

# Outline

1. Pre-course survey/getting to know you
2. Getting to know me/the syllabus
3. What is philosophy? What is (distinctive about) Chinese philosophy?
4. An exercise on culture

# Pre-course survey

15 minutes

Anonymous, BUT, please complete the consent form...

research possibilities – capstone design

# Getting to know you

Write the following:

1. Your name
2. Where you're from
3. What you're studying
4. Why you're taking this course/something you hope to get out of it
5. Something about which you're passionate

# Getting to know me

1. Rockwell Franklin III, PhD (a family name, doctorate from Purdue) – call me “Rocky.”
2. Chicago originally, although I’ve moved all over: undergrad in NYC, did my MA and spent a year as a foreign fellow in Belgium, did my PhD in Indiana, finished writing my dissertation in France, moved to Shanghai for this job – was back in the US working on a grant project for another course
3. Studied economics for two years in undergrad, switched to philosophy. Wrote my dissertation on French philosophy, American literature, and psychoanalysis, and now I’m interested in applied ethics, philosophy of technology, and moral psychology

# Getting to know me



Associate Teaching Professor in engineering ethics and philosophy,  
University of Michigan-Shanghai Jiao Tong University Joint Institute



Research fellow, Institute of Social Cognitive and Behavioral Science, Shanghai Jiao Tong University



Long-term educational consultant, Purdue  
University, West Lafayette, IN, USA

# Getting to know me

4. Learning discussing contemporary significance of Chinese philosophy with you – some good vignettes/questionnaires

5. Learning new things and telling others about what I learn (teaching) and binge watching TV shows (Game of Thrones, of course, House of Cards, West World, Black Mirror, etc. while eating 生煎包, 小笼包, and ice cream...)



# Introduction to philosophy

What is philosophy?

# Introduction to philosophy

philo + sophos

love/friend + wisdom

# Introduction to philosophy

philosophy = the love of wisdom

philosopher = someone who loves wisdom

# Introduction to philosophy

Socrates – philosopher/lover of wisdom

# Introduction to philosophy

Who's not a lover/friend of wisdom?

In contradistinction to what should philosophy  
be understood?

# Introduction to philosophy

the sophist = claims to have wisdom

# Introduction to philosophy

Socrates never had wisdom completely, but was constantly striving after it.

How did he go about striving after wisdom?

# Introduction to philosophy

Asking questions!!!

What types of questions does philosophy ask?

# Introduction to philosophy

Each branch of philosophy deals with specific questions/problems:

1. What's the nature of reality? (metaphysics)
2. What can I know/is knowledge? (epistemology)
3. What should I do – given some conception of the good? (ethics)

# Introduction to philosophy

Branches of knowledge result from a convergence of questions and methodologies to address those questions, for example, physics, economics, and psychology...

All knowledge, ultimately, comes from and can, therefore, be unified through philosophy.

# Chinese philosophy

What is *Chinese* philosophy?

# Chinese philosophy

哲学

# Chinese philosophy

哲 (knowledge) 学 (learning)

# Chinese philosophy

“...the Western word ‘philosophy’ is quite recent in Chinese; it was initially rendered into Chinese as zhèxué in 1873 by the **Japanese** scholar Xi Zhou (1829–1897) who studied in the Netherlands...

the initial character zhe means ‘knowledge’ or ‘capacity to acquire knowledge’, with an extended meaning of wisdom; and the second character xue means ‘learning’.

The Chinese term for ‘philosophy’ thus means ‘learning to become a wise and knowledgeable person.’”\*

\*Wang, N. (2013). “Philosophical perspectives on technology in Chinese Society.” *Technology in Society* 35. p. 165.

# Chinese philosophy

“Before the word coinage by Xi Zhou, the **abstract** notion of philosophy was always embedded in more **specific** neo-Confucianism terms created by Cheng Hao (1033–1107), Cheng Yi (1032–1085), and Zhu Xi (1130–1200), such as **qiongli xue** (inquiry learning into the universe), **xingli xue** (theory of human nature), or **li xue** (learning of principle).

In a note to explain why he decided to create zhixue to replace specific terms with a more general one, Xi Zhou wrote:

The original English word for zhixue is philosophy, and the French word is *philosophie*. Both derive from the Greek word philosophos, which means the person who loves (philo) wisdom (sophos). The functional implication in the Chinese language is the so called ‘scholar who follows the example of the wise person’, according to a proposal by Zhou Dunyi in the Song dynasty. Later generations specifically identified philosophy [in general] with neo-Confucianism [a specific philosophy] and even literally translated the former as the doctrine of neo-Confucianism. In many instances, it is better to translate philosophy as zhixue in order to distinguish it from Confucianism in East Asia”\*

\*Wang, N. (2013). “Philosophical perspectives on technology in Chinese Society.” *Technology in Society* 35. p. 166.

# Chinese philosophy

Confucius ~ first Chinese philosopher

Striving after wisdom

Emphasis on questioning

Skepticism regarding (definitive) knowledge claims  
– his perspective/theory versus those of others

# **Chinese philosophy**

1. What's the nature of reality? (metaphysics)
2. What can I know/is knowledge? (epistemology)
3. **What should I do – given some conception of the good?** (ethics) ← relative priority/emphasis

# What is culture?

What is culture?

Give three examples of things that are “cultural,” explaining what makes them so.

# Close reading and critical thinking

- “Active reading,” with a pen in hand
- Ask yourself: “What’s the main question/point of this reading/article/section/paragraph?”
- Try to state it in your own words, and look out for it in the text
- Use parentheses, a line in the margin – double lines for more important questions/points – or star to mark
- Definitions: Circle the word, make a line in the margin, and an “=” sign.
- Contrasts: Make a “/” between elements
- Claims you don’t understand/find dubious/with which you disagree → Use a “?” with a note reminding you of the problem
- Make notes for other important thoughts/connections

# “Culture in humans and other animals”

Q: What's the main question of this article? A: What is culture?

