situations are of the same *lei* “category.” Whilst Mengzi’s use of the term appears to be similar to that found in the Mohist sources, Nivison perhaps underestimates the importance of Mengzi’s use of *tui* as one of a group of terms that share a similar meaning; nor does he consider whether it would have been chronologically possible for Mengzi to appropriate a usage that occurs in Mohist sources that may have been later than Mengzi. In other words, the appropriating may have been in the other direction. Mengzi uses the terms *kuo* “broaden” and *chong* “expand” in his 2A6 discussion of the four *xin* “emotions, natural feelings” for which, see below, note 35. It is worth noting in regard to his use of technical terminology that, in 3B10, Mengzi deploys the phrase *chong qi lei* 充其類 “expanding its category” – not found in *Mozi* – to refer to making or recognizing connections between situations that are both of the same category. For a discussion of the 3B10 phrase, see Nivison, “Motivation and Moral Action in Mencius,” p. 100.

²⁶ The verb *shi* “distribute” is by no means alien to Mengzi’s vocabulary. He uses it in *Mengzi* 1A5, 1A7, and again in 1B5, to describe how a true king will distribute *ren zheng* 仁政 “benevolent government” to all his subjects; see *MZ* 2, p. 66, 3.92, and 4.136. Perhaps the verb is appropriate in such contexts because Mengzi thought of humaneness as something that should be applied equally to everyone without bias in favor of one’s own family. The usage can be contrasted with Mengzi’s use of the terms *tui* 推 “push” and *ji* 及 “extend,” for which see the preceding note. It is perhaps inappropriate to suggest, as I do here, that Mengzi thought of *qin* and *ai* as comparable to a lump of dough or clay. His use of *tui* and *ji* suggests that he thought of them as perhaps analogous to something more two-dimensional like an animal skin stretched to form a drumhead that needs to remain whole to work. His use of the verb *chong* “fill, expand” to describe how one should amplify the emotions he lists in 2A6 may mean that Mengzi thought of the latter as three-dimensional like a wine bladder or sack that must remain whole in order to be properly filled.

²⁷ *MZ* 11, p. 404: 且天之生物也使之一本而夷子二本故也。

²⁸ See the works referred to above, nn. 4 and 10.

The grammar of the sentence is such that 一本 *yi ben* and 二本 *er ben* must be understood as verbal predicates with the pivotal pronoun *zhi* 之 and the proper name Yizi 夷子 (“Master Yi”) as their respective subjects.²⁹ One cannot, as is often done, ignore the grammatical parallelism of the two phrases *zhi yi ben*, “they are single-rooted,” and *Yizi er ben*, “Master Yi is dual-rooted,” and render *er ben* as some sort of transitive verb; or insert other verbs into the text in an effort to make Heaven and Yizi parallel subjects and, as a result, render *yi ben* and *er ben*, translated as “one root” and “two roots,” or something similar, as if they were the objects of those verbs.³⁰

The translation into Japanese of Uchino Kumaichirō comes close to the one proposed here in that Uchino recognizes that Mengzi’s criticism of Master Yi is that he has made double the single root that Heaven has provided him. In all the other translations and studies to which reference has been made in compiling these notes on the passage, their authors interpret the line to mean that while Heaven provides the myriad creatures with *yi ben* “one root” (Legge, Nivison, Shun, Bloom), “a single basis” (Lau), “a single root-stock” (Dobson), or “one source” (Van Norden), Master Yi attempts to undo Heaven’s work by putatively (Dobson, Shun, Bloom) or actually (Legge, Lau, Nivison, Van Norden) rendering it in these other creatures into *er ben* “two roots” (Legge, Nivison, Shun, Bloom), “two root-stocks” (Dob-

²⁹ The causative verb *shi* 使 takes two objects: the first is the object pronoun *zhi* 之 which in this construction is pivotal and hence the subject of the second object, the predicate. For other examples of how *shi* and its objects work in the language of Mengzi, see Edwin G. Pulleyblank, *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995), pp. 33, 40–42. *Yi ben* and *er ben* are examples of numerical expressions used as predicates that are linked to their subjects without the need of a copula; *ibid.*, p. 58.

