

# STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE THOUGHT OF JIXIA ACADEMY ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF PRE-QIN SOCIAL ORDER<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Jixia Academy (稷下学派) is a general term for the Contending academic group in the Pre-Qin Period (B.C.235-B.C.221). The thought derived from Jixia Academy occupies an important part in the development of Chinese ancient ideological history. It has played an important role in regulating and enlightening the construction of the symbolic art of the social order at that time. And it is also of great value to the stability and orderly operation of today's social order. This paper takes the thought of Jixia Academy as the core. Firstly, it analyzes the general situation of Jixia Academy and its ideological connotation. Secondly, it explores the symbolic art of the Pre-Qin social order, including the characteristics of the Pre-Qin social order and the construction path of the Pre-Qin social order. On this basis, it elaborates the influence of the thought of Jixia Academy on the construction of social order in the Pre-Qin Period, in order to make more people to deeply understand the thought of Jixia Academy and its positive role in the construction of the Pre-Qin social order symbolic art.

**Keywords:** Jixia Academy. Thought connotation. Pre-Qin social order. Social system.

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## INTRODUCTION

The social order is closely related to the people's life. The peace and stability of the social order directly determines people's happiness index. For the Pre-Qin Period, especially during the Warring States Period, the social system was undergoing a major transformation, which highlighted the demand for the reconstruction of the symbolic art of social order. Under this great social background, the thought of Jixia Academy played an obvious role in the construction of the symbolic art of social order in the Pre-Qin Period.

The Jixia Academy is derived from Jixia Academy, its rich ideological content and innovative communicating form has laid a solid foundation for the construction of symbolic art of the Pre-Qin social order. Taking the thought of Jixia Academy as the starting point, this paper will deeply analyze its connotation of the thought of Jixia Academy and its influence on the construction of symbolic art of the Pre-Qin social order.

## 1 JIXIA ACADEMY AND AN OVERVIEW OF ITS IDEOLOGICAL CONNOTATION ANALYSIS

As for the origin of "Jixia", people have different opinions, among which Jimen is the most common one. In the Western Han Dynasty, Liu Xiang wrote "Bie Lu", saying, "In Qi, there was the Gate of Ji. There is a school outside, that is, the school established by King Xuan of Qi, so it is called Ji Xia's School". Scholars in later generations supported this view (ZHAO, 2020, p. 25). As for "Jixia Academy", it emerged with the development of modern Chinese. Researchers have verified that its initiator was Mr. Guo Moruo, and this academic discourse system was really popular in the 1980s. The Jixia Academy discussed in this paper evolved from Jixia Academy after more than 100 years of development, which is a general term for scholars with different ideas and academic viewpoints in Jixia Academy. According to Qian Mu's "Jixia Bachelor's Table" attached to "Jixia General Examination", Chunyu Kun, Meng Ke, Peng Meng, Song Xing, Yin Wen, Shen Dao, Jie Zi, Ji Zhen, Tian Pian, Huan Yuan, Wang Dou, Ershuo, Xun Guo, Zou Yan, Zou Shi and Tian Ba were all members of the Jixia Academy, among whom, Mencius and Xun Zi were the most famous and the most well-known by later generations (QIAN, 1992). Sun Yikai divided the figures of Jixia Academy into seven categories: Confucianism, Daoism, Huang-Lao School, Yin-Yang School, Famous School, Strategist, and Military Master. And he listed the representatives of different factions in turn except for the category

