

Prof. Kyoo Lee

孟子 *Mencius*

"The Second Sage," Meng Tzu, or, in Latinized form, Mencius (372-289 B.C.)
contemporary of the great Greek philosophers, Plato and [Aristotle](#)

Mencian Benevolence (仁 *ren/jen*) in Book 1

Bk1: benevolent government: return to/revival of the fundamentals of Confucian ethics
 Bk2: cultivating an "unperturbed heart": 4 sprouts of human benevolence/hearts of virtue
 Bk3: reciprocal exchange of benevolences as a way of maintaining good against evil
 Bk4: subtle balance between preservation of morality and discretionary flexibility
 Bk5: the problem of moral pretentiousness/hypocrisy
 Bk6: the *qing* (situational care) of a willow tree and its natural/internal flexibility
 Bk7: rediscovery of human nature as innately good; "among babes in arms"

Four "Sprouts" of Humanity in Book 2

The heart of compassion is the sprout of benevolence.
 The heart of disdain is the sprout of righteousness.
 The heart of deference is the sprout of priority.
 The heart of approval and disapproval is the sprout of wisdom.

Some pointers

- *Ren/Jen* (Humanity 仁) in Mencius – compare and contrast with that in Confucius
- Pragmatic Humanism
concentrating on human self-cultivation and self-transformation.
- Benevolent Government (1A1-7, textbook)
- Contractual Reciprocity: Justified Revolts? (1B5-8, textbook)