³⁰ My understanding and translation of the line are supported by Zhao Qi’s paraphrase of it; *MZ* 11, p. 404: 天生萬物。各由一本而出。今夷子以他人之親與己親等。是爲二本。故欲同其愛也。 “Heaven created the myriad things so that each would emerge from a single root. But now Master Yi makes equal the parents of others and his own parents. This creates a double root. He assuredly desired to make identical his love (for both).” Note that in Zhao Qi’s paraphrase Master Yi is being commented on with regard to his treatment of his own *ben* “root” not the “root” of others and that, in this regard, he is being contrasted not with Heaven but with the other “myriad things” that Heaven created. Shun, *Mencius and Early Chinese Thought*, pp. 129–30, argues that Zhao Qi interprets *yi ben* to refer to one’s biological origin, i.e., parents. As Shun observes, that would mean that Yi Zhi had, according to Mengzi’s characterization of him as being *er ben*, acknowledged two biological origins. But Shun seems to have misconstrued Zhao Qi’s meaning. Neither Zhao Qi nor Mengzi is talking about “biology”: Heaven, not their parents, “creates” (*sheng* 生) the myriad things. It is perhaps more accurate to say that Zhao Qi understood *ben* to refer to one’s lineage. Since Zhao Qi says that it is Master Yi’s *equal treatment* of his own parents and the parents of others that makes him *er ben* “dual-rooted” and hence desirous of loving all the same, he seems to have understood *yi ben* to refer to the unique devotion with which Heaven’s creatures treat their own lineage. See also below, n. 32.

son), “two sources” (Van Norden), or “a dual one” (Lau). For Legge, Dobson, Nivison, Shun, Van Norden, and Bloom, this seems to involve Yi Zhi adding a second *ben* to the one that Heaven has provided. D. C. Lau’s translation suggests that he understood Mengzi’s criticism to have been that Master Yi made dual or split into two parts what had been the single *ben* of creatures.³¹

Apart from the grammar of the sentence, there remains the question of what Mengzi meant by the term *ben*. The passage’s format as a dispute, and the context of Mengzi’s criticism of Master Yi for being “dual-rooted” in contrast to retaining the quality of being “single-rooted” bestowed on him as one of Heaven’s creatures, both suggest that Mengzi is replying to Yi Zhi’s own claim that he “distributes (*shi*)” his love equally and without distinction to his parents and to others. It is possible that Mengzi chose the image of a “root” because of the intransitive use of *shi* to refer to the spread or branching out of creepers and vines (though it must be admitted that the use of vegetative imagery to express his ideas was a commonplace of Mengzi’s rhetoric). Be that as it may, Mengzi’s formulation of the sentence as a reply to Yi Zhi’s statement about dispensing his love to both his parents and the parents of others implies that what Mengzi meant by *ben* – in the immediate context of his criticism of Yi Zhi – is one’s love of others.

Being “dual-rooted” means dividing this love in two, providing care equally to one’s parents and the parents of others.³² It further means that Yi Zhi has made “dual” by dividing in two something that in its original, innate, or “Heavenly” form is undivided – i.e., we should understand *yi ben* “single-rooted” not to refer to a root that is unique, or one root as opposed to two, but rather a root that is “whole” and “entire.”³³ Also involved in Mengzi’s conception of this root that is undivided is the idea that it, unlike Yi Zhi’s divided root, consists of a love that is extended, amplified in stages or grades, to reach others

³¹ My interpretation agrees with that of Lau, except that I understand Mengzi to have meant that Master Yi split in two his own *ben*, not (either putatively or actually) the *ben* of other things.

³² This understanding of *er ben* is supported not only by Zhao Qi – see above, n. 30 – but also by the 12th-c. Song thinker Chen Shizhi 陳士直. Chen, quoted in *Zhuzi yulei*, says, “I love my parents and I also impartially love the parents of others. These two loves stand together side by side and so I am said to be ‘dual-rooted.’” Zhu Xi proposes as an analogy for Chen’s understanding “one root that has two branch roots,” which Zhu no doubt intended as distinct from what Mengzi intended in his use of *er ben*; see Appendix, passages 3 and 4.

³³ If Mengzi’s choice of *ben* was influenced by the intransitive use of *shi*, his use of *er ben* “dual-rooted” to describe Yi Zhi’s status as the result of his having “distributed” his love suggests that Mengzi understood *shi* in the sense of the spread or branching out of vegetation to refer to a plant multiplying its branches and roots or to a sort of radical bifurcation in which a plant develops two branches or roots of equal length and complexity.

who are ever more distant from the self and hence occupy a lower status and lesser importance vis-à-vis the self than those to whom one is closely related.³⁴

Elsewhere in the text, Mengzi labels each of the emotions and feelings like love that people possess naturally and from birth as a “heart” (*xin* 心). For example, in *Mengzi* 2A6, he famously lists: the heart of compassion, the heart of shame, the heart of courtesy and modesty, and the heart of right and wrong. Moreover, Mengzi says of these four “hearts” that each is the “start” (*duan* 端), respectively, of humaneness, righteousness, ritual propriety, and wise discernment.³⁵ *Duan*, variously rendered as “start,” “beginning,” “sprout,” or “wellspring,” is readily recognizable as a synonym of *ben*. Thus it seems likely that in 3A5 Mengzi was using *ben* as a metaphor for *xin* and that his criticism of Yi Zhi, read less literally, is that he made dual by dividing in half the heart of love that, when it is permitted to retain its natural state of undivided wholeness, is the basis of caring for one’s parents and family and, to a lesser degree, others who are more distant from the self. It is worth noting that Mengzi – and presumably others – did not conceive of the various “hearts” he lists in 2A6 as a repertoire of static dispositions or inert capacities that one expresses or manifests in reaction to particular situations. Rather, like love, they are *ipso facto* emotional enactments: Mengzi thus compares them to “the first spark of a fire” or the “first bursting forth of a spring.” What is necessary is that we “broaden” (*kuo* 擴) and “expand” (*chong* 充) such acts,³⁶ so that their