of Military Master (GAO, 2019, p. 47). Song Xing, Yin Wen, and Shen Dao are all members of Jixia Academy, among them, Mencius and Xunzi are the most famous and well known. The development of Jixia Academy takes Jixia Academy as the core, and academic thoughts as the basis. After hundreds of years of development, the school still remains prosperous, showing its far-reaching influence and extremely high value. The reason for the long-term prosperity and development of Jixia Academy is closely related to the form of thought dissemination. Jixia Academy disseminates its own ideas in a completely open form, which can attract more attention and concern of literati than the traditional dissemination of classics of past dynasties (ZHU, 2018). At the same time, Jixia Academy adopts the principle of compatibility for academic thoughts, and replaces the previous form of only one school by absorbing the ideas of hundreds of schools. This is the most fundamental reason for the formation of the Pre-Qin Hundred Schools of thought, which provides an example and a solid foundation for the future development of Chinese ideology and academic compatibility. It is worth mentioning that disputes between ideas and academics are inevitable. However, because of the reason that compatibility means equality to a certain extent, it provides an opportunity for different people to express their own views, and also provides a broad space for the mutual development of different ideas, and avoids a series of problems such as being unable to express their own views due to the low status of the school (WANG, 2017). In addition, the Jixia Academy has the characteristics of freedom and independence. On the one hand, the scholars from the Jixia Academy can write, lecture, and advise. On the other hand, the scholars of Jixia Academy will not change their views at will because of the ruler's preferences. This independence, which does not cater to the ruler's preferences, is extremely valuable in that society. According to the different mainstream views of Jixia Academy, it can be divided into the Confucian school, Legalists, Mohist and Huang-lao Daoism and other categories, showing the prosperity and diversity of Jixia thought. The academic viewpoints of all schools are integrated into one, forming a school of thought in which hundreds of schools of thought contend in Chinese history. It has created the great brilliance of Chinese thought. Many thoughts of later generations can be traced back to this period, and the source can be found in the Jixia Academy.

## 2 ANALYSIS ON THE IDEOLOGICAL CONNOTATION OF THE JIXIA ACADEMY

Thought is the core of culture. The ideological connotation leads the cultural connotation and value trend. The ideological connotation of Jixia Academy is an important part of the connotation of Chinese traditional thought. Many thoughts of the Jixia Academy have played an important role not only in the Pre-Qin period, but also in the rapid development of modern times (HAN, 2015). The typical characteristic of the ideological connotation of the Jixia Academy lies in the richness of the content, which is determined by the diversity and complexity of scholars of the Jixia Academy. The thoughts mainly include the rule of law and the idea of harmony between man and nature. Among the ideas of the rule of law embodied by Jixia Academy, Legalist scholars are the most typical and representative. Different from the inherent self-restraint of Confucianism, the legalist thought of the rule of law emphasizes the compulsory restraint of people in the form of punishment and other external specific forms. And Han Fei even elaborated the necessity of the rule of law in social order in the form of double argumentation. Although his thoughts are extreme, to a certain extent, it promoted the birth of legal forms such as later legal provisions, so it has advantages (ZHI, 2014). The origin of the thought of rule of law and legalist ethics is related to the understanding of human nature. It is pointed out in *Guanzi • Jinzang* that “For ordinary people, when they encounter benefits, they go back to fight for them, and when they encounter disasters, they go back to avoid them.” In the Book of *Shang Junshu • Chuan Chi*, it is written that “[...] weighing with a scale to know the weight, measuring with a ruler to know the length”, both of which show the viewpoint of “Human nature seeks advantage and avoids harm, and determines the necessity of the administration by law.” Huang-lao thought is developed on the basis of absorbing the thoughts of various other Schools, emphasizing the combination of “Tao” and “law”. Compared with legalism, it is more reasonable and feasible. On the issue of the unity of man and nature, different people in the Jixia Academy have different interpretations, and there are certain similarities, but there are differences after careful study. The thought of conforming to nature represented by Daoism is very typical in the aspect of unity between nature and man, which can best represent the understanding of most people in the Hundred Schools of thought. The expressions in *Tao Tê Ching* about “[...] the law of man, the law of earth, the law of heaven and the law of nature” best represent the understanding of most people in the Hundred Schools of thought (YANG, 2014). The concept of natural law in Xunzi’s thought of the unity of man and nature is very different

