

Philosophy's Future ... and Confucianism's Past

Phil 210, Class 8

Overview of Today

- Review of the Trajectory of Western Philosophy
- Future Philosophies: PWOL, Field Philosophy, and Non-Western Philosophy
- * * *
- The Context of Classical Confucianism
- *Mengzi* 1A and 1B: Profit and Benevolence, Policy, and the Psychological Basis of Therapy



Philosophy in the West – Classical Schools

- Ancient schools teaching how to live (Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*)
- Socrates as an irritant – the gadfly
- Aristotle as an adviser
- Stoics in Greece and Rome

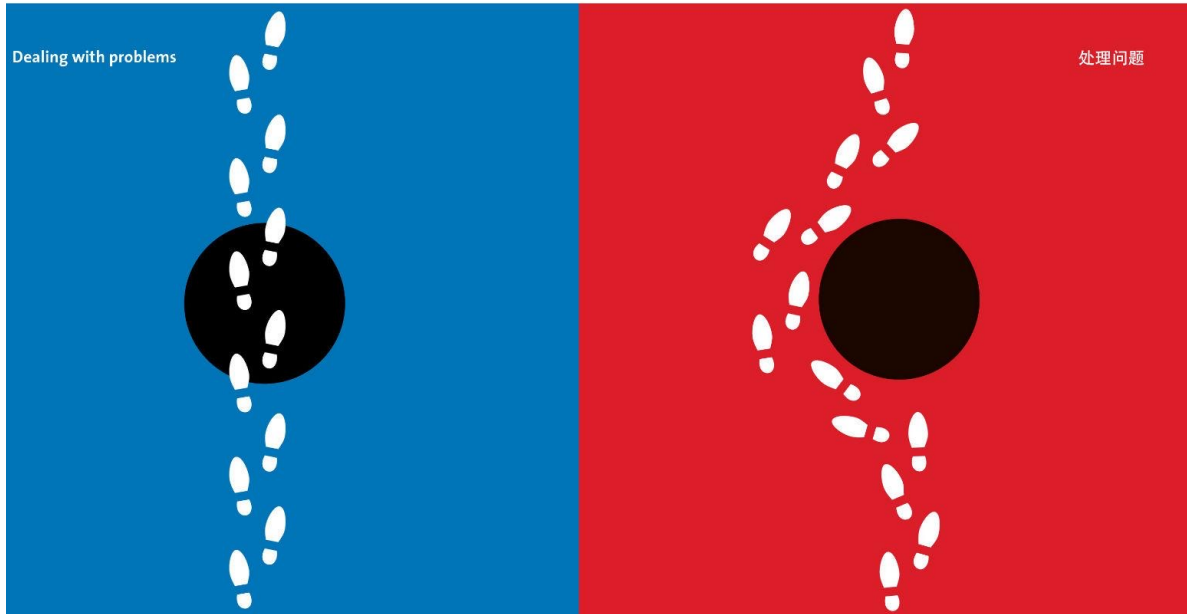
Philosophy in the West – Religion and Science

- Early universities, theology and philosophy, faith and reason
- Rise of natural science – what is the place for philosophy?
- Pressure for specialized methodology
- Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781)

Critik der reinen Vernunft

von
Immanuel Kant
Professor in Königsberg.





- Individualist focus of psychology
- Is subjective happiness (however defined) the determinant of a good life?

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- Limits of WEIRD science
- East and West: differences within and similarities across