³⁴ In *Zhuzi yulei*, an anonymous disciple poses a question to Zhu Xi that assumes that being “single-rooted” involves the “humane” sequence of “treating parents with care, being humane to the people, and loving creatures”; see Appendix, passage 3. In passage 6, Zhu Xi quotes Yin Tun, one of Cheng Yi’s most important followers, who says much the same thing as the anonymous disciple of passage 3: “Why are there gradations? Because it is a single root with nothing false or artificial.” Zhu Xi expands in agreement: “Being one root, within it there are naturally many gradations.”

³⁵ *MZ* 7, p. 234. The relevant passage of 2A6 reads: 惻隱之心，仁之端也。羞惡之心，義之端也。辭讓之心，禮之端也。是非之心，智之端也。人之有是四端也，猶其有四體也。有是四端而自謂不能者，自賊者也；謂其君不能者，賊其君者也。凡有四端於我者，知皆擴而充之矣，若火之始然，泉之始達。苟能充之，足以保四海；苟不充之，不足以事父母。“The heart of compassion is the start of humaneness; the heart of shame is the start of righteousness; the heart of modesty and yielding is the start of ritual propriety; the heart of right and wrong is the start of wisdom. A man possesses these four starts just as he possesses four limbs. To have these four starts but claim that one is unable, is to wound oneself; to claim that one’s ruler is unable is to wound one’s ruler. It is ever so that the four starts reside with me. If I know in all cases to enlarge and expand them, they are like a fire that is just starting to burn or a spring that has just burst forth. If one is able to expand them they are sufficient for one to enfold all within the Four Seas in a protective embrace; if one does not expand them they are not sufficient for one to serve one’s own father and mother.” Mengzi repeats his list of four *xin* in 6A6 but does not refer to them as *duan*.

³⁶ Compare as well Mengzi’s use of *chong* in 3B10. See above, n. 25.

scope extends well beyond the self. Presumably addressing a ruler to whom the spread of his influence mattered, Mengzi says that the four natural emotional enactments properly broadened and expanded in scope will permit one to enfold “all within the Four Seas” in his protective embrace.³⁷

That Mengzi uses the term “root heart” (*ben xin* 本心) in 6A10 – where it refers to the integrity that the *xian zhe* 賢者, or “worthy,” manage to hold onto while others lose it by serving corrupt rulers – suggests that for Mengzi there was a semantic connection between the two terms.³⁸ A possible metaphorical link between “root” and “heart” in 3A5 may, moreover, remind some readers of *Mengzi* 6A8 in which axes hacking down the “trees” (*mu* 木) that grew on Ox Mountain is a metaphor for a person letting loose his “finest heart” (*liang xin* 良心) that is part of one’s original nature and a basis for moral behavior.³⁹

Mengzi follows his criticism of Yi Zhi for being “dual-rooted” with an illustration that seems intended to indicate that what he meant by *yi ben* is a heart devoted to one’s own parents:

We may suppose that, in the earliest generations, there were those who did not bury their parents. When their parents died they lifted their corpses and consigned them to an open ditch. Passing by on another day, when foxes and raccoon-dogs were eating the corpses and flies and gnats sucking on them, their brows perspired and they averted their eyes. They were not perspiring because of what others might think. It was because their countenance and eyes conveyed what was in their innermost hearts. And, we may suppose, they returned home for baskets and shovels with which to cover them. If covering them was genuinely right, when filial children and humane people now cover the bodies of their parents, they must also possess the Way.⁴⁰

³⁷ Although *Mengzi* 2A6 seems to be, like 1A7, addressed to a ruler interested in enhancing his power it is, also like the latter, concerned with moral self-cultivation. This aspect of the passage is analyzed by several scholars including, for example, David B. Wong, “Is There a Distinction between Reason and Emotion in Mencius?” *Philosophy East and West* 41.1 (1991), 31–44; and, more recently, Kim Myeong-seok, “What *Ceyin zhi xin* (Compassion/Familial Affection) Really Is,” for which see above, n. 4, as well as idem, “Is There No Distinction between Reason and Emotion in Mengzi?” *Philosophy East and West* 64.1 (2014), 49–81.

³⁸ See *MZ* 23, pp. 784–86.

³⁹ *MZ* 13, p. 775.