from the former. Taking *Xunzi • TianLun* as an example, in which there are sayings such as “The operation of nature has its own laws and will not be changed by Yao or Ji’s autocracy”. “A gentleman preaches and practices his usual way, and a villain cares about utility for a while”; “Waders make marks on the bottom of the water to show that they are drowning.” Those who are responsible for the people must identify any improper behavior, so that people can be more vigilant and avoid selfishness.” His understanding of heaven is not only limited to the nature of heaven, but also includes the will of heaven, justice and principle of heaven, etc., showing the feeling and understanding of the unity of man and nature at more levels. And his different emphasis on heaven, showing Xunzi’s distinct personal emotional characteristics. In addition to the above two typical thoughts, the thought connotation of the Jixia School also includes Mohist thought of self-cultivation. For example, in *Mozi • Xiushen*, “[...] the person who is in the opposite direction” emphasizes self-denial and introspection; “Therefore, a gentleman will become stronger as long as he works hard, and become weaker as long as his own tastes and desires are satisfied” emphasizes self-improvement; “People or things with weak foundations will eventually be in danger” emphasizes being realistic. For example, Gongsun Longzi wrote in *On Jian Bai* that “Seeing without touching, only know that the stone is white but cannot feel the hardness of stone; only touching a stone without seeing, one can only feel the hardness of the stone but not know its color”, which emphasizes the difference of things by discussing the philosophies of separation and whiteness. Diversified ideological connotations have expanded the far-reaching influence of the Jixia Academy and created the prosperity of a hundred schools of thought in the Pre-Qin Period (YIN, 2012). It should be noted that the reason for the far-reaching influence of the Jixia Academy is not only the diversified content, but also the innovative form of its transmission and inheritance. The open inheritance form enhances the attraction to social groups, and the inclusive inheritance form is more conducive to the integration and development of ideas. The two jointly promote the thought of the Jixia Academy to become a side embodiment of the spirit of the Chinese nation, making it still of great value and great influence in modern society.

### **3 A STUDY ON THE CONSTRUCTION PATH OF SOCIAL ORDER IN PRE-QIN PERIOD**

#### **3.1 ANALYSIS ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL ORDER IN PRE-QIN PERIOD**

The most important feature of the Pre-Qin social order is freedom, which is an important premise for the free collusion of different ideas and reflects the close relationship between the compatibility of the Ji-Xia Academy of thought and the free social atmosphere of selecting and apportionment in the Pre-Qin Period. It was the attitude of the rulers of the State of Qi and the free atmosphere of giving advice in various ways that formed the compatible thought core of the Ji Xia Academy. To the Warring States Period, the Pre-Qin social order developed another prominent feature, that is, chaos. The contention of a hundred schools of thought and the unity of opposites in the chaotic social order reveal to a certain extent the close connection between thought and social order. A careful study of the social order and Jixia Academy during the Warring States Period shows that it has the characteristics of mutual influence and mutual promotion. On the one hand, the chaos of the Pre-Qin social order provided an opportunity for the prosperity and development of Jixia thought. In order to rebuild the peace and stability of the Pre-Qin social order, corresponding thoughts should be guided to highlight the needs of diversified thoughts and suggestions. This was the fundamental reason for the common prosperity and development of different schools in this period (MAYHEW, 2012). On the other hand, the diversified thoughts of Jixia Academy contributed to the stability of the Pre-Qin social order. During the Pre-Qin Period, the society was rather turbulent. Different scholars from Jixia Academy made positive comments to the rulers in order to make suggestions for the stability of social order. It is worth mentioning that all the members of Jixia Academy do not hold official positions, which can guarantee the authenticity and usefulness of their comments. They do not flatter the rulers because of their preference, but really start from the needs of the country and the people to help the development of the country and society. The mentality of serving the society wholeheartedly can still play a certain inspiring role today (ZHANG, 2013). Another prominent feature of the Pre-Qin social order is freedom, and freedom is an important prerequisite for the free collusion of different ideas, reflecting the close relationship between the compatibility of Jixia Academy's ideas and the free social atmosphere of selecting and appointing talented and capable people. Due to the attitude of the gentlemen of Qi State to treat people with courtesy and the atmosphere of free advice, the compatible ideological core of Jixia Academy was created.

It can be seen that the characteristics of social order in the Pre-Qin Period complemented the development of Jixia Academy. The unique background environment in the Pre-Qin Period fundamentally promotes the development of Jixia Academy, and the rich ideological connotation of the Jixia Academy provided theoretical support for the construction of the pre-Qin social order. The two complement and benefit each other.