Q: What's the main point of this article? A: Culture is not merely behaviors, ideas, beliefs, or other *cultural* variants, i.e., things related to culture.

These are the kinds of things – and differences between them – that culture is supposed to explain. They're phenotypic!

# “Culture in humans and other animals”

An argument to refute this claim:

1. “Culture” should be able to explain (differences in) “behaviors, ideas, etc.”
2. Define/understand “culture” as “behaviors, ideas, etc.”
3. It follows, from 1. and 2., that “behaviors, ideas, etc.” explain “behaviors, ideas, etc.”
4. 3. is circular/seems absurd
5. Hence, reject premise 2. – “culture” should not be defined as “behaviors, ideas, etc.”

# “Culture in humans and other animals”

In my own words: Culture is socially transmitted information that has long-term effects on the behaviors of individuals and groups.

In the text: “Culture is *information* [1] *transmitted between individuals or groups* [2], where this information *flows through* [3] and brings about the *reproduction* of [4], and a *lasting change* in [5], the *behavioral trait*” (Ramsey 466 – italics mine).

Culture is socially transmitted (2, 3?, 4?) information (1) that has long-term effects (5, 4) on the behaviors (3, 4) of individuals and groups.

# “Culture in humans and other animals”

Hence, five criteria for the application of the term “culture,” along with critical clarifications/questions:

1. information: different types, BUT not a *lack* of information
2. transmitted between individuals/groups – versus genes – BUT how transmitted? Includes environments/“niche construction”
3. transmitted through behaviors (“flows through”) – BUT, what types of behaviors? Again, environments/“niche construction,” and teaching
4. reproduction of behavior – NOT the information itself, BUT to what extent/how perfectly?
5. causes lasting changes – how long?

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5. causes lasting changes – how long?

# Group/critical thinking activity

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# “Culture and social behavior”

1. cooperation and punishment
2. fairness and punishment effects
3. ingroup favoritism/parochialism
4. markets
5. religion and ritual
6. ecology and class causes
7. monogamous marriage
8. social safety nets and security

# “Culture and social behavior”

1. What's the main question/point of this article? In my own words:

How do behaviors vary across human groups and why? Human behaviors are incredibly variable across groups (parts 1-3), as a result of social institutions (4-8), which are cultural.

2. In the text:

“**Social** behavior varies dramatically across human populations and throughout **history**” (84). “Let us consider four packages of social **norms** – **institutions** – that have been linked to **psychological** difference” (86).

# Some preliminaries – Economic games

-“economic” (phenomena related to market activities, such as fairness and cooperation)

-“games” (quantify behaviors – versus mere judgments)

1. Dictator game – allocate

2. Ultimatum game – allocate and (dis)agree

3. Cooperation game – put in and multiply

-Variations: anonymous versus known, one-off versus repeated,  
punishment: peer versus bystander

## Some preliminaries – Cultural variants

- Related to culture (remember: culture is INFORMATION, such that cultural variants would be informational – carriers of information)
- For example, self concepts ~ how one thinks about oneself: independent versus interdependent
- To date, “values” have been the most widely studied and conceived (cross-) cultural variant...

# Some preliminaries – (Chinese) values

## Introduction: the context of Chinese cultural comparisons

Fascination with noting the uniqueness of 'the Chinese' and their culture has been an enduring pursuit of many throughout recent history, observations well documented, for example, by Mackerras (1991, 1999) and Spence (1998). Some of these differences have been attributed to 'Chinese values'. Western observers early took note of and tried to describe these 'Chinese characteristics' (Russell, 1922; Smith, 1890/1984), and were joined by generations of internationally educated Chinese seeking to contrast and clarify the richness of their own civilization (e.g. Ku Hong-ming's *The spirit of the Chinese*, 1915, Hu Shí's *The Chinese renaissance*, 1934, and Lin Yu-tang's *My country and my people*, 1935/2000). The insights and significance of each of those cultural 'sightings' (Spence, 1998, p. xi-xiii) still arouse the interest of both modern 'China watchers' and modernizing Chinese citizens, as evidenced by multiple recent reprints of each of those early works (having similar status as Benedict's 1946 ever-read study on the Japanese, *The chrysanthemum and the sword*). But, as Spence noted, 'Assessments of China and the Chinese people were often coarse-grained or inaccurate; they drew on imagination and stereotype as much as on any kind of informed application of intellect' (1998, p. xvii). Social psychologists have been equally intrigued with and have committed research energy toward scientifically clarifying the unique or comparable domains of Chinese cultural values.

The psychological study of Chinese values has a long history, from Chinese being included in small-set multi-nation comparative studies (e.g. Morris, 1956; Hofstede, 2001), to deeper considerations of 'the Chinese' from indigenous and emic perspectives (K. S. Yang, 1982, 2006; Chinese Culture Connection, 1987), to seeking to integrate Chinese values into universal etic frameworks (Ho, 1998a; and Chinese samples included in Schwartz, 1992, 1994a, 2005). The earlier history of this endeavor has been well documented by K. S. Yang (1986; 1996) and Bond (1996), so that the focus of this essay will be the ongoing quest of indigenous and multicultural studies that seek to duly differentiate, inclusively consider, or universally incorporate variations of Chinese values.

With the development of social science, the quality of values studies continues to improve, a trend Bond (1996) noted and predicted, where increasingly 'samples are more comparable, instruments are more comprehensive, analyses are more sophisticated, and studies are more pancultural' (p. 208). This essay will depart slightly from Bond's (*ibid.*) previous edition, as we now believe that some emic

## Definitions of values

Though recent years have witnessed extensive theoretical and methodological debate over diverse conceptualizations of culture (cf. Borofsky, Barth, Shweder, Rodseth, & Stolzenberg, 2001; Heine, Lehman, Peng, & Greenholtz, 2002; Kitayama, 2002), a core body of research on the values construct (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002) has emerged. Several influential definitions continue to guide most values studies (even in China, e.g. Jin & Xin, 2003):

A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.

