Document-Based Essay Question

This task is based on the accompanying documents (1-8). Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of this task. This task is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and the author's point of view.

Directions: Read the documents and answer the questions after each document. Then write your answer to the essay question below, using the information from those documents and your general knowledge of Global History and Geography.

Historical Context:

During the period of the Seven Warring States at the end of the Zhou Dynasty [1027 – 256 BCE], they continued to prosper in spite of the intense fighting between them. Various Chinese philosophers offered different solutions as to how to restore social and political order out of the chaos of the times.

Question:

TASK: Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of Global History, write an essay in which you:

- Identify the views of the three major schools of philosophy – Confucianism, Legalism, and Daoism—of an ideal society.

- Explain how each major school of philosophy presented a different vision of the ideal ruler.
Yu Tzu [a disciple named Yu Jo] said, “Few of those who are filial sons and respectful brothers will show disrespect to superiors, and there has never been a man who is not disrespectful to superiors, and there has never been a man who is not disrespectful to superiors and yet creates disorder….Filial piety and brotherly respect are the root of humanity [ren].”

SOURCE: Analects of Confucius.

Q-1 --> What does Confucius mean by “filial piety?” How does he say one should practice it?
Confucius said, “Lead the people with governmental measures and regulate them with laws and punishment, and they will avoid wrongdoing but will have no sense of honor and shame. Lead them with virtue and regulate them by the rules of propriety, and they will have a sense of shame and, moreover, set themselves right.” [2:3]

Chi K’ang asked Confucius about government, saying, “What do you think of killing the wicked and associating with the good?” Confucius replied, “In your government what is the need of killing? If you desire what is good, the people will be good. The character of a ruler is like wind and that of the people is like grass. In whatever direction the wind blows, the grass always bends.” [12:19]

Confucius said, “If a ruler sets himself right, he will be followed without his command. If he does not set himself right, even his commands will not be obeyed.” [13:6]


Q-2 --> Identify the characteristics of the ideal ruler, according to Confucius.

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Constant principles underlie Heaven’s behavior. Heaven does not prevail because you are the sage Yao or disappear because you are the tyrant Jie. Blessings result when you respond to Heaven by creating order; misfortune results when you respond to it with disorder. When you concentrate on agriculture and industry and are frugal in expenditures, Heaven cannot impoverish your state. When you store provisions and act quickly in emergencies, Heaven cannot inflict illness on your people. When you are single-minded in your cultivation of the Way, Heaven cannot send disasters. Thus, even if they come, droughts and floods will not bring starvation, extremes of temperature will not bring illness, uncanny phenomena will not prove unlucky.

On the other hand, if you ignore agriculture and industry and spend extravagantly, then Heaven cannot make your country rich. If you are negligent concerning provisions and slow to respond to crises, Heaven cannot keep your country whole. If you renounce the Way and act recklessly, Heaven cannot make you lucky. In such a case, starvation will result even without flood or drought; illness will occur even without severe weather; misfortunes will occur without any uncanny phenomena…

SOURCE: Xunzi, a Confucianist, from Xunxi [213 BCE]

Q-3 --> What does a ruler have to do to gain the favor of Heaven? What are the consequences of his failure to do so?

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Those who are ignorant about government insistently say: "Win the hearts of the people." If order could be procured by winning the hearts of the people, then even the wise ministers Yi Yin and Kuan Chung would be of no use. For all that the ruler would need to do would be to listen to the people. Actually, the intelligence of the people is not to be relied upon any more than the mind of a baby.

The reason for the ruler to look for wise and well-informed men is that the intelligence of the people is not such as to be respected or relied upon. For instance, in ancient times, when Yu opened the rivers and deepened them, the people gathered tiles and stones (to hit him); when the prime minister of Cheng, Tzu Ch'an, cleared the fields and planted mulberry trees, the people of Cheng slandered and reviled him. Yu benefited the whole empire and Tzu Ch'an preserved the state of Cheng, but each incurred slander thereby. Clearly the intelligence of the people is not to be relied upon. Therefore, to seek for the worthy and the wise in selecting officials and to endeavor to suit the people in administering the government are equally the cause of chaos and not the means for attaining order.

**SOURCE:** Chapter 50 in the Han Fei Tzu, by the Legalist scholar, Han Fei.

Q-4 --> How should a ruler deal with his subjects, according to Han Fei?
...To govern the state by law is to praise the right and blame the wrong.

The law does not fawn \(\textit{show extreme affection}\) on the noble....Whatever the law applies to, the wise cannot reject nor can the brave defy. Punishment for fault never skips ministers, reward for good never misses commoners. Therefore, to correct the faults of the high, to rebuke the vices of the low, to suppress disorders, to decide against mistakes, to subdue the arrogant, to straighten the crooked, and to unify the folkways of the masses, nothing could match the law....If penalty is severe, the noble cannot discriminate against the humble. If law is definite, the superiors are esteemed and not violated. If the superiors are not violated, the sovereign will become strong and able to maintain the proper course of government. Such was the reason why the early kings esteemed Legalism and handed it down to posterity \(\text{\{succeeding generations\}}.\) Should the lord of men discard law and practice selfishness, high and low would have no distinction.

**SOURCE:** Selection from the writings of Han Fei, a Legalist writer, 230 BCE.

**Q-5 -->** According to Han Fei, what is the purpose of law in governing a nation?

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The Way produces the One.
The One produces two.
Two produces three.
Three produces the myriad {many} creatures.
The myriad creatures shoulder *yin* and embrace *yang*,
and by blending these *qi* {vital energies} they attain harmony….
And so sometimes diminishing a thing adds to it;
Sometimes adding to a thing diminishes it…. [Chapter 42]

**SOURCE:** Excerpts from Laozi [Lau Tzu], *The Daodejing* [Tao Te Ching].

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**Q-6** -- Identify the symbol illustrated above. What is the meaning behind this symbol for a follower of Daoism??

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Manifold plainness.
Embrace simplicity.
Do not think just of yourself.
Make few your desires. [Chapter 19]

...Those who make a display of themselves are not illustrious.
Those who affirm their own views are not well known.
Those who brag about themselves are not accorded merit.
Those who boast about themselves are not heard of for long.
From the point of view of the Way [Dao], such things are known as “excess provisions and pointless activities.”
All creatures find these repulsive;
And so one who has the Way does not abide in them. [Chapter 24]

...Streams and torrents flow into rivers and oceans,
Just as the world flows into the Way. [Chapter 32]

**SOURCE:** Excerpts from Laozi’s, *The Daodejing.*

**Q-7 -->** List two key Daoist ideas. How does one seek the *Dao* [the Way]?

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In governing men and in serving heaven, there is nothing like moderation. For only by moderation can there be an early return to the normal state of humankind. This early return is the same as a great storage of virtue. With a great storage of virtue there is nothing that may not be achieved. If there is nothing that may not be achieved, then no one will know to what extent this power reaches. And if no one knows to what extent a man’s power reaches, that man is fit to be the ruler of a state…; practice non-interference in order to win the empire.…

The greater the number of laws and enactments, the more thieves and robbers there will be. Therefore the Sage [Laozi] says: “So long as I do nothing, the people will right themselves. If only I keep from meddling, the people will grow rich. If only I am free from desire, the people will come naturally back to simplicity.…"

**SOURCE:** *The Sayings of Lao Tzu*, translated by Lionel Giles.

**Q-8** --> According to Daoism, how should a ruler govern?