### 3.2 ANALYSIS ON THE CONSTRUCTION PATH OF THE PRE-QIN SOCIAL ORDER

The construction of social order in the Pre-Qin period mainly includes two major paths. One is the ritual path represented by Confucianism, and the other is the rule of law path represented by the legal family. The two fundamentally determine two completely different symbolic art elements needed by the construction of Pre-Qin social order. The less restrictive system of rites and governance emphasizes the maintenance of social order through people's inner self-restraint, and pays more attention to people's subjective initiative, which is the interpretation of "[...] human beings are good by nature". It provides symbolic art elements such as benevolence, righteousness, filial piety and kindness for the construction of Pre-Qin social order symbolic art (MIAO, 2017). The rule of law system and the ritual system came into being correspondingly. This largely reflects a distrust of human nature. It believes that it is necessary to rely on external coercive measures to restrain the people. It is the prototype of the current judicial system and provides important inspiration for the birth of the judicial system. At the same time, it provides symbolic art elements such as laws and systems for the construction of the symbolic art of the Pre-Qin social order. Rule by rites and rule of law have their own advantages, but they have their own one-sidedness and limitation. The combination of the two can complement each other, better maintain social order, and promote the development of pre-Qin social order in a more orderly and perfect direction. As for the Jixia school, the Guan Zhong school represented by Guan Guan and the Zhonghe school represented by Chunyu Kun all advocated the combination of law and rites to govern the country and took "making the people rich" as their basic pursuit to maintain social order, demonstrating the wisdom of our sages. It should be noted that "making the people rich" is of great significance to maintain social order. *Guanzi • Zhiguo* emphasizes the importance of "making the people rich" by saying that "[...] the people are easy to govern if they are rich, and the people are difficult to govern if they are poor", and puts forward the proposition that "[...] each way

to govern a country must first enrich the people”, from which we can see the necessity of the thought of “making the people rich” for the construction of the Pre-Qin social order.

#### **4 INTERPRETATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF THOUGHT OF JIXIA ACADEMY ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SYMBOLIC ART OF PRE-QIN SOCIAL ORDER**

##### **4.1 THE THOUGHT OF JIXIA ACADEMY GUIDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC OPINION SYMBOLS IN PRE-QIN SOCIETY**

In the literal sense, public opinion refers to the views expressed by social groups about a certain social event. It is a concentrated display of social group consciousness. Its main body is human, through speech and other forms, it externalizes with the help of a variety of media to express attitudes and requirements. It is a common symbol/art element in both historical society and modern society. Because the public opinion symbol and the symbol of social people are both forms of expressing public attitudes, and there are certain similarities between them. But at the same time, there are certain differences. In a specific context, the two can be transformed into each other, so that in many cases, public opinion symbols can form public opinion symbols to achieve their respective purposes (LUO, 2018). Because the social public opinion symbol can reflect the public's ideology and value orientation to a certain extent, it reflects the important significance of social thought in the social public opinion symbol. Only with good ideas as the guide and good theories as the basis can a positive public opinion be formed and then contribute to the progress and development of the whole society. Otherwise, it may cause unbearable harm to the society. Ignoring it will damage social order and even endanger the legitimate rights and interests of the public.

For the Pre-Qin Period, although the communication between people in this period was not as developed and convenient as it is today, the social public opinion symbol also played an important role in this period. The public opinion symbol of this stage mainly depended on the dissemination and induction of literati. Jixia Academy, as an institution of higher learning in the Pre-Qin Period, actively carried out educational work. It not only gathered disciples in the society, but also accommodated sages of various schools. The literati cultivated here greatly facilitated the dissemination of thoughts, affecting the social opinion symbol of the Pre-Qin Period to a large extent (GUO, 2018). At the same time, Jixia Academy occupied a pivotal



position in the Pre-Qin Period. Although the academic disputes between Jixia Academy insiders were extremely fierce, the disputes also prompted the two parties with different views to learn from each other and give up rationally. Its own shortcomings, along with the continuous improvement of disputes, have promoted the continuous improvement of its own theoretical system, which is conducive to the continuous improvement and development of public opinion symbols.