Gluckhohn, 1951, p. 395

A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence.

Rokeach, 1973, p. 5

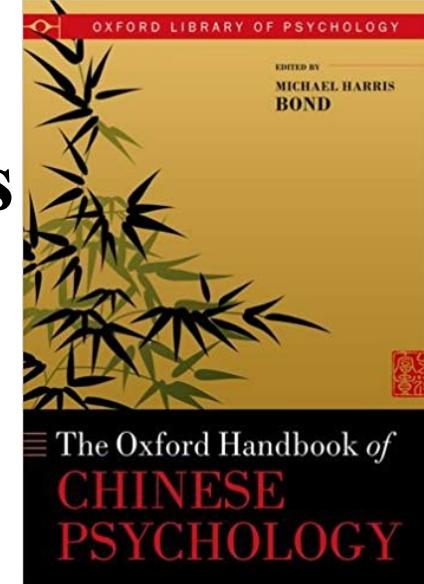
[V]alues are (a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance.

Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, p. 551

I define values as desirable transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity.

Schwartz, 1994, p. 21

These formulations span the latter half of the twentieth century and have been extensively drawn on to evaluate diverse bodies of research, incorporate broad multinational comparative samples (e.g. Hofstede, 1980, 2001), and develop more integrated theories (Schwartz, 1992). Though interest in



# Some preliminaries – (Chinese) values

## -Hofstede and Schwartz value dimensions:

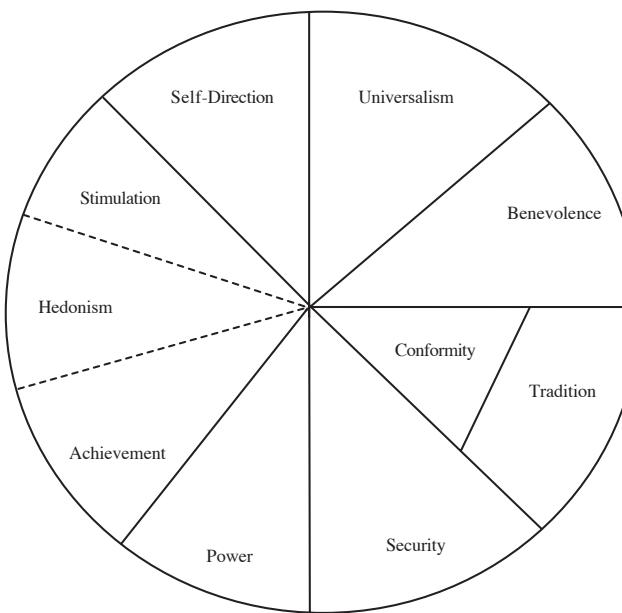
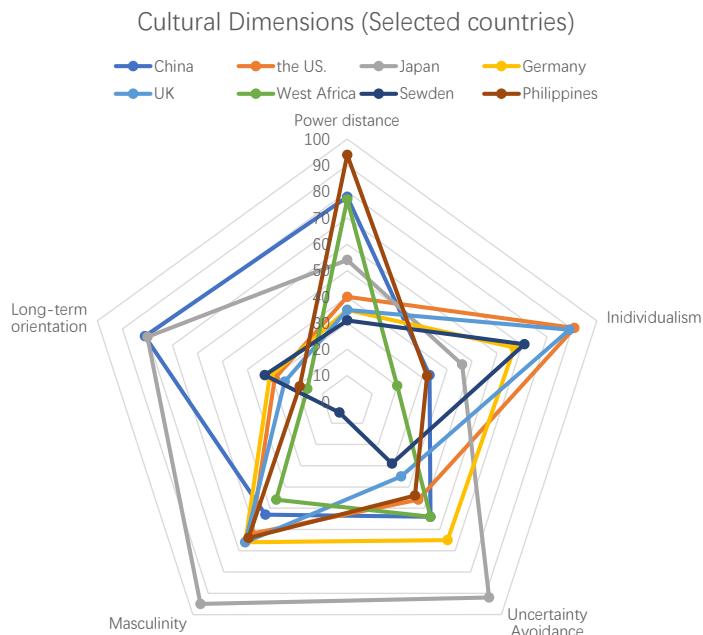


Figure 1 Theoretical structure of values.

-BUT, values aren't particularly/universally predictive of behaviors – high amounts of variation in the relation between (reported) values and (observed) actions

\*Bardi & Schwartz 2003

TABLE 2: Examples of Behavior Items Expressive of Each Value

Values	Behavior Items
Power	Pressure others to go along with my preferences and opinions Choose friends and relationships based on how much money they have Study late into the night before exams even if I studied well in the semester
Achievement	Take on many commitments Take it easy and relax Consume food or drinks even when I'm not hungry or thirsty Watch thrillers
Hedonism	Do unconventional things Examine the ideas behind rules and regulations before obeying them Come up with novel set-ups for my living space Use environmentally friendly products Make sure everyone I know receives equal treatment
Stimulation	Agree easily to lend things to neighbors Keep promises I have made Observe traditional customs on holidays Show modesty with regard to my achievements and talents
Self-direction	Obey my parents Avoid confrontations with people I don't like Refrain from opening my door to strangers Buy products that were made in my country
Universalism	
Benevolence	
Tradition	
Conformity	
Security	

# Some preliminaries – Norms

In addition, a focus on norms:

“...a norm is a **rule** or principle [1] that specifies **actions** [2] that are **required**, permissible, or forbidden [3] **independently** of any legal or social institution [4]. Of course, some norms are also recognized and enforced by social institutions and laws, but the crucial point is that they needn't be... Very roughly, people are motivated to comply with norms as ultimate ends, rather than as a means to other ends; we'll refer to this type of motivation as **intrinsic motivation** [4]... People can also be motivated to comply with a norm for instrumental reasons, though intrinsic compliance motivation adds a substantial additional motivational force [We'll return to this in debates between Confucians, Daoists, Mohists, and legalists]. Violations of norms...typically engender **punitive** attitudes, like anger, condemnation, and blame, directed at the norm violator, and these attitudes sometimes lead to punitive behavior [5]” (Sripada & Stich 2007).

