

1 ☐ Lecture 11

Zhuangzi

2 ☐ Zhuangzi

- Lived 369 – 286 BCE (after Laozi)
 - contemporary of Mencius
- Wrote the *Zhuangzi*
 - more philosophical than the *Daodejing*
 - and much different writing style

3 ☐ *The Zhuangzi*

- playful, comical
- the goal is to change people, not to debate theories
 - personified concepts and locations
 - humor as a learning tool
- de-emphasizes rules of conduct

4 ☐ The Theme of Knowledge

- 1 • *Guiding Thesis*: We should exchange our ordinary perspective for ...
 - ordinary knowledge is limited to our own little world
 - *hence*, no Absolute Truth is available to us (*contra* Confucianism)
- 2 • **perspectivalism**
 - no one really understands anything

5 ☐ The Theme of Knowledge

- Trying to attain knowledge of the *dao* is a waste of time
- Just act! – *that* is the *dao*

6 ☐ Argument from the Relativity of Distinctions

1. The validity of any distinction depends on ...
 - o monkey trainer story
2. *Hence*, distinctions are ...
3. *So*, we can never claim to have Absolute Truth

7 ☐ Argument from Many Appearances

1. The same thing can appear differently to different people, if their perspectives are different
2. And the same thing can appear differently to the same person, if his perspective changes.
3. *So*, the same thing can have many appearances, depending upon the perspective of the perceiver.

8 ☐ Argument from Many Appearances

4. There is no way to determine which appearance is the correct or true appearance
5. *Hence*, claims about the world -- about knowledge and morality -- always distort reality, because ...

9 ☐ Argument from Many Appearances

7. In order to *not* distort reality, we must ...

10 ☐ Argument from Skepticism

1. There is no indubitable criterion to which one can appeal in order to prove that a claim is true
2. But ...
 - butterfly story
3. *Hence*, questions about what is right and what there is can never be settled
4. *So*, we should stop trying to show that we are right

11 ☐ The Theme of Morality

- Rules and education lead to ...
- Pursuing too many virtues is ...
- Acting naturally requires ...
- All this requires openness
 - adjust to others
 - offer less resistance
 - these are the keys to moral behavior

12 ☐ The Theme of Activity

- Spontaneous, open action results from ...

13 ☐ The Theme of Activity

- The "true person" is someone who *lacks* education
 - result of learning is ...

14 ☐ The Theme of Activity

- Zhuangzi advises that following the *Dao* involves avoiding the spotlight -- it just wears one out
 - have no desire for leadership
 - libertarianism, anarchism, individualism

15 ☐ Confucianism vs. Daoism

- They can exist together harmoniously *to an extent*, because they emphasize different domains
 - Confucianism: family, politics, society
 - Daoism: nature, creativity, psychophysical health
- But these domains are not entirely distinct
- So there is a basis for conflict

16 ☐ Main Daoist Critique of Confucianism

- Rules, laws, customs are human artifacts, hence rigid and unnatural
- Rules, laws and social roles thwart responsiveness

- Confucians need to take a chill pill

17 ☐ Main Confucian Critique of Daoism

- It is natural for humans to be ...
- So Daoists should want to be ...
- But Daoists act unnaturally, contrary to their own principles, because ...

- And as far as education and training goes, ...

18 ☐ For Next Time

No readings!

Quiz #4 on February 27, yo.