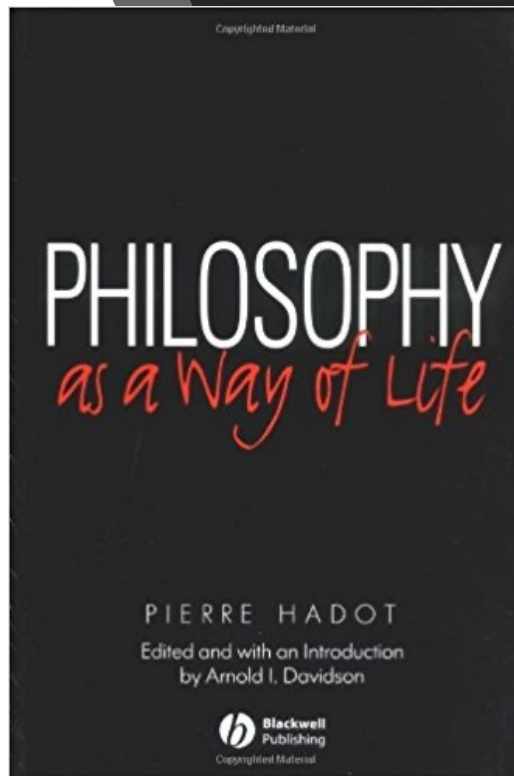
WEIRD (Positive) Psychology



Philosophy in the West – Discipline

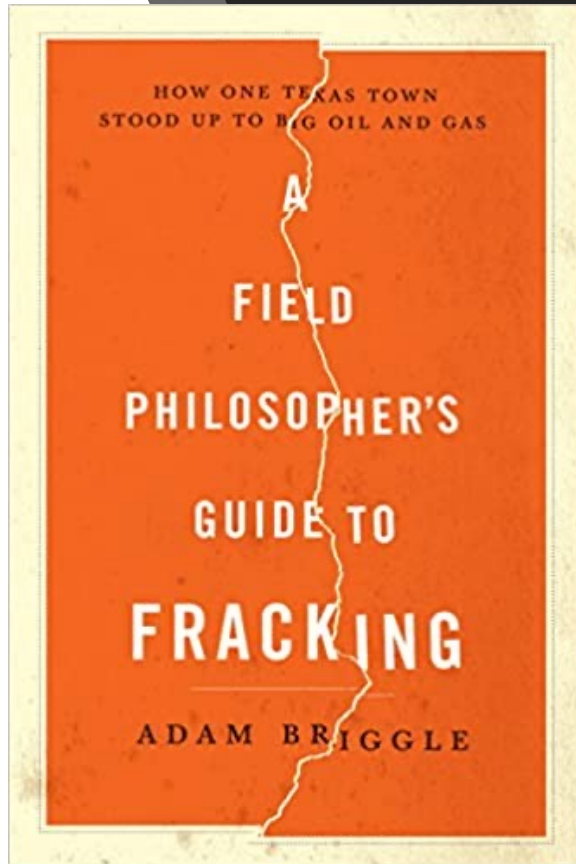
- “Professors of philosophy”, not “philosophers” (Thoreau, d. 1862)
- Philosophy as isolated, like organic chemistry (Quine, d. 2000)
- Advantages of specialization, but “disciplinary capture”

21st Century Philosophy: New Possibilities



- New (or Renewed) Sources:
 - Earlier history of Western Phil
- Levels:
 - Micro: individual
 - Macro: philosopher king
- Roles:
 - Disciplinary philosopher
 - [Teacher, counselor, coach, therapist]

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21st Century Philosophy: New Possibilities



growing moral
a confucian guide to life

STEPHEN C. ANGLE

- New (or Renewed) Sources:
 - Earlier history of Western Phil
 - Modern organizational / institutional needs
 - Non-Western Phil. Theory and Practice
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 - Micro: individual
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Classical Confucianism – Social Context

