

三字经

黄德宽 何功杰 崔恒昇 等编著



安徽教育出版社

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前 言

《三字经》是我国古代优秀的儿童启蒙读物，相传它是由宋代人王应麟编撰的。《三字经》自问世以来，流传不绝，为历代少年儿童所习诵，又经不少文人士的增补修订。

《三字经》列举方名事类，介绍经史诸子，叙次历代兴衰，启智劝学，循循善诱，包含了丰富的历史、文化内容。《三字经》分别部居，不相杂厕，文辞浅白，言简意赅，韵律和谐，便于吟诵，十分适合儿童学习。数百年来皆被奉为儿童启蒙教育的范本。

近代以来，社会急剧变革，科学迅猛发展，思想观念不断更新，教育内容日益丰富，《三字经》之类的传统教育读物，因其内容陈旧，甚至有某些封建性糟粕，遂被抛置一隅，无人问津，读过《三字经》的人也屈指可数了。然而，这部书在海外却不胫而走，1990年被联合国教科文组织选入儿童道德教育丛书，向全世界少年儿童推荐。最近，我们也看到国内一些出版社重印了这本书的不同版本，这表明人们正在重新评价《三字经》。

《三字经》记述了我国悠久的文明历史和优秀的文化传统，不失为一部对少年儿童进行历史文明、文化传统和爱国主义教育的教材。我们应剔除那些封建性糟粕，吸取其精华，使《三字经》成为现代中国儿童乃至世界儿童有益的精神食粮。

《三字经》成书于六、七百年之前，从内容到语言，都给今天的孩子们带来阅读障碍，汉语汉字更是国外小朋友无法逾越的鸿沟。因而，我们期望用自己的劳动为海内外的孩子们铺平道路，使他们能轻松地愉快地读懂这部古代儿童的通俗读物。我们所作的主要工作如下：

一是文字整理和注音。《三字经》版本很多，文字上互有歧异，旧本均是繁体印刷，无标点。我们以清《三字经注解备要》本为据，参照他本，略作校核，分节标点，用通行的现代简化字整理印刷，并且逐字加标现代汉语拼音。

二是注释词语，阐明典故。我们用现代汉语对书中难以理解的古代词语加以注释，力求简明易懂。对古代典章名物、人物故事，则以简略的语言加以说明，记其原委，做到通俗可读。

三是原文汉译。《三字经》原为三字韵语，简洁明快，为适合现代儿童吟诵，我们试着将原文用现代汉语直译。译文发扬原文特点，保持原意，一律译为五言韵文。现代儿童可逐句对照诵读，加深对原文的理解；也可分开吟诵，直接读原文、或直接读译文，理解《三字经》所述的内容。

四是汉语英译。联合国教科文组织推荐的《三字经》译本是新加坡出版的中英文对照本。我们也选用英语来翻译。英译是一项难度很大的工作，译为韵文要适合国外儿童的语言特点，已是一件极不容易的事；加之《三字经》是一部言简意赅、广泛涉及中国古代历史文化内容的作品，英译可谓难上加

难。然而，我们总不能只依赖外国人来翻译，因此，我们仍大胆尝试着来从事这项义不容辞的工作。

本书的英译根据《三字经》和英诗形式的特点，采用格律诗形式，大部分译文以四个或五个重音为一行，韵律一般是每两行一韵或二、四行一韵。为了格律的需要，为有助于外国孩子对中国历史文化的理解，翻译时采取了一些灵活的作法，比如增加适当的词语来介绍历史文化背景等。对于专有名词，如有传统译法，一律按传统译法翻译；如用汉语拼音，一律加标四声声调，以便区别读音，避免误解。译文力争用浅显通俗的现代英语，使《三字经》的英译适合外国小朋友的语言特点。中国的小朋友也可以将译文作为学习英语的读物。

