

THREE DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES

Confucianism

Social order could be achieved if people accepted their place in society and followed his five basic relationships. None were equal except friend to friend. Older were superior to younger, men were superior to women.

Five basic relationships: ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, friend and friend.

Felt the ruler should be a virtuous man who led by example.

Felt education was the road to advancement.

Filial piety: respect for parents and elders (this is still part of Chinese society today)

Family and government were most important.

Taoism

Began by Lao Tzu

Focused on natural order

Best ruler was the one that ruled the least

Felt government was unnatural and the cause of conflict

Wanted harmony with nature

The Tao (“dow”) was “The Way” or a universal force that guides all things. He felt that people should follow the Tao.

Taoists usually removed themselves from society and lived close to nature.

Tried to find a substance to bring immortality. This led to alchemy (trying to transform ordinary metals into gold).

Thought to have invented gunpowder which was used in firecrackers to frighten ghosts.

Legalism

Began by Hanfeizi

A highly efficient and powerful government was the key to maintaining order.

Ruled using strict laws and harsh punishments.

People were rewarded for good deeds, but severely punished for bad behavior.

They wanted to control ideas as well as the people. They might burn all writings that encouraged people to question government.

Felt the nature of man was evil and goodness had to be acquired.

Said greed was the motive for all actions

Strength, not goodness, was a ruler’s greatest virtue.

Chi in Shi Huang-ti used this philosophy to rule China in 246 BCE

WHICH SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY?

Decide whether the statement belongs to the school of Confucianism, Daoism, or Legalism.

- A. younger people must serve older people
- B. school was founded by Laozi
- C. family is the basic unit of society
- D. believes in “the Way”, which cannot be described
- E. believed that human nature was evil
- F. there are 5 important relationships
- G. emphasized tolerance for individualism
- H. best government was a government with few or no laws
- I. thought humans were subject to change due to circumstances
- J. the ruler must be just and the people must be loyal
- K. laws should be used to scare people to act a certain way
- L. the interest of the state is more important than the interest of the people
- M. stressed the importance of education
- N. wanted people to live in harmony with nature
- O. people who break the law must be punished harshly
- P. the morals of society hinder the individuality of people
- Q. emphasizes respect for ancestors
- R. education is impractical and unnecessary
- S. considers filial piety very important
- T. a good ruler possesses the Mandate of Heaven
- U. believed all laws went against human nature
- V. people are motivated to act because of fear and greed
- W. people should be forced to work on government projects
- X. enforcement of the laws must be consistent
- Y. became official philosophy of the Qin dynasty
- Z. people should revolt against the ruler only if he was acting like a tyrant