⁴⁰ *MZ* 11, pp. 404–5. 蓋上世嘗有不葬其親者。其親死則舉而委之於壑。他日過之。狐狸食之。蠅蚋姑嘬之。其類有泚睨而不視。夫泚也。非爲人泚。中心達於面目。蓋歸反藁裡而掩之。掩之誠是也。則孝子仁人之掩其親亦必有道矣。 Both Nivison and Shun, in the works cited above, n. 4, conclude that the “innermost heart” of the illustration is intended by Mengzi to stand for *yi ben*. But in their overall reading of the passage they interpret *yi ben* to be the “one root” that

This illustration serves two purposes in Mengzi's argument. First it provides an example of how one's "innermost heart" (*zhong xin* 中心) works: because it is whole and intact – unmoved by other considerations besides the abuse suffered by the bodies of dead parents due to one's own neglect of them – one spontaneously takes steps to ensure that they will be properly buried.⁴¹ The illustration also shows that what Mengzi regarded as correct burial rites – as opposed to the frugal burials that he alludes to in his opening hypothetical argument against Yi Zhi – ultimately have their origin in the way this "innermost heart" works. Mengzi no doubt meant by this that Mohists like Yi Zhi who advocate and practice the doctrine of frugal burials are distorting the emotions involved in caring properly for the bodies of dead parents and so lack the Way of the filial and humane.⁴² Their practices are thus not based on the "innermost heart" but rather here, as with their enactment of "love without gradations," the Mohists are ruining its workings. Whether he practiced frugal burials like a good Mohist or did the opposite and provided a parent with a lavish burial contrary to Mohist rules, Yi Zhi would, according to Mengzi, fail to be a filial son.

"ROOT" AND "HEART" COMPARED

While it may be the case that in 3A5 Mengzi intended *ben* to stand in some way for *xin*, that does not mean that we can understand *yi ben* and *er ben* as synonymous, respectively, with *yi xin* 一心 and *er xin* 二心, two terms that occur with some frequency in the language of Mengzi's time. On the contrary, the two pairs of terms are distinct, and to understand the different ways in which they are used provides a better sense of Mengzi's use of *yi ben* and *er ben*. In *Mengzi* 6A9 *yi xin* ("single-hearted") refers to the concentration or focus necessary to master something. Without it, one may hear good advice from others but learn nothing from it.⁴³ It is possible that there is some connection between this and what seems to have been Mengzi's conception of *yi ben* as the

Heaven bestows upon living beings as opposed to the *er ben* "two roots" that influence the ethics of Mohists such as Yi Zhi. In my argument the terms do not refer to alternative sources of ethics but are instead related to Mengzi's view that *the* source of morality – the heart – should remain whole and should not be divided, as Yi Zhi has done to himself.

⁴¹ Of the various "hearts" that Mengzi lists in 2A6 – for which see above, n. 35 – it seems that the "heart of shame" should be the one that resulted in people covering the bodies of the dead. Others assume it is the "heart of compassion." Perhaps both hearts were involved.

⁴² Zhao Qi, *MZ* 11, p. 407, says that Mengzi is using this fable to criticize the Mohist doctrine of frugal burials.

⁴³ See *MZ* 23, p. 781.

love of others that, when permitted to remain whole and intact, tends to focus attention on one's own family and lineage.

More noteworthy are the texts – somewhat later in date than *Mengzi* 3A5 – that understand *yi xin* as a “unified heart,” the numerous, and sometimes conflicting, promptings and inclinations of which have been reconciled so that one can address with equanimity all the competing moral challenges that one faces. An example is a passage in the “Fanzhi” 反質 chapter of Liu Xiang's 劉向 (79–8 BC) compilation *Shuo yuan* 說苑 that contrasts a “unified heart” – also called in the text one's *Tian xin* 天心 (that is, “Heavenly heart”) – with “a heart divided one hundred ways.”⁴⁴ The former permits one to serve myriad rulers; but a heart divided myriad ways prevents one from serving properly even a single ruler. This and other texts that share this theme appear to have been inspired by the opening couplet of the *Shijing* song “Shi-jiu” 鶉鳴 (Mao no. 152):

The cuckoos rest in the mulberry, their chicks are seven.

The pure man, the Gentleman, his comportment is one.⁴⁵

The so-called “commentary” (*shuo* 說) section of the *Wuxing* 五行 manuscript excavated at the Han-dynasty site of Mawangdui 馬王堆 compares the cuckoos to the Gentleman who reconciles all his moral urgings with a single, unified sense of purpose. The “Mao Commentary” to the *Shijing* understands the first line of the couplet as a brief allegory: “In feeding their chicks, the cuckoos start with the first in the morning and with the last in the evening. They treat them fairly and equally as if all were one and the same.”⁴⁶

This conception of *yi xin* suggests that the several emotions that are natural to an individual – for example, the four “hearts” listed by

⁴⁴ For this passage, see *Shuoyuan jinzhu jinyi* 說苑今註今譯 (Taipei: Shangwu yinshugan, 1988) 20, p. 703.