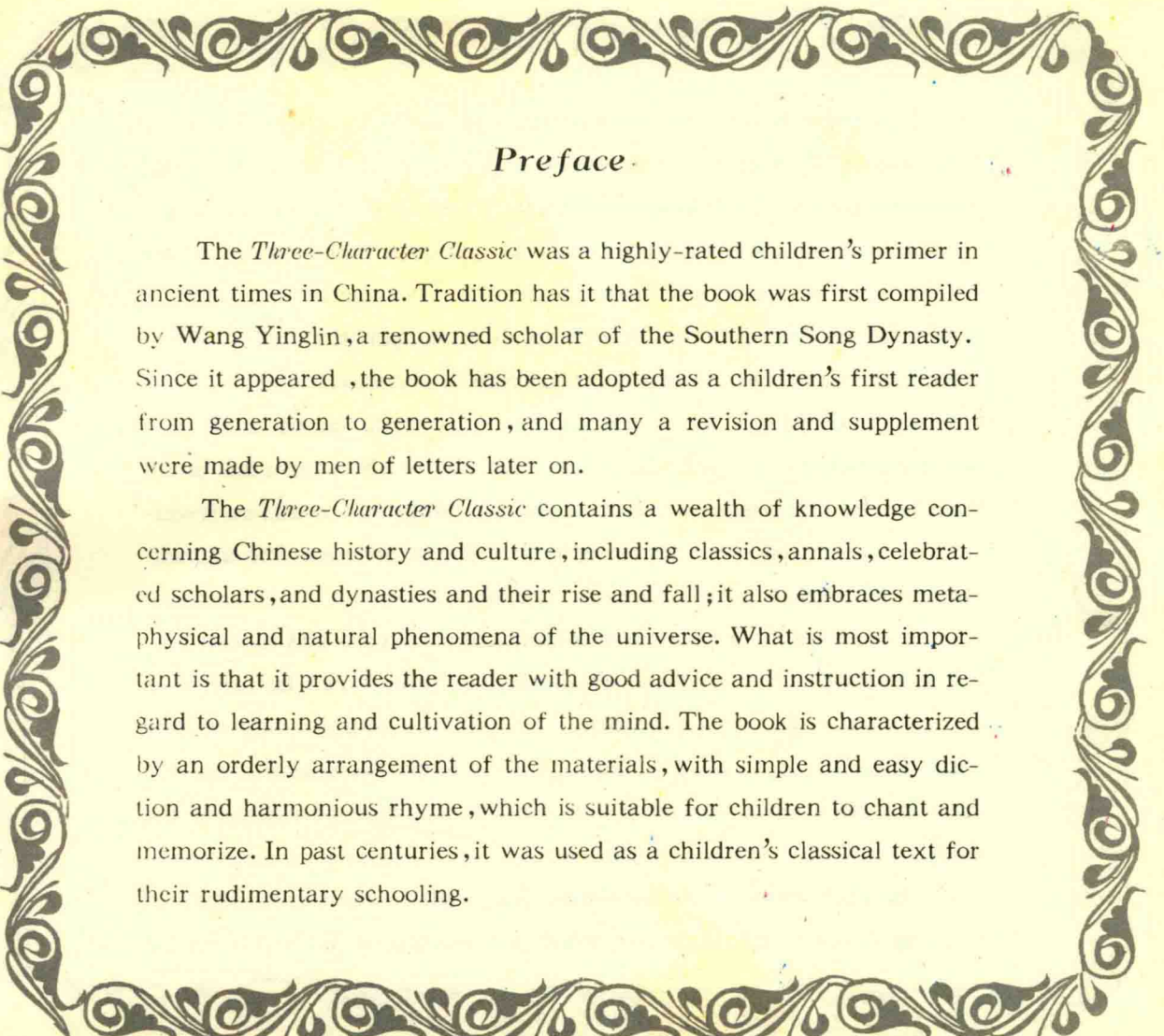
本书由崔恒昇副教授注释，何功杰教授英译，黄德宽副教授负责文字整理、分节标点、汉语注音、今译并统阅全稿。为了增强形象性、趣味性，出版社还约请了蒋辉明先生绘制了插图。

工作中，我们有时为一句译文，一个词语的注释，反复推敲，多次切磋，唯恐一时疏忽，贻误后代。历时经年，现在终于完成了任务。我们期望通过我们的工作，《三字经》这部优秀的儿童读物能重放光彩，为海内外少年儿童所喜爱。

