HKU03x Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought

Week 3: Mozi and Logic
Section 12: Summary

- The differences between the Western and the Chinese mind maps.
- Main difference - between logic in the West and 辯 *bian*[distinction] in China.
- Both are ways of solving disagreements without resorting to authority.
- In logic we focus on argument structure and syntactic forms/laws.
    - The concept of meanings - definitions - is understood in terms of sentences which can slot into arguments as premises.
    - Logic fills out the theory of psychology and the Western conception of mind and body.
    - This is a core dynamic which underpins Western philosophy.
    - It creates a puzzle for ethical naturalism and helps explain the traditional dominance of non-naturalist ethical directions in the West.
    - Hume: desires, not reason, are the ultimate motivations of our actions.
    - There's no way to prove an *ought* from purely factual "is" premises.
- On Mozi's side, we have the metaphor of a construction, a structure that guides behaviour.
- Mozi uses 法 *fa*[measurement standards] to distinguish between 義 *yi*[moral] and 不*bu*[not] 義*yi*[moral] between 是 *shi*[right] and 非 *fei*[wrong] - this, not that.

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- Mozi rejects the Mandate of Heaven 天 *tian*[natural] 命 *ming*[identity/role] - we are the ones to choose the ruler.

- Mozi focuses on *measurement* rather than *syntactic structure*, intuition, or self-evidence.

- Everything is governed by operational 辯 *bian*[distinction] , avoiding intuition.

- Mozi, Like Hobbes, describes a State of Nature to motivate a social order but without assuming psychological egoism, contracts, kings, laws or deontological punishments.

Under Mozi, 天子*tian zi*[natural master] (the ruler's) role is to adjudicate people's different moral judgments, not to legislate—not to publish laws. His norms are the synthesis of everyone's judgements about what is 利害 *li-hai*[beneficial-harmful.]

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