⁴⁵ *Maoshi zhushu*, 7C.7a–9a. For a discussion of the relationship between this couplet and the texts that it appears to have inspired, see Jeffrey Riegel, “Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary,” *HJAS* 57.1 (1997), pp. 162–63; and Kuan-yun Huang, “A Research Note on the Textual Formation of the ‘Ziyi,’” *JAS* 132.1 (2012), pp. 61–71.

⁴⁶ For the *Wuxing* and “Mao Commentary” texts see Riegel, “Eros,” pp. 162–63. Huang, “A Research Note,” pp. 61–71, discusses other texts and recently excavated manuscripts that are concerned with this conception of *yi xin* and suggests insightfully (p. 65) that all may be related to *Lunyu* 15.3, in which Kongzi says that he “uses one thread that binds all of his learning together 一以貫之.” Kongzi says much the same thing at *Lunyu* 4.15. There Zengzi identifies the “one thread” for the benefit of other perplexed disciples as *zhong* 忠 “loyalty” and *shu* 恕 “sympathy.” Herbert Fingarette, “Following the ‘One Thread’ of the *Analects*,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 47.3 (Supplement) (1979), pp. 373–405, explains that the reason that the “one thread” consists of two things rather than one is that while *shu* as a moral principle instructs one to be sympathetic to others by putting oneself in their place, it does not sufficiently ensure that one will transcend one's own desires and perceptions. To accomplish that it is necessary that one make a commitment “that transcends the purely personal” to what

Mencius in 2A6 – could come into conflict and so attention must be paid to balancing them. The *Mengzi* 1A7 story of king Xuan of Qi freeing the ox being led off to slaughter provides an example.⁴⁷ By substituting a ram for the ox the king is able to balance being humane with his obligation to provide blood sacrifices to his ancestors. This balance embodied in the unified comportment of the Gentleman celebrated in the opening couplet of the *Shijing* song is also seen in how, according to the Mao reading, the cuckoos in the song find a way to feed their many young with equal portions, a metaphor for how one must treat equally and without partiality the close members of one’s immediate family, as opposed to the lesser degrees of care and concern one ought to display toward those outside the bounds of the family.⁴⁸ This conception is not the same as Mengzi’s idea of *yi ben*. Being “single-rooted” has to do with extending one’s love of others so that one’s own family is favored and not with how, in maintaining a “unified heart,” one reconciles competing moral impulses or manages the contending demands that may occur within the family.

Er xin, written 二心 or 貳心, meaning “dual-heartedness,” though absent from the text *Mengzi*, appears often in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, a narrative history the composition of which may predate *Mengzi* by a few decades.⁴⁹ According to these passages, “to possess a dual heart” means that one lacks a singular loyalty to his ruler but is instead of two minds and therefore harbors doubts about the superiority of his lord that may lead him to conspire with others to rebel. For Mengzi the problem with Yi Zhi being “dual-rooted” and with the Mohist doctrine of “impartial love” more generally is that they diminish one’s native desire to care properly for one’s own parents. Recall the passage in *Mengzi* 3B9 where Mengzi says that the doctrine of “impartial love” is tantamount to denying one’s own father. Mengzi traces the causes of political, as against familial, disloyalty to the selfish doctrines of Yang Zhu. Those

is right and just. This commitment, Fingarette argues, is the meaning of *zhong* or *zhong xin* 忠信 (to use the synonym compound that occurs frequently in *Lunyu*). Weaving *shu* and *zhong xin* together into one thread – ensuring that one’s sympathies are informed by what is right and one’s adherence to what is right is tempered by a sensitivity to the circumstances of others – harmonizes the two. As Fingarette (p. 392) succinctly puts it: “Thus *chung-hsin* [*zhong xin*] makes human community possible; *shu* makes community humane.”

⁴⁷ See above, n. 22.

⁴⁸ The juxtaposition of how an ideal Gentleman comports himself in the company of others with how birds feed their young is another example of how the care of others was thought to involve providing them with things that were material and limited in quantity.

⁴⁹ The term occurs eleven times in *Zuozhuan* 左傳: Zhuang 14.2, Xuan 12.2, Cheng 3.4, Cheng 8.1, Cheng 13.3, Xiang 26.8, Zhao 13.3, Zhao 15.5, Zhao 16.3, Zhao 18.6, and Zhao

who possess a “dual heart” would thus seem to be closer to Mengzi’s characterization of Yang Zhu. It was the Mohists like Yi Zhi who were “dual-rooted.”

CONCLUSION

When Xu Bi conveyed to Yi Zhi Mengzi’s criticism of him for being “dual-rooted” along with the fable about the origin of burials, the Mohist is said to have “appeared at a loss and, only after a while, to have said, ‘I, Zhi, have received instructions.’”⁵⁰ We are meant to understand that, by his demeanor and with his final words, Yi Zhi is acknowledging the flaws in his own statements and perhaps even abandoning his Mohist learning. This is not simply a literary conceit on the part of the author of *Mengzi* 3A5.