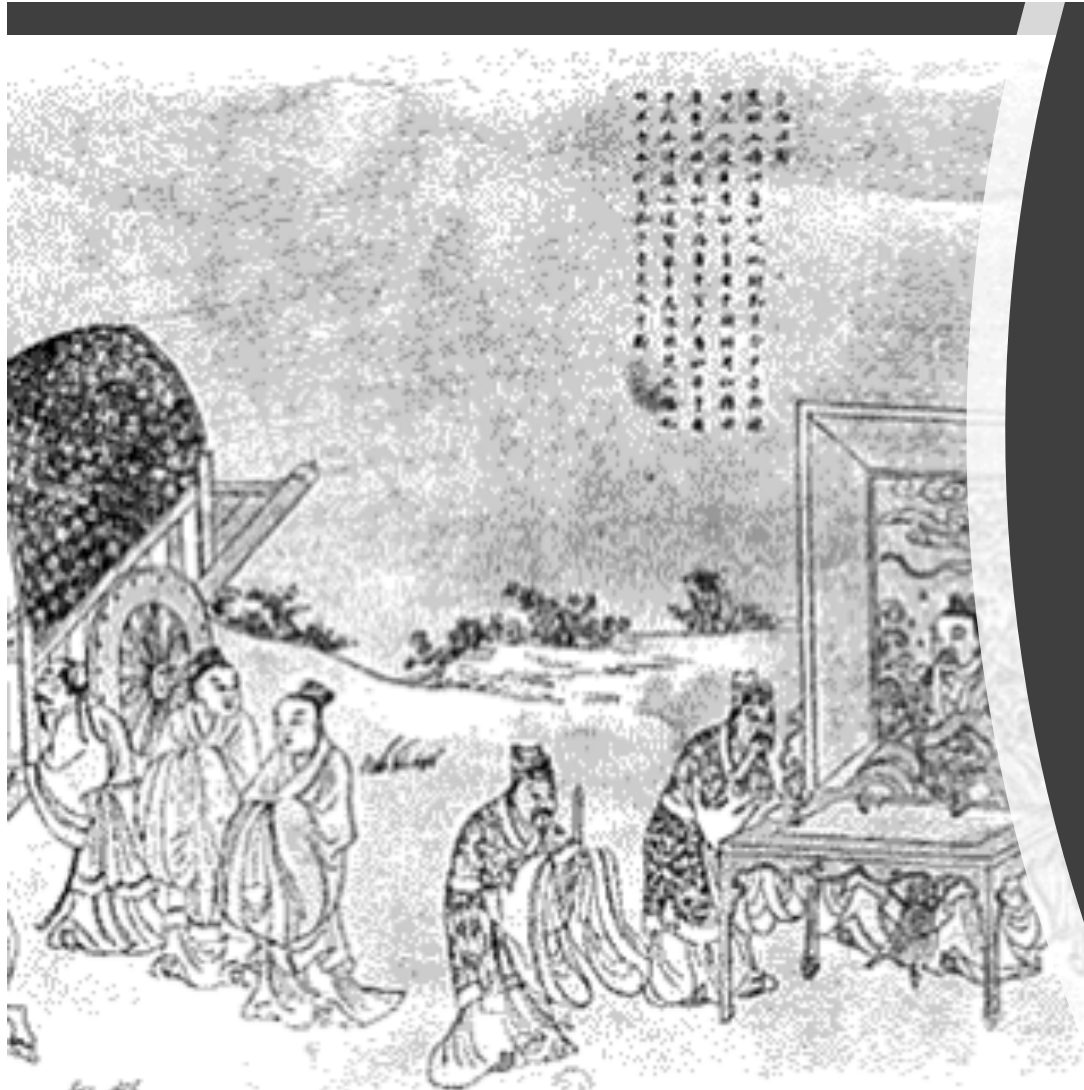
- Early Zhou (c. 1000 BCE)
- Gradual changes
 - Decline of central power
 - Growth of population and social complexity
 - Feudal “lords” aspire to be kings



Classical Confucianism – Social Context

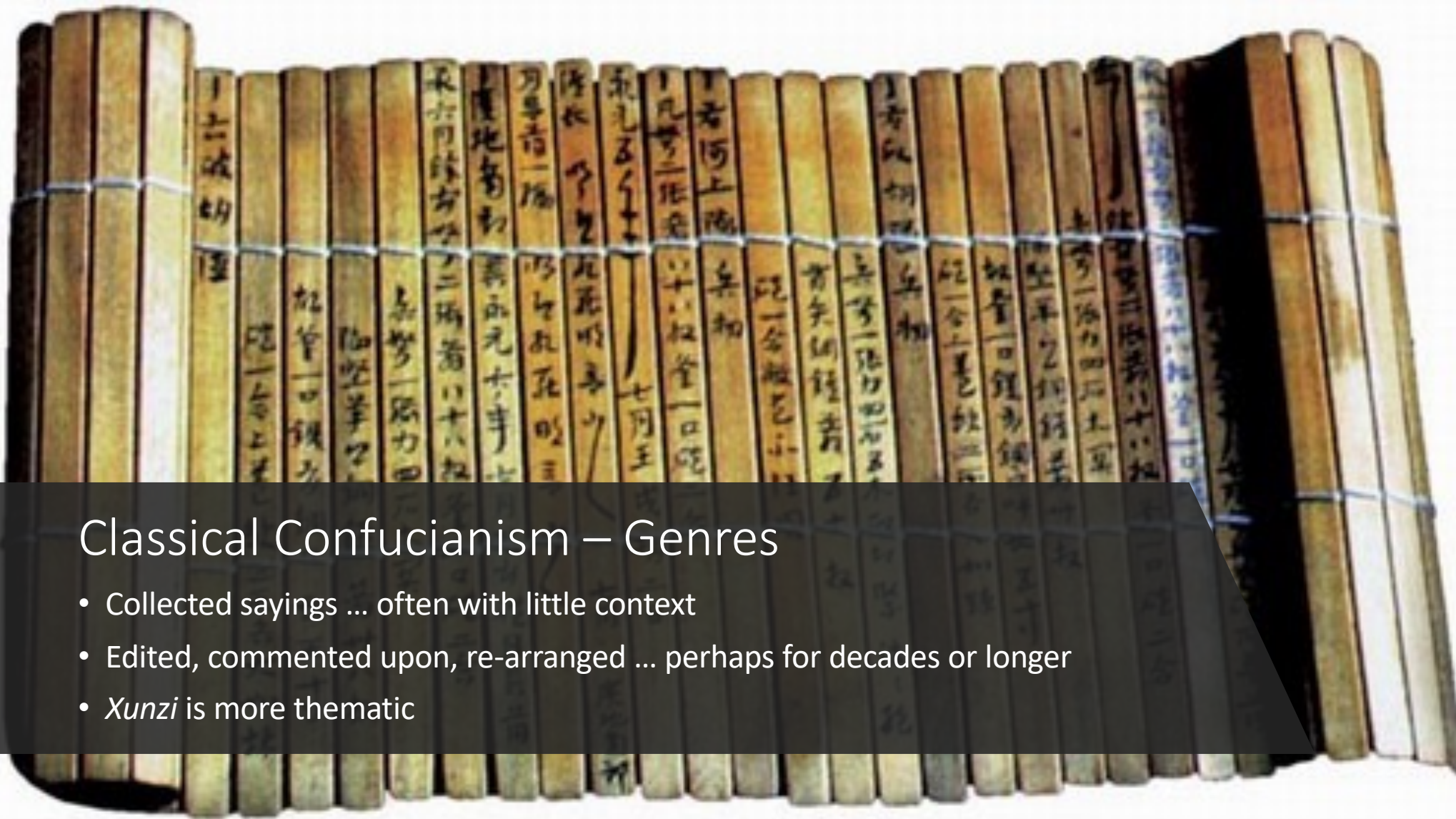
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- Warring States Era (5th-3rd c. BCE)
- “What is the Way (*dao* 道)?”