这里，我们还要感谢美籍教师 Glauert 夫妇，他们审阅了本书的英文译稿，给了我们不少的指点。

注译者

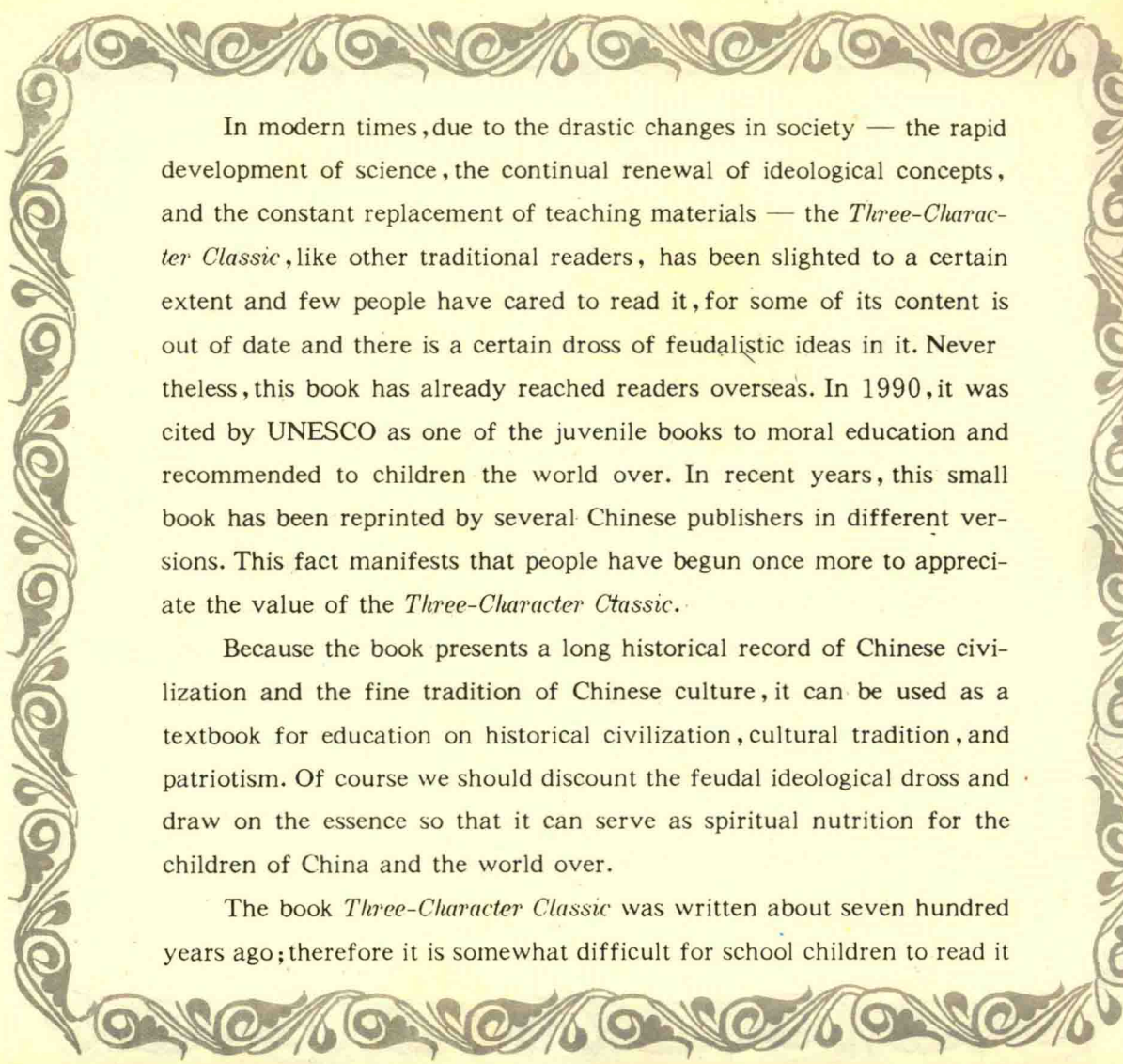
1991 年 12 月

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Preface

The *Three-Character Classic* was a highly-rated children's primer in ancient times in China. Tradition has it that the book was first compiled by Wang Yinglin, a renowned scholar of the Southern Song Dynasty. Since it appeared, the book has been adopted as a children's first reader from generation to generation, and many a revision and supplement were made by men of letters later on.

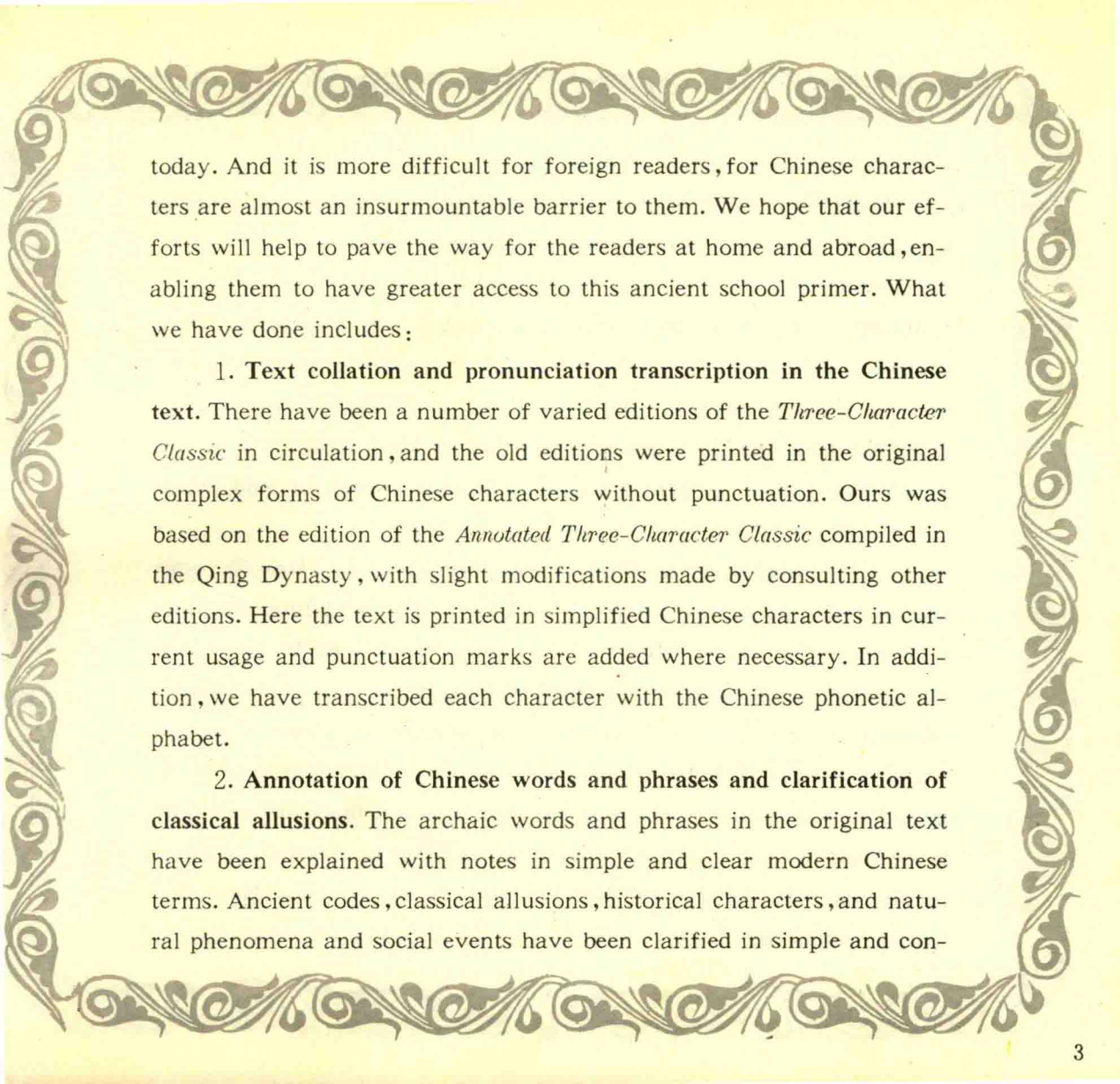
The *Three-Character Classic* contains a wealth of knowledge concerning Chinese history and culture, including classics, annals, celebrated scholars, and dynasties and their rise and fall; it also embraces metaphysical and natural phenomena of the universe. What is most important is that it provides the reader with good advice and instruction in regard to learning and cultivation of the mind. The book is characterized by an orderly arrangement of the materials, with simple and easy diction and harmonious rhyme, which is suitable for children to chant and memorize. In past centuries, it was used as a children's classical text for their rudimentary schooling.

