HKU03x Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought

Week 1: Introduction: God, Nature and Dao
Section 5: Ethics: range of normative subject matters with morality at the top

- Ethics is concerned with guidance
    - How to behave, what to do, what to buy, where to go…
    - A very wide-ranging field
    - It embraces all normative questions
- Various traditional subject matter fields
    - Aesthetics: art, beauty, poetry…
    - Political ethics: justice, punishment, distribution, democracy…
    - Etiquette, manners, mores, conventional guidance
    - Style & taste
- Morality: The queen of ethics
    - How we should treat other humans
    - Moral judgements often thought to trump other judgements such as conventions, fashions, or mores
    - The highest, the basis from which to critique other forms of normative guidance
    - Similar status in both classical Chinese and Western ethics