Classical Confucianism – Big Three

- Kongzi 孔子 (or Confucius), 551 – 479 BCE, pronounced kong-dz
- Mengzi 孟子 (or Mencius), 4th c. BCE, pronounced mung-dz
- Xunzi 荀子, 3rd c. BCE, pronounced hsün-dz



Classical Confucianism – Genres

- Collected sayings ... often with little context
- Edited, commented upon, re-arranged ... perhaps for decades or longer
- *Xunzi* is more thematic

Mengzi 1A:1 – Core Ideas

- Mengzi and King Hui of Liang
- “...so you must have a way of profiting my state.”
 - *Li* 利 = profit, benefit
- “Why must Your Majesty speak of ‘profit’? Let there simply be benevolence and righteousness.”
 - *Ren* 仁 = benevolence
 - *Yi* 義/义 – righteousness, appropriateness



Mengzi 1A:1 – What's the Argument?

What do you think the conclusion is?

1. Why must one speak of profit?
2. When people put profit before righteousness, they cannot be satisfied.
3. Let your majesty speak only of benevolence and righteousness.
4. Benevolent and righteous leaders are best.
5. We should strive to be virtuous.

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6. Order is better than chaos.

Which of these premises is explicit in the passage? Which is implicit (so we need to infer it)?



Mengzi 1A:3

- Role of policy in being able to live a good life
- “Currently, no one knows to limit how much of the food is consumed by dogs and sows. Then no one knows to disburse food from the granary when there are bodies in the streets dead of starvation. When someone dies, you say, ‘It wasn’t me. It was due to the harvest.’ How is this different from killing someone by stabbing him and saying, ‘It wasn’t me. It was due to the weapon’?”

Mengzi 1A:7 — Explication

- “What must one’s Virtue be like so that one can become King?”
 - *De* 德 = virtue
- “One cares for the people and becomes King. This is something no one can stop.”
- “Can one such as ourselves care for the people?”
- “This heart is sufficient to become King.”
 - *Xin* 心 = heart, heartmind





Mengzi 1A:7 — Micro / Meso / Macro Connections

- How do micro-cultivation, meso-policies, and macro-rulership affect one another?

Mengzi 1A:7 & 1B:5 — Basic Reactions

- What reactions (feelings, emotions) are key to 1A:7?



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 - Care for people
 - Inability to bear suffering of ox
 - Treat elders as elders ...



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- What reactions are key to 1B:5?



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- NEXT TIME: Mengzi's psychology of human nature, and its connection to virtue and the good life