# Some preliminaries – Norms

Hence, five criteria for the application of the term “norm,” along with some critical clarifications/questions:

1. rule/principle – not necessarily ideational – i,e., involving a belief, idea, etc.
2. specifying actions – versus thoughts, beliefs, etc. BUT, these might not be unrelated...
3. specification of: should, could, or **should not** – to date, the greatest amount of research has focused on the last one...
4. institutionally independent/intrinsically motivating – the relations between these two are not entirely clear...
5. punitive attitudes or punishing actions

# Cooperation and punishment

- Own words: Levels of cooperation (as measured by mean contributions in cooperation games) and their “dynamics” (~whether these remain the same, go up, or down, and the affects of punishment on these levels) are different among different groups in different places.
- In the text: Not really...
- Definitions?

# Cooperation and punishment

- Information transmitted/how: If people will cooperate (contribute money – a behavior), how they will cooperate (how much money they contribute), and whether and to what extent people *should* cooperate (how and how much people punish)
- Lasting change in behavior: How likely people are to cooperate in the future – for example, group projects and entering a subway car...
- Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Fairness and punishment

-Own words: Perceptions of fairness (as measured by mean offers made and accepted in ultimatum games) are different among different groups in different places.

-Definitions?

-Information transmitted/how: What people think is fair (how much they offer and rates at which people accept – behavior) and what people *should* think is fair (when an offer is rejected because it is too low/high)

# Fairness and punishment

- Lasting change in behavior?
- Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Ingroup favoritism/parochialism

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Markets

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# **Religion and ritual**

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Ecology and class

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Ecology and class

“...certain ecological conditions, in particular those conducive to intensive paddy *rice* cultivation, should favor the formation of highly *cooperative* groups... The results reveal a strong positive correlation between rice-growing and in-group favoritism,” interdependent conceptions of the self, and holistic thought (86 – emphasis added).

# Monogamous marriage

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# Social safety nets and security

1. What's the main question/point of this section? (philosophy)
2. State it in your own words – try to find it in the text too
3. Are there any definitions?
4. What information is being transmitted? (culture)
5. How is it being transmitted? (For example, in environments, behaviors of others, explicit instruction, or...)
6. What kind of lasting change in behavior occurs/takes place?
7. Claims you don't understand/find dubious/with which you disagree?

# “The cultural evolution of prosocial religions”

Common to conceive of religion in terms of *belief* in a supernatural God ← *orthodoxy* (=“right belief”)

Influences (“success”) of the “Abrahamic” religions – origins in Abraham – i.e., Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (6 & 8).

Most of history/among most people – *orthopraxy* (=“right practice”/behavior).

# “The cultural evolution of prosocial religions”

1. What's the main question/point of this article? In my own words:  
How can cultural evolution explain the predominance of a particular type  
of religion and, therefore, large-scale human cooperation? Beliefs and  
practices associated with morally interested, super natural watchers are  
adaptive.

2. In the text:

“We explain how a package of culturally evolved religious **beliefs** and  
**practices** characterized by increasingly **potent**, **moralizing**, supernatural  
agents, credible displays of faith, and other psychologically active  
elements conducive to social **solidarity** promoted high fertility rates and  
large-scale cooperation with co-religionists, often contributing to success  
in intergroup competition and conflict. In turn, prosocial religious beliefs  
and practices **spread** and **aggregated** as these successful groups expanded,  
or were copied by less successful groups” (1).

# Two questions

1. How has it been possible for human societies to scale up so much/quickly? (Large, anonymous, and cooperative)
2. Why have “prosocial”/“big gods” religions come to dominate the cultural landscape?

The two are related...

# “The cultural evolution of prosocial religions”

-Religion is prototypically cultural, where individual/evolved psychology interacts with socially/behaviorally transmitted information, which changes how people behave over the long run.

-Form a mutually reinforcing feedback loop, like: cooking, long-distance running, precision throwing, and lactose tolerance.

# The components – byproducts

1. Individual psychology: ““(1) mentalizing [=attributing minds to/being able to empathize with others] (Bering 2011; Frith & Frith 2003; Waytz et al. 2010), (2) teleological [=purposiveness] thinking (Kelemen 2004), and (3) mind-body dualism (Bloom 2007; Chudek et al. 2015)” (4). ← Empathize with/believe in god(s), and discern purposiveness in the world/nature
  
2. We monitor and sanction each other – reputation concern – for example, learning and remembering normative rules more easily than others

# The components – byproducts

3. We are social learners/believe (in) others (more on pages 10-14):

“[A.] Content-based mechanisms, which lead to the selective retention and transmission of some mental representations [and behaviors] over others because of differences in their content (Boyer 2001; Sperber 1996). For example, **emotionally evocative** and **socially** relevant ideas are more memorable and, therefore, culturally contagious (Heath et al. 2001; Stubbersfield et al. 2015; see also Broesch et al. 2014).

[B.] Context-based mechanisms (or model-based cultural learning biases), which arise from evolved psychological mechanisms that encourage learners to attend to and learn from **particular** individuals (cultural models) based on cues such as **skill, success, prestige, self-similarity** (Henrich & Gil-White 2001), and trait frequency (Perreault et al. 2012; Rendell et al. 2011).