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In modern times, due to the drastic changes in society — the rapid development of science, the continual renewal of ideological concepts, and the constant replacement of teaching materials — the *Three-Character Classic*, like other traditional readers, has been slighted to a certain extent and few people have cared to read it, for some of its content is out of date and there is a certain dross of feudalistic ideas in it. Nevertheless, this book has already reached readers overseas. In 1990, it was cited by UNESCO as one of the juvenile books to moral education and recommended to children the world over. In recent years, this small book has been reprinted by several Chinese publishers in different versions. This fact manifests that people have begun once more to appreciate the value of the *Three-Character Classic*.

Because the book presents a long historical record of Chinese civilization and the fine tradition of Chinese culture, it can be used as a textbook for education on historical civilization, cultural tradition, and patriotism. Of course we should discount the feudal ideological dross and draw on the essence so that it can serve as spiritual nutrition for the children of China and the world over.

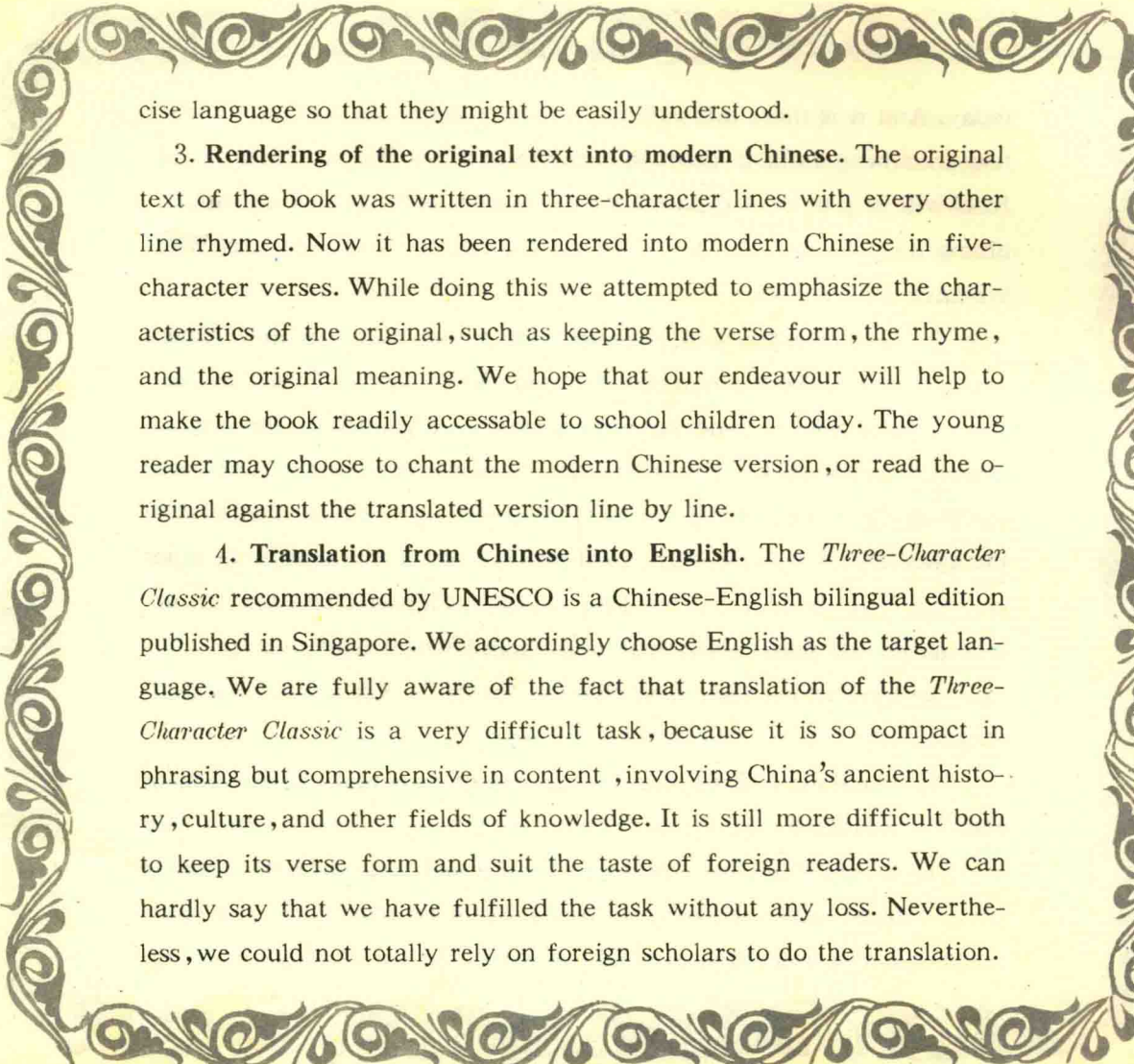
The book *Three-Character Classic* was written about seven hundred years ago; therefore it is somewhat difficult for school children to read it

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today. And it is more difficult for foreign readers, for Chinese characters are almost an insurmountable barrier to them. We hope that our efforts will help to pave the way for the readers at home and abroad, enabling them to have greater access to this ancient school primer. What we have done includes:

1. **Text collation and pronunciation transcription in the Chinese text.** There have been a number of varied editions of the *Three-Character Classic* in circulation, and the old editions were printed in the original complex forms of Chinese characters without punctuation. Ours was based on the edition of the *Annotated Three-Character Classic* compiled in the Qing Dynasty, with slight modifications made by consulting other editions. Here the text is printed in simplified Chinese characters in current usage and punctuation marks are added where necessary. In addition, we have transcribed each character with the Chinese phonetic alphabet.