Leaving aside the descriptive passages that frame the conversation between Yi Zhi and Mengzi, if the words at the heart of their exchange are an accurate reflection of what they actually said, it should be allowed that Mengzi genuinely succeeded in turning Yi Zhi’s doctrines against him. Yi Zhi had defended the Mohist doctrine of frugal burials by referring to the related doctrine of impartial love or love without gradations. But Mengzi was able to demonstrate that by Yi Zhi’s own definition of impartial love and his description of how he practiced it – “I, Zhi, take it to refer to love without gradations that I distribute beginning first with my own kin” – the Mohist was diminishing his capacity to love his parents.⁵¹ Like a feudal lord forced to dispense land and other forms of largesse at the expense of his own family in order to win the loyalty of his underlings, the more Yi Zhi practiced the doctrine of impartial love the less love there would be for his own kin.

In addition to his more immediate goal of dismantling the doctrines central to Mohist thought, Mengzi otherwise was concerned with exposing the faulty language and misguided conceptions of doctrines more generally. He prided himself on his ability to “understand words” (*zhi yan* 知言), that is, to identify incisively the fatal flaws in the doctrines he opposed. In 2A2 Mengzi gives four examples of this

21.7. These various occurrences have been analyzed in Ogura Yoshihiko 小倉芳彦, *Chūgoku kodai seiji shisō kenkyū* 中国古代政治思想研究 (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1970), pp. 252–81.

⁵⁰ *MZ* 11, p. 407: 夷子憮然，爲問曰，命之矣。

⁵¹ Though I disagree with some aspects of the interpretation of the language of *Mengzi* 3A5 found in David Nivison’s two studies (cited n. 4, above) – in particular his explanation of *er ben* – I fully concur with Nivison’s observation that Mengzi’s criticism of Yi Zhi has to do precisely with identifying the ill effects of adopting Mohist doctrines.

ability: “I can see wherein one-sided statements are partial, excessive statements are wanton, heretical statements perverse, and evasive statements impoverished.”⁵²

One might say that, rather than debate his opponents, Mengzi skillfully deconstructs their doctrines. But this does not mean that Mengzi was simply pointing out a doctrine’s inconsistent or careless wording and concluding that it should be abandoned merely on those grounds. He was worried about the actual impact of a doctrine on the lives and behaviour of those who practiced it. Zhu Xi claimed that what Mengzi accomplished in his exchange with Yi Zhi was pointing out the incompatibility of Yi Zhi’s two statements that “love lacks gradations” and that he, Yi Zhi, “distributes love starting with his own kin.” For Zhu Xi, Yi Zhi was a lapsed Mohist and Mengzi defeated him by pointing out internal contradictions in his statements that were the result of his careless and inconsistent practice of Mohist doctrines.⁵³

These notes have presented a different interpretation of what Mengzi was doing in 3A5. In this interpretation Mengzi was not concerned with the inconsistent behavior or contradictory statements of an opponent. Rather, Mengzi wished to expose the Mohist doctrines of frugal burials and impartial love to be contrary to human emotions and to demonstrate that by adopting such doctrines Yi Zhi and his kind carve up and otherwise impair their feelings, rendering what should be a whole and undivided heart into disparate pieces capable of serving neither one’s family nor the world at large. It is by these means that, in engaging even indirectly with Yi Zhi, Mengzi hoped not only to straighten him out but also to warn others of the hazards of Mohist doctrines and promote the virtues of his own philosophical tradition.

⁵² *MZ* 6, p. 209: 諛辭知其所蔽, 淫辭知其所陷, 邪辭知其所離, 遁辭知其所窮. For a discussion of this passage see Nivison, “Philosophical Voluntarism,” pp. 127–28; and Jeffrey Riegel, “Reflections on an Unmoved Mind: An Analysis of *Mencius* 2A.2,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 47.3 (Supplement) (1979), pp. 445–46. In his commentary to a passage of *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子 that closely parallels Mengzi’s words in 2A2, Lu Tian 陸佃 (1042–1102) says that Mohist doctrines are examples of the *yin ci* 淫辭 “excessive statements” the wantonness of which Mengzi claims to be able to see. For Lu Tian’s comments, see *MZ* 6, p. 211.

⁵³ See the Appendix for a summary of Zhu Xi’s interpretations of *Mengzi* 3A5.

Appendix: Zhu Xi's Interpretations of Yi Ben and Er Ben

The following six passages are from chapter fifty-five of *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, the collected conversations of Zhu Xi with his disciples and others, compiled by Li Jingde 黎靖德 of the Song era, on various passages in ancient Ruhist literature, on Song thinkers, and related topics.⁵⁴ Taken together these six passages constitute Zhu Xi's reflections on *Mengzi* 3A5, especially the meaning of the line 愛無差等施由親始 ("love without gradations that I distribute beginning first with my own kin") and of the terms *yi ben* and *er ben*. The passages were recorded for the most part by Zhu Xi's disciples who were in attendance as others asked questions of the master. According to the dates when those who recorded the passages are supposed to have been present at Zhu Xi's lessons, the conversations took place between 1173 and 1199.⁵⁵ The conversations incorporate views other than Zhu's and these, together with Zhu's responses, contribute nuances of meaning to Zhu's otherwise fixed opinions on the significance of *Mengzi* 3A5.