[C.] Credibility-enhancing displays (CREDs), or learners’ sensitivity to cues that a cultural model is **genuinely** committed to his or her stated or advertised beliefs. If models engage in behaviors that would be unlikely if they privately held opposing beliefs, learners are more likely to **trust** the sincerity of the models and, as a result, adopt their beliefs (Henrich 2009; see also Harris 2012; Sperber et al. 2010)” (5).

# The components – byproducts

4. “Cultural group selection” (more on pages 14-16) – Groups that are more cooperative/internally cohesive outperform those that are less:

“...experimental evidence reveals that larger and more economically successful groups have **stronger** prosocial norms: a pattern consistent with cultural group selection models. For example, in a global sample of roughly a dozen diverse populations, individuals from larger ethnolinguistic groups and larger communities were more willing to incur a cost to **punish** unfair offers in experimental games (Henrich et al. 2010a; 2014), a result that held after controlling for a range of economic and demographic variables (see also Marlowe et al. 2008). Even among Hadza foragers, larger camps are more often prosocial in economic games (Marlowe 2004)” (5).

“Cross-nationally, experimental work also reveals a negative correlation between gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and both people’s motivations to punish cooperators in a public goods game (stifling cooperation) and their willingness to cheat to favor themselves or their local ‘in’ group (Hermann et al. 2008; Hruschka et al. 2014).”

# Bringing it together

1. “Big Gods” become responsible for watching and reprimanding – lower costs for individuals/groups – monitoring and punishment are costly to individuals and groups...
2. Behaviors heighten commitment to religious groups through feelings – for example, CRED’s (credibility enhancing displays), singing, and dancing
3. Beliefs and behaviors raise cooperation – for example, in-versus out-group marking

## China – Social stratification...

“In China, for example, the beginning of the Bronze Age (ca. 1500 BCE [商朝 – Shang dynasty]) is accompanied by a radical elaboration in tomb architecture and burial practices of elites, indicating the emergence of highly *centralized* and *stratified* polities *bound* together by costly public religious ceremonies (Thote 2009)” (8 – italics mine).

# China – Supernatural monitoring...

“...although China has sometimes been portrayed as lacking moralizing gods, or even religion at all (Ames & Rosemont 2009; Granet 1934), scholars in recent years have begun systematically correcting that misconception (Clark & Winslett 2011; Slingerland 2013)... in the earliest Chinese societies for which written records exist, the worshipped pantheon includes both the actual ancestors of the royal line and a variety of nature gods and cultural heroes, all under the dominion of a supreme deity, the ‘Lord on High’ (shangdi [上帝]) or Heaven (tian [天]). This Lord on High/Heaven was a Big God in our sense, wielding supreme power over the natural world, intervening at will in the affairs of humans, and intensely concerned with prosocial values. The ability of the royal family to rule was a direct result of its possessing the ‘Mandate’ (lit. ‘order or ‘charge’) of Heaven 【天命】 , the possession of which was – at least by 1000 BCE or thereabouts – seen as being linked to moral behavior 【德】 and proper observance of costly sacrificial and other ritual duties... Even from the sparse records from the Shang Dynasty, it is apparent that the uniquely broad power of the Lord on High to command a variety of events in the world led the Shang kings to feel a particular urgency about placating Him with proper ritual offerings. When the Zhou polity began to fragment into a variety of independent, and often conflicting, states (770–256 BCE [Eastern Zhou = Spring and Autumn + Warring states 东周=春秋 + 战国时代]), supernatural surveillance and the threat of supernatural sanctions remained at the heart of interstate diplomacy and internal political and legal relations (Poo 2009). Finally, the written record reveals an increasingly clear connection in early China between morality and religious commitments. The outlines of moral behavior had been dictated by Heaven and encoded in a set of social norms, and a failure to adhere to these norms – either in outward behavior or in one’s inner life – was to invite supernatural punishment (Eno 2009)” (8).

# “Chinese philosophy as experimental philosophy”

1. What's the main question/point of this article?

In my own words: How can Chinese philosophy be understood in relation to experimental philosophy? The methodology of experimental philosophy can be used to identify and assess claims made within the Chinese philosophical tradition.

2. In the text: “[T]he purpose of this chapter is to briefly assay the landscape of experimental philosophy and **identify** which, if any, of its central manifestations may be of **use** for those working in the Chinese philosophical tradition” (353). “There are two broad types of projects one might do: (1) Test for the **impact of internalized** [=ideas, beliefs, behaviors, values, norms, etc.] Chinese social/philosophical culture [=socially transmitted information]: Subjects appropriate for this study would be drawn from East Asian societies inheriting Confucian cultural and moral values, such as China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam [and then compare the answers of these individuals to those from other cultural groups]. (2) Test **specific philosophical claims** that appear in the philosophical tradition itself, such as claims concerning the nature of moral judgment or the effects of observing ritual propriety [among all groups]” (358).

# An example from experimental philosophy: The Knobe/side-effect effect

1. “The vice-president of a company went to the chairman of the board and said, ‘We are thinking of starting a new program. It will help us increase profits, but it will also **harm** the environment.’ The chairman of the board answered, ‘I don’t care at all about **harming** the environment. I just want to make as much profit as I can. Let’s start the new program.’ They started the new program. Sure enough, the environment was **harmed**.’”

Did the chairman **intentionally harm** the environment? How much **blame** does he deserve?

2. “The vice-president of a company went to the chairman of the board and said, ‘We are thinking of starting a new program. It will help us increase profits, and it will also **help** the environment.’ The chairman of the board answered, ‘I don’t care at all about **helping** the environment. I just want to make as much profit as I can. Let’s start the new program.’ They started the new program. Sure enough, the environment was **helped**.’”

Did the chairman **intentionally help** the environment? How much **praise** does he deserve?