#### **4.2 THE THOUGHT OF JIXIA ACADEMY LED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL SYSTEM SYMBOL IN THE PRE-QIN PERIOD**

Social system generally refers to various systems in the society, including economic system, education system, legal system, etc. Improving the formulation of the social system is the key to ensuring orderly social order. The symbol of the social system is the key symbol of social order (YOU, 2019). During the Pre-Qin period, the virtue, rite and law were the core topic discussed by Jixia Academy, which successively derived more specific elements of social system symbols, such as benevolence, righteousness, filial piety and kindness, urging the establishment and development of social system symbols. Taking the element of benevolence and righteousness as an example, it is the most prominent and Confucianist representative of the hundred schools of thought. Mencius put forward the idea that benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom are the four ends, which created a normative system of consciously and voluntarily abiding by propriety, and provided a legal basis for the order of propriety. The dissemination of the elements of benevolence, righteousness and related ideas is conducive to the formation of a good social atmosphere, which is the foundation and important premise of maintaining and stabilizing social order. Another example is the legal element, by the promulgation and implementation of the two measures of “closing the canal” and “making the qiu fu”, Zichan from Zheng state expanded the private right of land, reformed the taxation system, and ensured the implementation and compliance of the corresponding system through the form of “casting the criminal cauldron”. It is worth mentioning that the “Casting the Dingding” implemented by Zi Chan of Zheng was the first written law in Chinese history, while the government of Han state focused on magic, not heavy punishment, but “the justice of the law”, creatively developed the “art” of Legalists “by conferencing officials” and “submissive royal officials”, and promoted the integration of magic into the power of the emperor (MA, 2015, p. 44). In addition, the virtue, rites and

law advocated by Jixia Academy are directly related to the establishment of social system symbols in the Pre-Qin Period, through the internal self-request and external moral constraints and legal constraints, the social order of Pre-Qin society is promoted better. This is of great necessity and importance to the political turmoil of the Pre-Qin Period. In the aspect of necessity, there are the necessity of external environment caused by turbulent background environment and the urgent need for social order. In terms of importance, ideology and culture determine the development direction of the social system to a certain extent as well as the advancement and rationality of the social system. It should be noted that the ideology directly affects people's behavior and habits, and the spread of Jixia thought first changes the public's ideology and then changes behavior. The social system established under the premise of the general acceptance and recognition of the public is more likely to be accepted, its execution and operability are stronger, and it is more quickly accepted by the public. This promotes the establishment and improvement of social system symbols, and is more conducive to demonstrating the superiority of social system symbols.

## CONCLUSIONS

Jixia Academy has created the famous academic phenomenon of hundred schools of thought in the history of China, which leads to the ideological trend of debate in the Pre-Qin Period. The collision and mutual absorption of the thoughts of the sages give rise to the rich and diverse thoughts of Jixia Academy. This thought guides the development of pre-Qin public opinion symbols and social system symbols, which in turn affects the construction of pre-Qin social order symbolic art. Other academic researchers should realize the important value of thought of the Jixia Academy, explore deeper into the positive role of the thought of Jixia Academy in the construction of the symbolic art of the Pre-Qin social order, and promote the essence of the thoughts of Jixia Academy to generate new vitality in the new era, thus promoting the enduring influence of fine ideological and cultural connotations in China.

YANG, J.; SWINDALL, H. Estudo sobre a influência do pensamento da Academia Jixia na construção da ordem social Pré-Qin. *Transformação*, Marília, v. 45, p. 69-86, 2022. Edição Especial 2.

**Resumo:** Academia Jixia (稷下学派) é um termo geral para o grupo acadêmico Contendo, no período da Dinastia Pré-Qin (235 A.C. -221 A.C.), e o pensamento derivado da Academia Jixia ocupa uma parte importante no desenvolvimento da história ideológica antiga chinesa. Esse pensamento desempenhou um papel importante na regulação e esclarecimento da construção da arte simbólica da ordem social da época, sendo também de grande valia para a estabilidade e o funcionamento ordenado da ordem social atual. Este artigo toma como núcleo o pensamento da Jixia Academy. Primeiramente, analisa a situação geral da Academia Jixia e sua conotação ideológica. Em segundo lugar, explora a arte simbólica da ordem social Pré-Qin, incluindo as características da ordem social Pré-Qin e o caminho de construção da ordem social pré-Qin. Com base nisso, interpreta a influência do pensamento da Academia Jixia, na construção da ordem social no período Pré-Qin, a fim de levar mais pessoas a compreenderem profundamente o pensamento da Academia Jixia e seu papel positivo, na construção da arte simbólica da ordem social |Pré-Qin.

Palavras-chave: Academia Jixia. Conotação de pensamento. Ordem social pré-Qin. Sistema social.

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