

Legalism

Attitude Toward Traditional Culture

- Ideology of the harsh and short-lived Chin Dynasty;
- Hostility to Confucianism and culture in general;
- Confucian ideals attacked unmercifully;

a policy that demands the ruler reach the standard of Confucius is bound to fail;

Confucianists talk about rulers who brought order in the past but legalists bring order today;

- Benevolence and righteousness no longer relevant;
- Legalists disregarded all moral values;
- Low view of human nature; no regard for power of education to transform it;
- Man is totally self-seeking; motivated by reward and punishment;
- Reward and punishment at heart of a ruler's method of controlling a population;

- No need to imitate the past to benefit the state; such hostility to past is rare in Chinese history;
- Hostile toward people who were not engaged in productive occupations; esp.
- Law primary importance; seen as a harsh and unbending system of control;
- Laws should be rigid and detailed so no element of personal decision was left;
- Human beings can be manipulated by the law as easily as weights and measures could be standardized;

Bureaucracy

- Ministers need to be manipulated through reward and punishment as well;
- Mutual responsibility – one is responsible to turn in corrupt colleague;
- No hereditary succession to bureaucratic office
- Recognized growing need for specialization

Over time, harshness and rigidity of legalism modified and tempered by Confucianism.