

“Knowing Words” and “Nourishing Ch’i”: Mencius, Chu Hsi, and Later Interpreters

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This paper is broken into three sections: (a) what Mencius said in the central section of his conversation with Kung-sun Ch’ou (2A2) about “knowing (men by their) words” and “nourishing *ch’i*.” (b) what Chu Hsi said in his interpretations of Mencius, and (c) what later commentators said about Chu Hsi’s interpretation of Mencius.

It is suggested in this paper that if Chu Hsi had a dualistic axe to grind, later commentators also had one of their own to grind — a monistic metaphysics, for which they had to interpret the key terms in the *Mencius*. What distinguished one commentator from another were merely their individual ingenuities to adjust the meaning of Mencius’ terms to fit their monistic interpretations.

Mencius is peculiarly vibrant, especially in the central section of his conversation with Kung-sun Ch’ou (2A2) about “knowing (men by their) words” and “nourishing *ch’i*.” He is vibrant in what he said, in how he said it, and in unifying the what in the how — and the how in the what — into an organic architectonic. He is vibrant in that the development of the conversation with Kung-sun Ch’ou and the circumstances surrounding it elucidates the theme of the conversation.

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「知言養氣」論：孟子、朱子及後代詮釋者

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摘要

本文以《孟子》的「知言養氣」論為核心，析論朱子對孟子「知言養氣」說的解釋，及其在近世東亞思想史上所引起的論辯。本文內容共分三部份：(一)析論孟子「知言養氣」說的基本內涵；(二)分析朱子對孟子（尤其是對「知言養氣」說）的解釋，本於理氣不離不雜之二元論，不免違失孟學大旨；(三)本文第三部份討論王陽明、黃宗羲、德川儒者伊藤仁齋、中井履軒及李朝鮮儒者丁茶山等人，對朱子的批判，以觀察自公元十六世紀以降東亞儒學思潮發展的新動向。