

Chapter 8: Ancient China

Lesson 2: China's Ancient Philosophies



A. Legalism

- a. Legalism = a belief that rulers should use the legal system to force people to obey laws.
 - Strict laws + force
 - strong government = answer to China's problems
 - Believe human nature is wicked and they needed strict laws to control them
 - Harsh punishments are needed to make people afraid of doing wrong
- b. Shang Yang - a supporter of Legalism
 - Wanted to force people to report lawbreakers
- c. Punishments
 - Favored arresting people who questioned the government or taught different ideas
 - Taught rulers to burn books that contained different philosophies or ideas

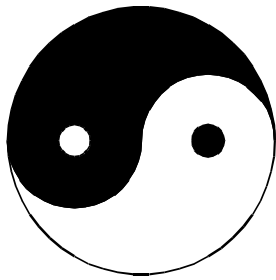


B. Confucianism

- a. Based on Confucius' teachings - *Analects* = book of collected ideas
- b. Taught that respect for others was absolutely necessary for peace and harmony
- c. Government leaders should set a good example
- d. Code of Proper Conduct for people = 5 basic relationships
 - Father and son
 - Elder brother and junior brother
 - Husband and wife
 - Friend and friend
 - Ruler and subject
- e. Filial piety - treating parents with respect (Most important teachings)

C. Daoism

- a. Based on the teachings of Laozi - Dao De Jing (The Book of the Way of Virtue) - book of his teachings
- b. Dao - universal force or the way guides all things
- c. Individuals had to learn to live in harmony with nature and with inner feelings
- d. Following the way
 - Did not argue about good and bad
 - Did not try to change things
 - Did not want to be involved with the government
 - Tried to understand nature and live in harmony
 1. Yin and Yan - two things that interact with each other



- a. Yin (black) = cold, dark, mysterious
- b. Yang (white) = warm, bright, light
- c. Understanding this helped a person understand how he or she fits into the world.