

POLITICAL - SOCIAL IDEAS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF XUNZI

IDÉIAS POLÍTICAS - SOCIAIS NA FILOSOFIA DO XUNZI*

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Abstract: Xunzi is one of the important philosophers of ancient China. The birth and development of Xunzi philosophy is a reflection of the volatile reality of the socio-political situation in China during the Spring and Autumn period, Warring States period. He has contributed to enriching and deepening many aspects of the content, trends and schools of Chinese philosophy in the context of the "Hundred Schools of Thought" (Ren, 2020). In his philosophical ideology, socio-political thought holds a particularly important position. According to the researchers who have commented: "Xunzi absorbed the philosophy of Mencius, took the humanist political thought of Mencius, and throughout his doctrines had materialism and idealism, however, Xunzi demonstrated his loyalty to the political theory of the founder of Confucianism" (Vo, 2010, p. 299). There are many points show that Xunzi's views are useful and still relevant to Eastern peoples in today's world. Therefore, the study of Xunzi's socio-political thought has profound theoretical and practical significance. Within the scope of the article, the author focuses on clarifying the socio-political thought of Xunzi through three significant theories: correct naming, "human nature is evil" and the theory of society.

Key words: Correct naming. Evil. Ritual and yi. Xunzi.

Resumo: Xunzi é um dos importantes filósofos da China antiga. O nascimento e o desenvolvimento da filosofia Xunzi é um reflexo da realidade volátil da situação sócio-política na China durante o período de primavera e outono, período dos Estados em guerra. Ele contribuiu para enriquecer e aprofundar muitos aspectos do conteúdo, tendências e escolas da filosofia chinesa no contexto das "Cem Escolas de Pensamento" (Ren, 2020). Em sua ideologia filosófica, o pensamento sócio-político ocupa uma posição particularmente importante. De acordo com os pesquisadores que comentaram: "Xunzi absorveu a filosofia de Mencius, tomou o pensamento político humanista de Mencius, e através de suas doutrinas teve materialismo e idealismo, entretanto, Xunzi demonstrou sua lealdade à teoria política do fundador do confucionismo" (Vo, 2010, p. 299). Há muitos pontos que mostram que as opiniões de Xunzi são úteis e ainda relevantes para os povos orientais no mundo de hoje. Portanto, o estudo do pensamento sócio-político de Xunzi tem um profundo significado teórico e prático. Dentro do escopo do artigo, o autor se concentra no esclarecimento do pensamento sócio-político de Xunzi através de três teorias significativas: nome correto, "a natureza humana é má" e a teoria da sociedade.

Palavras-chave: Nomeação correta. Maligno. Ritual e yi. Xunzi.

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1. Introduction

Xun Kuang (315 – 230 BC) surname Xun, self-titled Kuang, also widely known as Xunzi. Since his forefather was Xun Yao or Zhi Yao (506 – 451 BC), an Earl of Zhi (a vassal state of Jin), who was killed in 451 BC. His ancestors moved to state of Zhao, and Xunzi was born in there.

The two oldest documents on Xunzi's life still available today are Chapter 74 in Ranked Biographies section, Records of the Historian of Sima Qian (145 – 86/90 BC) (Csikszentmihaly, 2020; Goldin, 2018) and the Preface of the *Xunzi* by Liu Xiang. Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE) (Goldin, 2018) was born after Sima Qian, must have read the Records of the Historian, so his preface has the same sentences as in the Historical Records, the only difference is that Sima Qian said that Xunzi served as an official in Lang Sheng of Chu state only once, but according to Liu Xiang, Xunzi received the post there twice.

In *Xunzi*, there are two passages about the journeys of Xun Kuang to the state of Qin: A passage in chapter The Achievements of the Ru (Xunzi, 2014, p. 52) or The teachings of the Confucians (儒效篇 *Ruxiao*) (Theobald, 2010), King Zhao of Qin (秦昭王; 325–251 BC) criticized the Confucian scholars are useless for the country, Xunzi replied in general that the Confucian scholars followed the religion of the sage-kings' method, respected ritual, and had a high position at the court, which made politics beautiful. Low status makes customs beautiful. King Zhao of Qin praised it, but then he did not use it to govern his state.

Another passage in chapter The Strong State (Xunzi, 2014, p. 163) or On strengthening the state (疆國篇 *Qiangguo*), Fan Sui's 范雎 (d. 255 BC) (Pines, 2020) asked how he felt about the Qin state, Xunzi replied: Qin's land is in a dangerous position with many resources, people are spontaneous, not lewd, afraid of the authorities, serious and faithful mandarins, good in every aspect, only a weakness is not knowing how to apply Confucianism.

Around the age of forty, Xunzi had a clear ideology of using Confucianism to rule the country and he traveled to other countries (Qin, Zhao, Qi) to convince vassal kings, like Confucius (trad. 551–479 BC) (Csikszentmihaly, 2020) and Mencius did in the past. However, King of Qin did not offer him a position, so after a while he returned to Zhao and went to Qi (after 264 BC, he was about fifty years old). He stayed in the state of Qi for a long time, the Historical Records recorded that three times he served as Tejiu, but it was not yet an official position at that time.

By 255 BC (the year state of Zhou was captured by state of Qin), Xunzi was no longer in Qi, and he went to Chu, the Prime minister - Lord Chunshen 春申君 (d. 238 BCE) ([Galvany, 2017](#)) invited him to take a position as Magistrate of Lanling (蘭陵令), a region in what is today's southern Shandong province, then live here for the rest of his life. He opened a school to teach and write books, founded the Lanling school, and built the atmosphere of this county. He spent his remaining years in Chu as a teacher. Among his students, there were two famous legalists, Han Fei 韓非 (d. 233 BCE) and Li Si 李斯 (d. 208 BC) ([Pines, 2018](#)). He died in Lanling about 237 BC to 235 BC, at aged 78-80.