# An example from experimental philosophy: The Knobe/side-effect effect

harm – 82% versus help – 23%

“intentionality” – at least volition (~desire)

“blame” – at least intentionality

“Philosophical” conceptions of intentionality/blame (=agreed upon by philosophers/those who have reflected (extensively) on these notions), the chairman intended to neither harm nor help the environment and, therefore, should neither be blamed nor praised...

(Some responses: Who cares what the “folk” thinks – reflection and expertise?! Outcomes influence punishments/accolades, which might be related to ascriptions of blame/praise, influencing ascriptions of intentionality – related to “foresight” too, for example, first- versus second-degree murder versus manslaughter...

# “Empirical” (Chinese) philosophy

Definition: “‘Empirical philosophy’ refers to an approach by numerous philosophers (most noticeably in...*moral* philosophy) to *make use* of observational and experimental research from the social, behavioral, and natural sciences to inform, enrich, and adjudicate [=assess and decide on] philosophical claims” (353 – emphasis added).

Goal: “...much research is dedicated to *systematizing* the empirical research in these fields and placing it in a *coherent* and broad theoretical framework” (354 – emphasis added).

“...Bongrae Seok (2013), for example, has argued that thinking of classical Confucian theories of *virtue* [德] from a framework informed by *cognitive science* can help us understand the tradition better and also make it *more relevant* and *applicable* to contemporary concerns... [making] extensive use of the scientific literature on embodied cognition to elucidate this theme” (354 – emphasis added).

# “Experimental” (Chinese) philosophy

Definition(s):

“Experimental philosophy is distinguished chiefly in that *philosophers themselves* (often *in collaboration* with researchers in the relevant sciences) conduct the experiments by generating the hypotheses, developing the experimental design, collecting data, and doing the statistical analyses (see also Rose and Danks 2013)...

the systematic exploration of *philosophically relevant* questions *using* the tools of experimental science. Its aims, goals, and methods are, however, diverse” (354 – emphasis added).

# 1. “Extended conceptual analysis” (~What concepts mean/when they are correctly applied?)

“...when Socrates asks about the nature of *justice*, or the nature of what is *pious*, he is engaged in conceptual analysis – seeking to *elucidate* [=clarify] the nature of a concept by examining its *usage* [for example, the Knobe effect] and *breaking it down into its more basic components* [subsequent analyses]... We can understand Confucius’s attempt to clarify the application of terms such as ‘filial’ [孝] and ‘upright,’ and Mencius’s argument about the correct application of the concept of a true king, to be analogues of this practice. The result is a characterization that provides a concept’s *prototypical instantiation*, *general definition*, or *condition of apt use*... an activity supremely suited to pursuit without any highly specialized training or equipment save the individual mind and clarity of thought [such as philosophers and you!]”

# 1. “Extended conceptual analysis” (~What concepts mean/when are they correctly applied?)

“Why reflect with others? As shared users of concepts, we might help one another elucidate and analyze the semantics of the concepts being considered. If this is so, then experimental methods can *extend* this activity *systematically*, canvassing the intuitions of *ordinary* language users on a host of concepts *at the heart of philosophical debate*” (356 – emphasis added).

## 2. Psychological modeling (~What's going on in people's minds?)

“...uncover the psychological *mechanisms* that underlie the application of these concepts. What are the psychological *processes* that give rise to these concepts? Are they driven by cold, calculating cognition [for example, rationality/reflection], or hot, reflexive cognition [for example, feeling/intuition]? What *factors* are the judgments sensitive to? And are the processes reliable? [for example, presentation language, ‘order effects,’ and font types]... most work done under this broad theme is not done to elucidate a concept or to provide a more nuanced or novel analysis of a concept (such as moral responsibility or justice or beauty). Instead, psychological modeling seeks to show *how the application of a concept may be affected by factors or considerations in unexpected ways*” (356 – emphasis added).

### 3. Philosophical restrictionism (~What philosophy should not do?)

“...seek to problematize traditional philosophical *methods* by showing that the *intuitions* or *judgments* that they yield stem from *processes* that are *unreliable* or prone to systematic *bias*. For example, researchers have reported systematic differences in philosophical intuitions stemming from the *order* of the cases presented (e.g., Schwitzgebel and Cushman 2012), the *context* in which thought experiments are presented (e.g., Liao et al. 2012; Tobia, Chapman, and Stich 2013), the *identities* of the actors in the experiments (e.g., Sarkissian et al. 2011), or the social or cultural *background* of the participants themselves (e.g., Machery et al. 2004; Sytsma et al. 2015)... One large motivation for the restrictionist project has been the well-documented, pervasive, and systematic psychological differences between East Asians and Westerners, especially pertaining to how individuals in these different cultures conceive of, categorize, and explain the social and nonsocial world” (357 – emphasis added).

# What you can/should do – writing assignments

“...a couple of case studies concerning how one might use experimental methods to explore the Chinese intellectual tradition.

[(0) In an objective and systematic fashion, determine (the extent to which) cultural and moral values present in ancient Chinese texts – a ‘big data’/digital humanities approach – explore the extent and relations between value terms in Chinese philosophical texts]

(1) Test for the impact of internalized Chinese social/philosophical culture: Subjects appropriate for this study would be drawn from East Asian societies inheriting Confucian cultural and moral values [or other cultural variants such as norms or beliefs, conditioned by socially transmitted information], such as China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. [=subjects whose behaviors are influenced by “Chinese” culture]

(2) Test specific philosophical claims that appear in the philosophical tradition itself, such as claims concerning the nature of moral judgment or the effects of observing ritual propriety.

In what follows, we will give examples of both types of projects, using two of Confucianism’s most distinctive features as test cases—filial piety and ritual propriety” (358).

