

# HKU03x Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought

## Week 8: Xunzi and Legalism (Han-Fei-zi)

### Section 2: Justification of conventional authority

- Morality is an artifice which arises from the Sages who 思 *sī*<sup>ponder</sup>.
- Morality is not autonomous nor independent of us; it is a human invention which guides our behavior.  
It cannot be discovered; it is an artificial creation
- Xunzi thinks a human psychological force called 人<sup>human</sup> 情<sup>feeling:reality</sup> *qíng* is a disruptive, anti-social force of unruly behaviour and disorder.
- The cleverness of the Sages rests in their ability to control this 人<sup>human</sup> 情<sup>feeling:reality</sup> *qíng* via devising artificial conventions and practices
- Three aspects of the naturalistic argument
- Nature as a non-prescriptive context of our behaviour
- Economics and the conditions of “distributive *dào*s”.
- Humans’ place in nature.