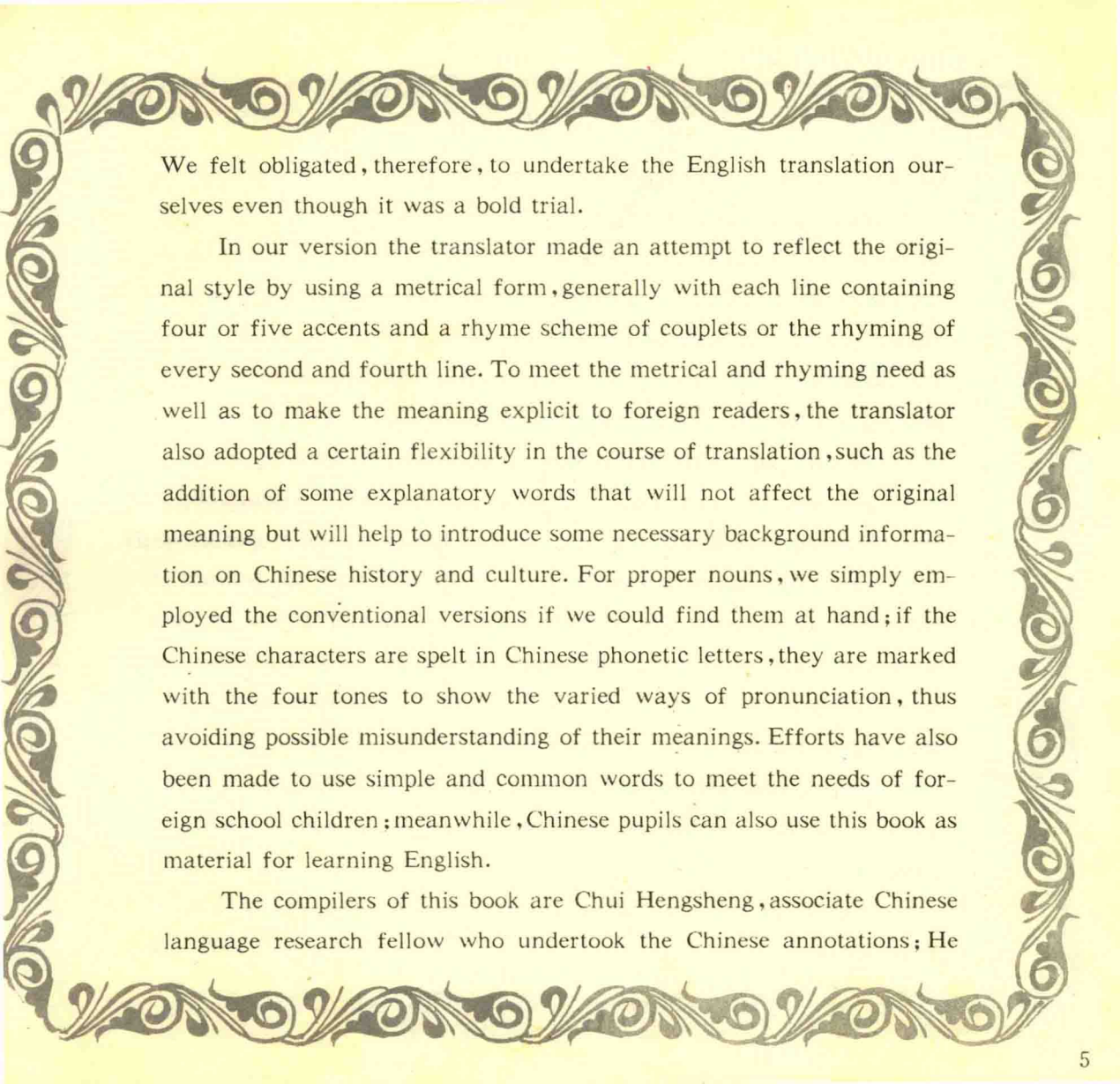
2. **Annotation of Chinese words and phrases and clarification of classical allusions.** The archaic words and phrases in the original text have been explained with notes in simple and clear modern Chinese terms. Ancient codes, classical allusions, historical characters, and natural phenomena and social events have been clarified in simple and con-



cise language so that they might be easily understood.

3. **Rendering of the original text into modern Chinese.** The original text of the book was written in three-character lines with every other line rhymed. Now it has been rendered into modern Chinese in five-character verses. While doing this we attempted to emphasize the characteristics of the original, such as keeping the verse form, the rhyme, and the original meaning. We hope that our endeavour will help to make the book readily accessible to school children today. The young reader may choose to chant the modern Chinese version, or read the original against the translated version line by line.