In the earliest surviving conversation, recorded by Jin Quwei, Zhu Xi understands Mengzi's claim that Yi Zhi is "dual-rooted" to mean that he held simultaneously two incompatible positions: that love should be distributed without gradations and that it should start with one's own parents.⁵⁶ Zhu finds the second position to be the weaker claim because it was offered by Yi Zhi merely to explain away Mengzi's charge that Yi Zhi had, contrary to Mohist practice, buried his parents lavishly.⁵⁷ Zhu Xi repeats these explanations in his response to a question put to him by his disciple Huan Yuan 晏淵, recorded in the following passage by the disciple Pan Shiju.⁵⁸

In the passage that follows, recorded by the disciple Liao Deming, an anonymous questioner observes that according to the Ruhist practice of love with gradations one starts with one's parents and then extends one's concern to others but only to a certain point. This inspires Zhu Xi to observe that in the case of someone like Yi Zhi, who has added a root to represent his love of others, there can be no limit to those for whom he should dispense his love. Hence he is not merely "dual-rooted" but rather "thousand-rooted" or "ten-thousand-rooted." But after having said this, Zhu Xi withdrew and had a conversation with Chen Shizhi 陳士直,⁵⁹ referred to in the text by his polite name Yanzhong, who offered another explanation of "dual-rooted": the term refers to the two loves – the love for one's own parents and the impartial love of others – that coexist for Yi Zhi. (This is the explanation of the term *er ben* that I have argued for in this paper.) In

⁵⁴ Li, *Zhuzi yulei*, pp. 1313–14.

⁵⁵ Li Jingde provides the dates when those who recorded the passages were present at Zhu Xi's lessons at *Zhuzi yulei*, pp. 13–20.

⁵⁶ This is the source of D. C. Lau's understanding of *er ben*; Lau, *Mencius*, p. 63, n. 22.

⁵⁷ As pointed out above, Zhu Xi is mistaken in thinking that Mengzi had accused Yi Zhi of actually burying his parents lavishly.

⁵⁸ Huan Yuan, who audited Zhu Xi's lessons in 1193 and was the author of a commentary on *Mengzi zhu* 孟子注, is referred to in the text of passage 2 by his polite name Yafu.

⁵⁹ Chen and his brother, natives of Minqing 閩清 in the southeast part of what is now Fujian province, were both scholars respected by Zhu Xi. In 1182 Zhu presented them with a poem written in his own calligraphy.

the passage that follows, Zhu Xi offers as an analogy for Chen's two loves: "one root that has two branch roots." Zhu Xi is saying that if Mengzi's meaning was what Chen said it was he would have used the analogy that Zhu proposed and not *er ben*. (But, as I have argued, Mengzi probably meant by *er ben* something like a root that has been divided into two parts.) In the next passage, recorded by the disciple Yang Zhi, Zhu Xi emphasizes his view that Yi Zhi's being "dual-rooted" involves his holding incompatible positions by offering as an illustration of *er ben* forcibly pulling up the roots of one tree and planting them together with the roots of another tree.

In the final *Zhuzi yulei* passage related to *Mengzi* 3A5, Zhu Xi quotes an opinion of Yin Tun 尹焯 (1071–1142), who was long dead by the time these conversations were taking place.⁶⁰ Yin had pointed out that love naturally involves gradations and distinctions because it is "single-rooted" and thus lacks anything *wei* 偽 "false or artificial" that might change or distort it. By "false or artificial" Yin was perhaps alluding to Mohist doctrine. Zhu Xi elaborates on Yin's teaching by pointing out that in contrast to being "single-rooted," being "dual-rooted" involves two things standing side by side without any difference of grade between them. This, Zhu Xi notes, is the view of Mozi.

Passage One

[Jin Quwei observed,] "Because Master Yi says, 'Love without gradations that I distribute starting with my own kin,' it seems he knows what comes first and what afterwards. [That is, he seems to give priority to his own parents.] What do you make of this?" Master Zhu replied, "Many people suspect that he knows what comes first and what comes afterwards but they do not know that this is precisely where Master Yi is mistaken. A person's love for others is established on the basis of his parents. He extends⁶¹ this to other creatures and in so doing there are grades and differences. Now Master Yi first takes it to be so that, 'loving others without distinction' and he bestows it starting with his parents first. This is how it is that Master Yi is dual-rooted. Master Yi however is only using this to explain the claim that he has buried his parents lavishly and he does not know that his phrase 'love others without distinctions' is creating two roots." Recorded by [Jin 金] Quwei (who audited in 1175).