# What you can/should do – writing assignments

1. Find parts of the readings that make an empirical(ly testable) claim regarding, for example, how people understand and/or use terms, or would behave
2. Create a vignette/story and questions
3. Consider and explain a hypothesis and predict results

# 1. Find parts in the readings that makes empirical(ly testable) claims...

“13.18 The Duke of She said to Confucius [叶公语孔子曰], ‘Among my people there is one we call “Upright Gong” [‘吾党有直躬者]. When his father stole a sheep, he reported him to the authorities’ [其父攘羊，而子证之’]. Confucius replied [孔子曰], ‘Among *my people* [those from the state of Lu/embodiment Chinese culture/practicing li 礼], those who *we consider* [how we think about/apply this concept] “upright” [直] are different from this [‘吾党之直者异于是]: fathers cover up for their sons, and sons cover up for their fathers [父为子隐，子为父隐]. “Uprightness” is to be found in this’ [直在其中矣’] ” (Slingerland 2003a: 147)” (358 – emphasis added).

## 2. Create experiment/story

“Nichols et al. (2016) designed an experiment that *duplicated several key features of the case* of Upright Gong, focusing not specifically on stealing but on other immoral behavior [DID NOT ask about stealing sheep...]. All participants in the experiment read a *short passage* asking them to imagine being the passenger in a car when the driver of the vehicle causes an accident. Two components of this short passage varied according to experimental condition. One variable concerned the identity of the driver causing the accident: either one’s *father*, one’s taxi cab *driver*, or one’s *supervisor* at work. A second variable concerned the resulting consequences of the imaginary accident: either *property* damage to someone else’s car, bodily *injury* of a pedestrian, or vehicular *manslaughter* of a pedestrian. In all cases, the driver speeds away. Participants were drawn from both Chinese and Western populations, and were asked the same set of questions (in Chinese or English), which revolved around moral psychology. For example, they were asked ‘How *ashamed* would you feel if you turned in the driver to the civil authorities, and other people *found* out that you did so?’ and ‘How morally *wrong* do you believe was the driver’s actions?’ Answers to these and other questions were collected on a *scale*, meaning that participants were not forced into answering yes or no questions” (359 – emphasis added).

### 3. Develop hypothesis/predict results

“...one must craft principled *reasons* to hypothesize that a specific, testable answer is true. To illustrate, one of the hypotheses of this research was that *Chinese participants would express more filial piety than American participants by being more willing to conceal the crimes of their fathers* [as a result of culture – socially transmitted information]” (359 – emphasis added).

“Results confirmed the hypotheses that Chinese participants were significantly more influenced by *filial piety* [fathers] and by authority [supervisors] in their moral psychological reasoning. This can be illustrated by using data from the question ‘How willing would you be to conceal this offense?’ Across all conditions, Chinese were much more willing to conceal the driver’s crime than were American participants. In particular, even though both Chinese and American participants were more willing to conceal the crimes of their fathers than, say, the crimes of their taxi drivers, Chinese participants were much more willing to do so (Nichols et al. 2016)” (359 – emphasis added)

# Ancient Chinese philosophy: Background

Xia 夏 ("Xia dynasty"). Traditional dates: 2205–1766 B.C.E. See Yu and Jie under *Important Figures*.

Shang 商 ("Shang dynasty," also known as the 殷 "Yin dynasty"). Traditional dates: 1766–1122 B.C.E. See Tang and Zhou under *Important Figures*.

Zhou 周 ("Zhou dynasty"). Traditional dates: 1122–256 B.C.E. Often divided into "Eastern" and "Western" Zhou (see below).

Western Zhou (*Xizhou* 西周). The earlier part (1122–771 B.C.E.) of the Zhou dynasty. Widely regarded as a golden age of peace, stability, and prosperity. See Wen, Wu, and Zhou Gong under *Important Figures*.

Eastern Zhou (*Dongzhou* 東周). The latter part (770–256 B.C.E.) of the Zhou dynasty. It began when disgruntled vassals, together with "barbarian" (i.e., non-Chinese) forces, sacked the Zhou capital and killed the ruling king. Remnants of the Zhou royal family escaped and founded a new capital far to the east at Loyang and installed the king's son as ruler. However, the dynasty never again controlled China.

Spring and Autumn Period (*Chunqiu* 春秋). The period 722–481 B.C.E. covered by the court chronicle of Lu, Kongzi's native state (see *Spring and Autumn Annals* in *Important Texts*). This period saw the rise of the institution of *ba* 霸 ("lord protector," see *Important Terms*).

Warring States Period (*Zhanguo shidai* 戰國時代). The period 403–221 B.C.E. It began when the Zhou king officially recognized the partitioning of the state of Jin 晉, which had been carved up by and divided among the members of an alliance of other states in 453. Soon after, in 335, the rulers of these and other allegedly "vassal" states began to usurp the title *wang* 王 "king" (see *Important Terms*) which rightfully only the Zhou king could claim.

Qin dynasty 秦. A short-lived dynasty (221–207 B.C.E.) that marked the end of the "Warring States Period" by unifying the various states into a single empire. It is from the name "Qin" that we get our word "China."

Han dynasty 漢. A long lasting and largely stable dynasty consisting of an "Earlier" or "Western" and a "Later" or "Eastern" period, on either side of a brief interregnum (see below).

"Earlier" or "Western Han" (206 B.C.E.–8 C.E.)

"Later" or "Eastern Han" (25–220 C.E.).