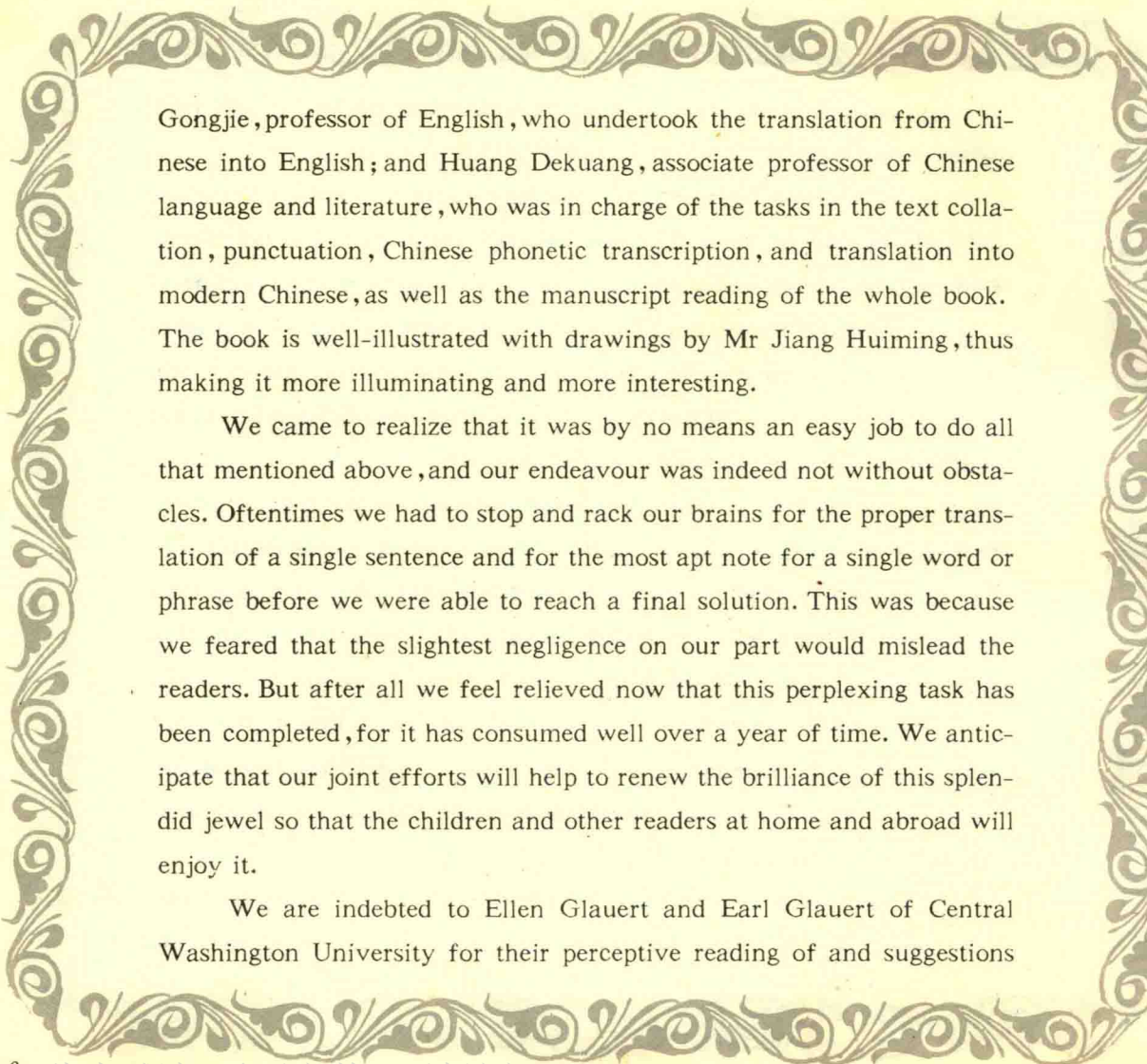
4. **Translation from Chinese into English.** The *Three-Character Classic* recommended by UNESCO is a Chinese-English bilingual edition published in Singapore. We accordingly choose English as the target language. We are fully aware of the fact that translation of the *Three-Character Classic* is a very difficult task, because it is so compact in phrasing but comprehensive in content, involving China's ancient history, culture, and other fields of knowledge. It is still more difficult both to keep its verse form and suit the taste of foreign readers. We can hardly say that we have fulfilled the task without any loss. Nevertheless, we could not totally rely on foreign scholars to do the translation.



We felt obligated, therefore, to undertake the English translation ourselves even though it was a bold trial.

In our version the translator made an attempt to reflect the original style by using a metrical form, generally with each line containing four or five accents and a rhyme scheme of couplets or the rhyming of every second and fourth line. To meet the metrical and rhyming need as well as to make the meaning explicit to foreign readers, the translator also adopted a certain flexibility in the course of translation, such as the addition of some explanatory words that will not affect the original meaning but will help to introduce some necessary background information on Chinese history and culture. For proper nouns, we simply employed the conventional versions if we could find them at hand; if the Chinese characters are spelt in Chinese phonetic letters, they are marked with the four tones to show the varied ways of pronunciation, thus avoiding possible misunderstanding of their meanings. Efforts have also been made to use simple and common words to meet the needs of foreign school children; meanwhile, Chinese pupils can also use this book as material for learning English.