夷子以謂，愛無差等，施由親始，似知所先後者，其說如何。曰人多疑其知所先後，而不知此正是夷子錯處。人之有愛，本由親立，推而及物，自有等級。今夷子先以為愛無差等，而施之則由親始，此夷子所以二本矣。夷子但以此解厚葬其親之言而不知愛無差等之為二本也。去偽。

⁶⁰ Yin, one of the foremost disciples of Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), was the author of a *Mengzi* commentary titled *Mengzi jie* 孟子解 that does not survive. A biographical notice can be found at *Songsshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977) 428, pp. 12734–38.

⁶¹ Refer to the comments on *tui* 推 "extend" above, n. 25.

Passage Two

Yafu asked: “Are ‘Love without gradations that I distribute starting with my own kin’ and ‘Treat your parents closely and then be humane to the people; be humane to the people and then love all creatures’ the same or not?” Master Zhu replied, “If one has already said, ‘Love without gradations,’ what need is there to say, ‘I distribute it starting with parents’? This already involves having distinctions. To add the phrase, ‘I distribute it starting with parents,’ is just Yi Zhi in an *ad hoc* manner piecing together a reply to Mengzi. However he does not know that the phrase, ‘love without gradations’ is already not correct. (That is, it is self-contradictory. It is not without gradations because he gives priority to his parents.) His saying, ‘I distribute it starting with my own kin,’ means that he is dispensing the heart of ‘loving others without gradations.’ This means that he is taking the heart of loving others and extending it from his love of his parents.⁶² This is very much in accord with principle and reason!” Recorded by [Pan 潘] Shiju (who audited starting in 1193).

亞夫問，愛無差等，施由親始，與親親而仁民，仁民而愛物，相類否。曰既是愛無差等，何故又施由親始。這便是有差等。又如施由親始一句，乃是夷之臨時撰出來湊孟子意，卻不知愛無差等一句，已不是了。他所謂施由親始，便是把愛無差等之心施之。然把愛人之心推來愛親，是甚道理。時學。

Passage Three

Someone asked, “Love has gradations, this is the so called ‘single root.’ There is the full range complete within it: treating parents with care, being humane to the people, and loving creatures. But what is the so-called ‘dual root’?” Master Zhu replied, “If love lacks gradations why stop with dual roots? Surely there would be a thousand or ten thousand roots.” Later Master Zhu withdrew and discussed this with [Chen 陳] Yanzhong. Yanzhong said, “I love my parents and I also impartially love the parents of others. These two loves stand together side by side and so I am said to be ‘dual-rooted.”” Recorded by [Liao 廖] Deming (who audited starting in 1173).

問愛有差等，此所謂一本，蓋親親，仁民，愛物具有本末也。所謂二本是如何。曰愛無差等，何止二本。蓋千萬本也。退與彥忠論此。彥忠云，愛吾親，又兼愛他人之親，是二愛並立，故曰二本。德明。

Passage Four

Someone asked about “the dual root.” Master Zhu replied, “To serve the parents of others like one’s own parents this is to regard the two as equally important, like one root that has two branch roots.” Recorded by [Lü 呂] Tao (who audited in 1199).

或問二本。曰事他人之親，如己之親，則是兩箇一樣重了，如一本有兩根也。熹。

⁶² Note that in these two sentences Zhu Xi is referring to the love of others as a *xin* “heart.”

Passage Five

Someone asked, “A person is born of one set of parents, a father and mother. It is the same thing as a tree only having one root. Master Yi however looked on the parents of others the same as his own parents. It is the same as pulling up the root of that tree there and forcibly joining it together with the root of this tree here.” Master Zhu replied, “‘Loving others without distinctions or gradations’ is the two roots.” I, Zhi, said, “In the phrase, ‘I have received instructions,’ if the word *zhi* is Master Yi’s given name then this is grammatical but if it is a particle [i.e., the object pronoun] then it is not grammatical.” Master Zhu replied, “Correct.” Recorded by [Yang 楊] Zhi (who audited during the years 1193 and 1194).

問人只是一父母所生，如木只是一根株。夷子卻視他人之親猶己之親，如牽彼樹根，強合此樹根。曰愛無差等，便是二本。至曰命之矣，之字作夷子名看，方成句法。若作虛字看，則不成句法。曰是。至。

Passage Six

Master Yin said, “Why are there gradations? Because it is a single root with nothing false or artificial.” Being one root, within it there are naturally many gradations. With two roots, then the two stand side by side without any difference of gradation between them. Mozi is an example of this. Recorded by [Shen 沈] Xian (who audited starting in 1198).

尹氏曰何以有是差等，一本故也，無偽也。既是一本，其中便自然有許多差等。二本，則二者並立，無差等矣。墨子是也。僩。

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MZ Jiao Xun 焦循, *Mengzi zhengyi* 孟子正義