

Lecture Today

- Admin stuff
- The *Tao-te ching* continued

Admin stuff

- I need to see Sukhkiran Kaur and Lea Walters.

Admin stuff

- Re Third Assignments: If you don't agree with my evaluation of your assignment, by all means come and talk with me (about why you disagree). (This doesn't mean I'll alter your grade, but I have been known to do so from time to time [even this year].)
- Re your Term Paper: I recommend talking your ideas over with me. Don't leave this paper to the last minute!
- Re your own Term Paper topic: If I get a Term Paper on a topic I did not approve, *I will not pass it.*
- For all of you doing your own Term Paper topic - email me (afenton2@uwo.ca) your topic (this way you don't get burned).
- Any questions about the Term Paper topics?

Admin stuff

- If you haven't been regularly attending classes, do make sure that you have all of the handouts I have given out (they are helpful study aids for the exam).
- Not all handouts can be posted on-line. So you will have to come and see me for some of the handouts.
- You now have your list of potential exam questions. The only way this exam question list will change is if we do not get to certain topics (i.e. one or two of the latter questions may be dropped if we get too far behind).
- Your actual exam questions will be chosen (verbatim) from this list.
- Are there any questions about the possible exam questions?

Admin stuff

- What I can tell you about the exam:
- (i) You will have *some* choice on the exam (you'll be asked eight questions out of which you *must* do six).
- (ii) It will be a two hour exam.
- (iii) No aids.
- Any questions?

Admin stuff

- Remember:
- (a) The more *relevant* material (from lectures, readings or class discussion) you can include in your answer the better,
- (b) this means you really do need to sort out how you will answer a question before the day of the exam,
- (c) don't spend too much time on any one question (don't spend more than twenty minutes on any one question ... and try for fifteen),
- (d) and do network with each other (e.g. form study groups).
- Also, **DON'T PANIC**. These questions are designed to test your knowledge, not fail you.

Tao-te ching

- Do make sure to use my handout to group the *assigned* chapters ... it should help with getting a grasp of the material.

Tao-te ching: On proper action and proper character

- Where we left off:
- Some of the virtues commended by Lao Tzu:
 - 1. Compassion (Chapters 10, **16**, 27, 81).
 - 2. Contentment (Chapter **33**, 44).
 - 3. Flexibility, or open mindedness (Chapter **76**).
 - 4. Generosity (Chapters 10, 44, 64, 77, **81**).
 - 5. Humility (Chapters 13, 15, **20**, 22, 28, 49, 53, 66, 67).
 - 6. Impartiality (Chapter **5**).
 - 7. Mercy (Chapter **49**, **67**, 77).
 - 8. Moderation (Chapter **67**).
 - 9. Self-love (Chapter **13**).
 - 10. Serenity (Chapter 15, **16**, **31**, 37, 42, 56).

Tao-te ching: On proper action and proper character

- Some of the vices condemned by Lao Tzu:
- 1. Aggression; an aggressive inclination (Chapter **31**, **42**, **46**, **53**).
- 2. Arrogance (Chapter **53**, **75**).
- 3. Closed mindedness; inflexibility (Chapter **76**).
- 4. Greed (Chapters **1**, **12**, **19**, **29**, **42**, **44**, **46**, **53**, **75**, **77**).
- 5. Partiality (Chapter **42**, **75**, **77**).
- 6. Self-centeredness; self-aggrandizement (Chapters **12**, **13**, **29**, **38**, **42**, **44**, **48**, **53**, **75**, **77**).
- 7. Self-indulgence (Chapter **29**, **35**, **44**, **53**, **67**, **75**).
- 8. Selfishness (Chapter **44**, **53**, **75**, **77**).

Your thoughts?

- What out of the chapters we have looked at so far have spoken to you and why?

Tao-te ching: On proper action and proper character

- Now Koller claims the following:
- “Because, according to Lao Tzu, morality is incapable of providing for peace and happiness, it should be regarded as an unsuccessful solution to the problem of achieving the ideal society and abandoned in favor of a different solution” (p. 290 of your *Asian Philosophies*).
- We have just seen a list of virtues commended and vices condemned in the *Tao-te ching*.
- How are we to reconcile what Koller writes with what we see in the *Tao-te ching*?

Tao-te ching: On proper action and proper character

- A way of sorting this out:
- Confucian ethics is clearly a target in the *Tao-te ching* (see Chapters **18** or **19**). But note it isn't the end, or ends, that is, or are, being attacked so much as the means (see Chapter **19**).
- The path to living morally in the *Tao-te ching* involves cultivating a life free of (self-centered) desires or attachments and aversions (see Chapters **12**, **15**, **16**, **19**, **22**, **75**).
- It also involves abandoning an anthropocentric view of ourselves and the world around us (Chapters **20**, **35**, **45**, **48**).
- The source of immoral behavior (according to the *Tao-te ching*) are self-centered desires or attachments and aversions (see Chapters **44**, **46**, **49**, **53**, **75**).

Tao-te ching: On proper action and proper character

- This kind of approach or moral outlook differs significantly from the emphasis on internalizing *li*, molding our desires or attachments and aversions, and adopting an anthropocentric view of our-selves and the world proffered in Confucian moral philosophy.
- As many elements of Confucian moral philosophy reflected a not uncommon view of morality in the Chinese society within which the *Tao-te ching* took shape, the author(s) of the *Tao-te ching* takes issue with morality (albeit so understood) (see pp.289-90 of your *Asian Philosophies*).