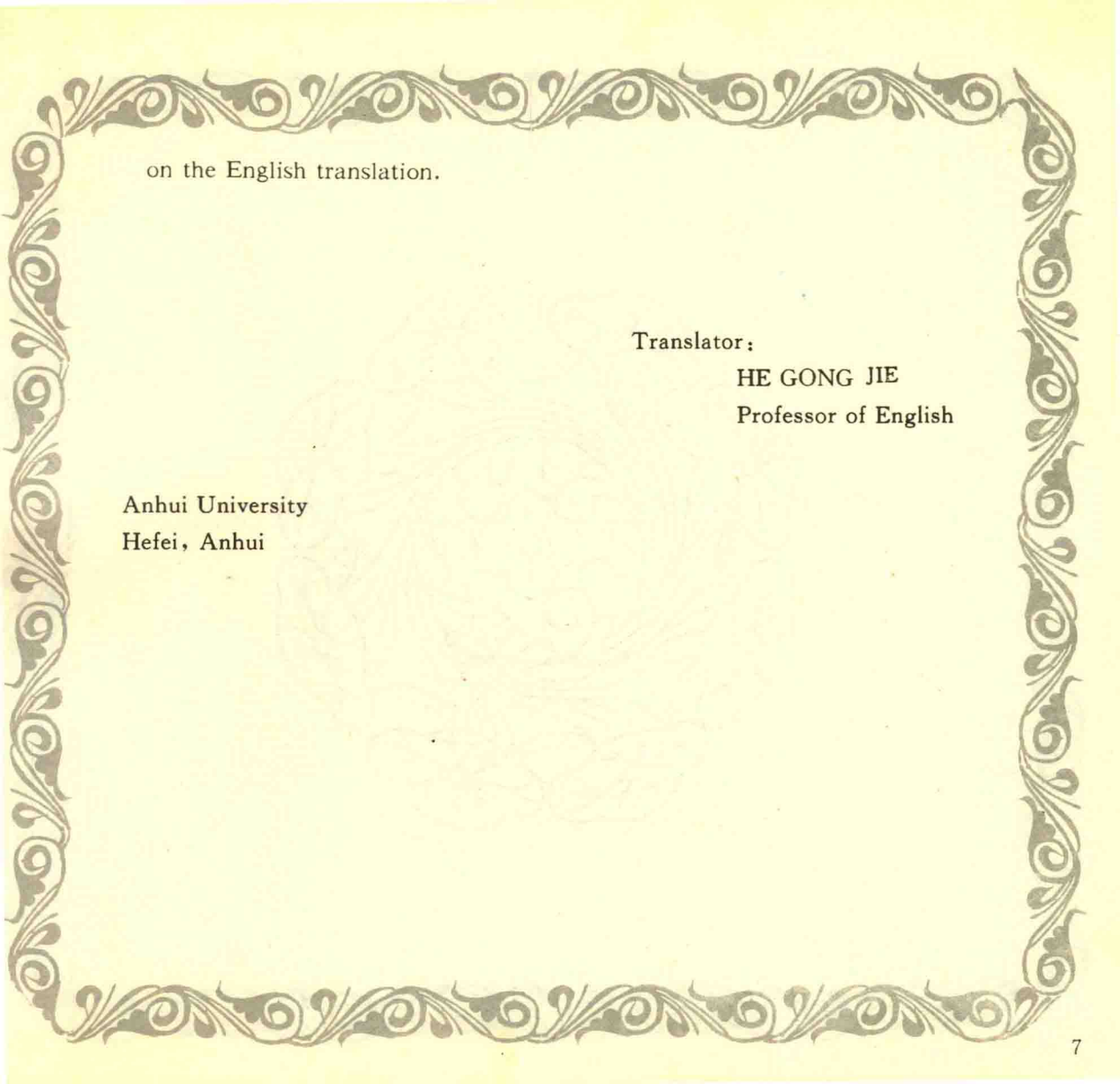
The compilers of this book are Chui Hengsheng, associate Chinese language research fellow who undertook the Chinese annotations; He

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Gongjie, professor of English, who undertook the translation from Chinese into English; and Huang Dekuang, associate professor of Chinese language and literature, who was in charge of the tasks in the text collation, punctuation, Chinese phonetic transcription, and translation into modern Chinese, as well as the manuscript reading of the whole book. The book is well-illustrated with drawings by Mr Jiang Huiming, thus making it more illuminating and more interesting.

We came to realize that it was by no means an easy job to do all that mentioned above, and our endeavour was indeed not without obstacles. Oftentimes we had to stop and rack our brains for the proper translation of a single sentence and for the most apt note for a single word or phrase before we were able to reach a final solution. This was because we feared that the slightest negligence on our part would mislead the readers. But after all we feel relieved now that this perplexing task has been completed, for it has consumed well over a year of time. We anticipate that our joint efforts will help to renew the brilliance of this splendid jewel so that the children and other readers at home and abroad will enjoy it.

We are indebted to Ellen Glauert and Earl Glauert of Central Washington University for their perceptive reading of and suggestions



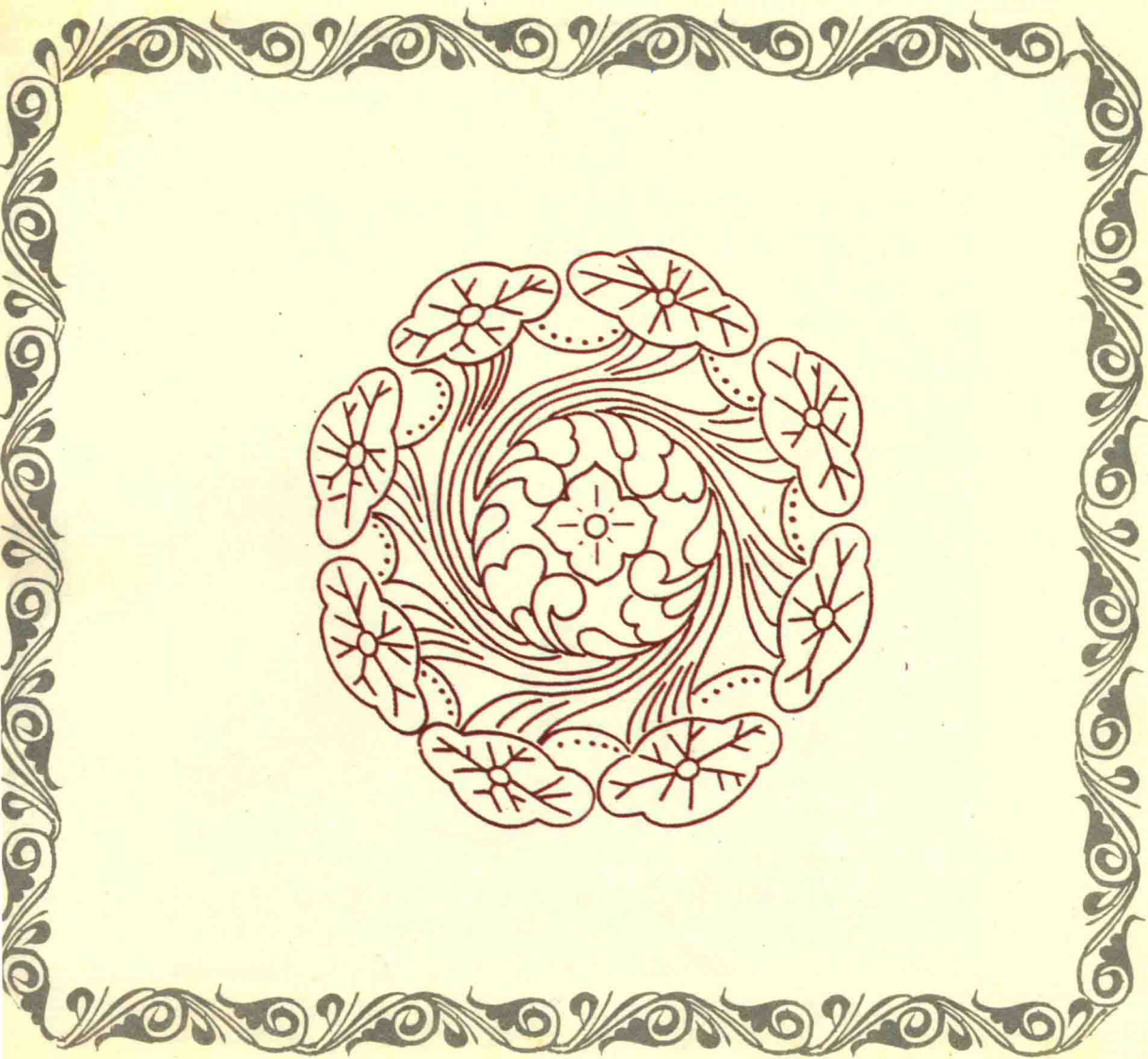
on the English translation.