# Ancient Chinese philosophy: Background

1100-1050 BCE – Oracle bones/divination in the Shang dynasty  
商朝

time – circular versus linear (down versus up)

Shangdi 上帝 to Tian 天 (Zhou dynasty 周朝)

whims of spirits to alignment with a moral order (tianming 天命)

moral/ethical behavior → tian ming ← → harmony ← →  
“virtue” 德 (primacy of ethics)

# Confucius: Background

1. Ancient Confucianism (Eastern Zhou 东周 – 770-256 BCE) – Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi
2. Imperial Confucianism (Han dynasty 汉朝 – 206 BCE-220 CE) – institution of “Confucianism” as a state/ruling ideology
3. Neo-Confucianism (Song dynasty 宋朝 – 960-1279 AD) – a blending of Daoism and Buddhism (prevalent during the Sui 隋朝 581–618 CE and Tang 唐朝 dynasties 618–907 CE) with Confucianism

# Confucius: Background

- Confucius 551-479 BCE – the beginning of Chinese philosophy?
- The Zhou as a golden age – through li that get tianming
- Searching for a ruler to put his form of governance into practice
- if a ruler is virtuous (has ren 仁), as a model (junzi 君子), everyone else will also become virtuous
- from *individual* to *social* order (Confucianism and Daoism 道家) rather than from *social* order to individual (Sunzi 孙子, Mohism 墨家, and legalism 法家) – rule by character/virtue rather than deception/guile (Sunzi) versus
  - ~ metaphysical skepticism
- primacy of the family and the nature of social relations
- the “culturalization” of “nature” (zhi 质 + wen 文)

# Confucius: Exercise/presentations

Count off by 11 – with your group members:

Select two passages

1. What's the main question this section asks/answer it gives/point it makes – in your own words?
2. What empirical – testable via observation – claims are being made?
3. What information is being conveyed? (Remember, if Chinese philosophy serves as the basis for Chinese culture, and culture is socially transmitted information, then Chinese philosophy should embody and, therefore, convey information – beliefs, values, norms, etc.)
4. Which behaviors/behavioral differences result from this information? (Remember, culture is information, making a difference in and transmitted through behaviors – beliefs, values, norms, etc.)

# Confucius: Exercise

1. The primacy of the family/virtue from in to out: 1.2, 1.9, 2.21, 12.2, 12.19
2. Governance by virtue: 1.10, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1, 6.30
3. The culturalization of nature: 1.12, 2.4, 5.10, 6.18, 7.2
4. The importance of attitudes: 2.7, 3.4, 3.8, 3.12, 9.24
5. The primacy of actions (~ethics): 2.9, 2.10, 5.13, 7.33
6. The primacy of the past: 2.11, 3.14, 7.1, 7.20, 9.5
7. The nature/primacy of character: 2.12, 4.14, 7.17, 11.22, 17.8
8. The nature/importance of education: 2.15, 7.8, 8.2, 8.9, 15.31
9. Contra expedience/materialism: 4.12, 4.16, 6.22 (12.11, 12.17 – governance by virtue)
10. The rectification of names: 4.22, 12.11, 14.13 (13.4, 14.44 – governance by virtue)
11. Religious aspects: 6.22, 11.12, 13.3 (17.2, 19.6 – the culturalization of nature)
12. Daoist rumblings: 14.39, 18.6, 18.7 (13.5, 15.5 – the primacy of actions (~ethics))

# Confucius: Exercise/presentations

1.2 Youzi said (有子曰), “It is unlikely that one who has grown up as a filial son and respectful younger brother will then be inclined to defy his superior, and there has never been a case of one who is disinclined to defy his superiors stirring up a rebellion (“其为人也孝弟，而好犯上者，鲜矣不好犯上，而好作乱者，未之有也”). The gentleman applies himself to the roots (君子务本). Once the roots are firmly planted, the Way will grow therefrom (本立而道生). Might we thus say that filiality and brotherly respect represent the root of ren? (孝弟也者，其为仁之本与?”)

# Ancient Chinese philosophy: Background

1. How to ensure a harmonious social order – i.e., that rebellion is not undertaken? Through the cultivation of 仁. How to cultivate 仁? Through filiality/respect 孝 – initially in the home/private.
2. Rebellion undermines social harmony
  - If one is raised to be filial toward his(/her?) parents, then (s?)he is *unlikely* to be disobedient to superiors ← weaker claim
  - No one who is “disinclined to defy his superiors” has *ever* fomented rebellion ← stronger claim
  - Private/familial virtues carry to/are applicable in the public/political realm

# Ancient Chinese philosophy: Background

3-4. Expectations of how people *do* act, descriptively, for example, those who're filial are also obedient; how people learn, for example, junzi applying “himself to the root”; the nature of reality/metaphysics – relation between “root” (本) and its outgrowth; how people *should* act, normatively, for example, if rebellion undermines social harmony... then children should be raised to be filial

# Laozi: Background

- “Lived” during the Spring and Autumn period
- Dao De Jing: Classic (经) of Way (道) and Virtue (德)

Situation:

- The world is bad!
  - Why is the world bad?
  - A lack of harmony ← Collective action/cooperation problems...
  - Why is there a lack of harmony?
- 
- Confucius/Confucians: Not enough rituals (礼 ~norms) and, therefore, no mandate, virtue, and benevolence
  - Laozi/Daodejing: Too many rituals and, therefore... (no mandate, virtue, and benevolence?)

# Laozi: Background

- Naturalization (自然) of culture (文)
- Human nature as good? Limit desires and reflection...
- Paradoxical: What's “unique” to human beings leads to what's *unnatural*...

# Laozi: Exercise

1. “Subtle” nature of dao (道) – reality versus appearance (像): **1.1, 1.15, 1.21**
2. Nature and importance of non-/in- or effortless action (无为): **1.2, 1.5, 1.11, 2.41, 2.46, 2.55, 2.75**
3. Governance by “virtue,” from in- to out-side: **1.3, 1.17, 1.19, 1.22, 1.23, 1.30, 2.49, 2.58, 2.59, 2.68**
4. The naturalization (自然) of culture: **1.7, 1.12, 1.16, 1.18, 1.25, 2.38, 2.51, 2.76, 2.80**
5. The primacy of the past: **1.14, 2.65**
6. The nature of education: **2.71, 2.81**
7. Religious aspects: **2.60**