Translator:

HE GONG JIE

Professor of English

Anhui University
Hefei, Anhui



(1)

rén zhī chū

人 之 初，

娃娃初出生，

xìng běn shàn

性 本 善。

性情本友善。

xìng xiāng jìn

性 相 近，

本性虽相近，

xí xiāng yuǎn

习 相 远。

习性相差远。

gǒu bù jiào

苟 不 教，

如果不教育，

xìng nǎi qiān

性 乃 迁。

本性就改变。

jiào zhī dào

教 之 道，

教育的方法，

guì yǐ zhuān

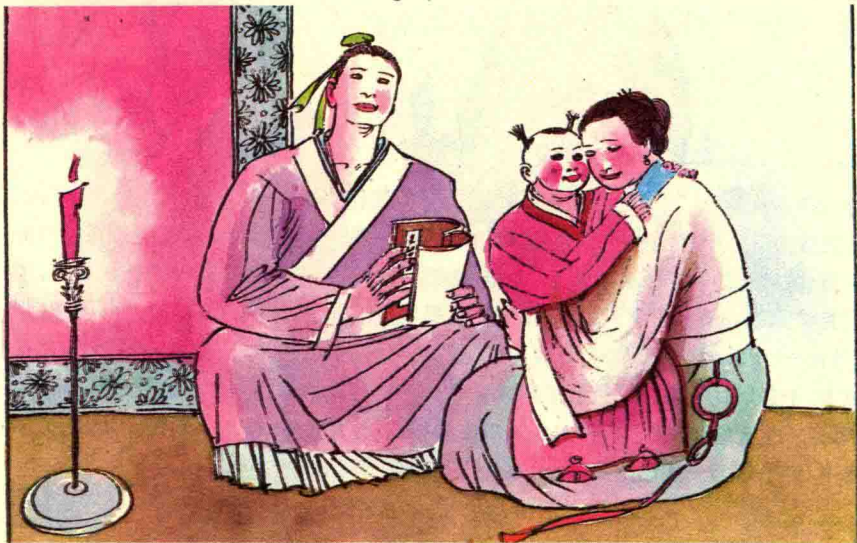
贵 以 专。

可贵在心专。

初：刚开始。 性：指人的本性；性情。 习：指习染；习性。 苟：如果；假如。

教：教育 迁：离开原来的（状态）。 道：方法。 贵：珍视。可贵。 专：集中（精力）。

Innately good the nature of man
Upon his birth when life began.
The natural quality alike at start,
But grow the tempers far apart.
If no postnatal schooling occurs,
Man's nature turns from good to worse.
In teaching boys, a worthy way
Is all attention one must pay.



(2)

xī	mèng	mǔ	
昔	孟	母，	从前孟子母，
zé	lín	chǔ	
择	邻	处，	选择好邻居，
zǐ	bù	xué	
子	不	学，	孟子不上学，
duàn	jī	zhù	
断	机	杼。	孟母割机布。

昔：古时；从前。 孟母：孟子的母亲。 处：居住。 子：指孟子。 机杼：织布机上的梭子。孟子幼年时，父亲早死，母仉(zhǎng)守寡，他家靠近墓地，孟子跟着学习丧葬等事情，孟母认为不利于儿子成长，于是搬到靠近市镇的地方。他家住宅旁有屠户，孟子又跟着学习宰杀买卖的事情，孟母认为住在那里也不合适，又搬到孔庙附近。每逢（阴历）每月初一、十五，官员入孔庙，行宾主相见的礼节。孟子见了，一一学习。孟母认为这是个好地方，于是居住下来。以后孟子渐渐长大，拜子思（孔子孙）为老师，一天孟子停学跑回家，母亲一见大怒，割断了机梭上尚未织成的布，以教育孟子，使孟子悔悟。从此，孟子发愤读书，终于成为一代思想家、政治家。

Mencius's stringent mother of old,
For son's good, thrice removed abode.
She once destroyed her woven-cloth,
Because of her truant son of sloth.