When going to find out about Xunzi's career, in *The Grand Scribe's Records* ([Ch'ien, 2020](#)) of Sima Qian, Xunzi wrote books of several ten thousand words, so the *Xunzi* series appeared as late as the second century BC. Liu Xiang collected, arranged, and adjusted to 32 chapters, so it was called "*Xunzi*".

2. Research methods

The formation and development of Xunzi's socio-political thought was deeply influenced by the socio-historical conditions of ancient Chinese society (during the Spring and Autumn period, and the Warring States period) and a close correlation with others contemporary philosophical trends and doctrines. Therefore, in order to be able to properly appreciate the role of Xunzi's socio-political thought in particular and the philosophical system in general, it is necessary to master the principles of dialectical materialism when awareness and access to the research object. These are the following principles: objective principle, comprehensive principle, specific historical principle, development principle and practical principle.

Besides, the socio-political thought in particular and the philosophical thought of Xunzi is a system containing many extremely rich and profound contents, which is not only a continuous continuation of the flow of ideas of human beings but also a reflection of the tumultuous realities of Chinese society during the Spring and Autumn period, and the Warring States period. Thus, to ensure the quality of research results requires an interdisciplinary scientific approach; including philosophy, politics, education, ethics.

To serve the research process, the author has used research methods such as: analysis, synthesis, comparison and contrast, the unified method between logic and history. In which, the method of comparison and contrast plays an important role; Because the study of Xunzi's

socio-political thought is placed in the same flow of history and culture of ancient China, it is necessary to have comparisons and contrasts when presenting to ensure objectivity and science. In addition, studying the socio-political views of Xinzi needs to be compared with other ideas and theories of his time. The above methods are used at the same time, having a dialectical relationship with each other, helping the author to approach the problem and solve the problem in a comprehensive way, effective.

3. Content

3.1. Correct naming

Xunzi believes that “names are given to point up realities” ([Chuanhua, 2011](#)). Thanks to the fixed name, it is possible to distinguish between the real and the things, so that it is not confused with the other, that “the determined name is really clear” ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 164](#)). In short, the name is the name or concept - which people use to represent objective things in thought and language. His definition of name is simple when considering that nouns and concepts are reflections of properties of things in the world. Concept formation must first be based on human feelings, then people take the general properties of things and phenomena brought by sensory organs to analyze, compare, generalize, induct into each type for giving it a name, thus forming a noun or concept.

In order to show the effect of the name and the main basis for naming, for Xunzi, the image of different things will separate people's hearts and understand each other. The ten thousand things are different, they are so messy to recognize. Hence, the wise person ([Xunzi, 2014, p. 50](#)) make distinctions and give names just to indicate the real thing. From above to clearly the precious people, below to distinguish between the similar and the different. Preciousness has been divided, heterosexuality has been separated, so the will has no worries about not understanding, and the job will not have a miserable curse. That's why there's a name." Thus, the creation of a name in Xunzi's ideology not only has epistemological and logical meanings but is also associated with social and ethical meanings.

Regarding the classification of names, Xunzi said:

"the myriad things are very numerous, sometimes one desires to refer to them all together, and so one calls them “things.” “Things” is a case of large-scale group naming. By drawing analogies, one groups things together, grouping and grouping, until there is nothing more to group, and then one stops. Sometimes one wishes to refer to them partially, and so

one calls them “birds” and “beasts.” “Birds” and “beasts” are instances of large-scale differentiated naming. By drawing analogies, one differentiates things, differentiating and differentiating, until there is nothing more to differentiate, and then one stops.” ([Xunzi, 2014, p. 239](#)).

Thus, "common name" is the result of the process of synthetic reasoning, and "proper name" is the result of the process of analytical reasoning. Since then, Xunzi asserts that "the common", "the whole" is in the "private", "the individual". "The common" can only cover "the particular" roughly. "The common" and "the particular" are different but not separate from each other. Those are concepts that are completely opposite to the idealism and eclecticism of Gongsun Long (320-250 BC) ([Fraser, 2020b](#)) school, which separates dramatically the "common" from "the particular".

In order to avoid the confusion of name and reality, Xunzi also believes that everyone must take that common convention as a standard and model for all their activities, thoughts and inferences ([Doan, 2012, p. 71](#)). That is, once the name has been established, conventionally applied to a real thing, it can only be applied to that fact, not arbitrarily changed and applied to other realities. Moreover, the king must use his legal system and authority to create a name, specify the meaning of the name, and define the title for clarity and unity. He wrote: "The king made his name, when the name is fixed, it is clear, when the religion is implemented, it can lead the people to consensus. Therefore, choosing false words to distort the legitimacy to make people suspicious, many people sue, that is called fraud ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, pp. 166-167](#)). He vehemently criticizes unrighteous theories and erroneous words that separate from the righteous path, and those who arbitrarily pose as never to be in the same category with these three things. Therefore, the wise person knows how to keep his name clear, without using apologetics to confuse the name ([Doan, 1991, p. 183](#)).

The root of the confusion of name and reality that Xun Zi criticized is a reflection of the current state of Chinese society. Therefore, the wish to have a wise ruler to unify politics, flourish ideologies and morals, and put an end to all social disturbances, is not only his own wish but also an aspiration of Chinese common people at that time.

When looking into the theory of correct naming of Xunzi, we find out that Xunzi was one among the philosophers of the pre-Qin dynasty who discussed carefully on rectification of names. Because, Confucius advocated the theory of "righteousness" to make "the king become the king, I become the servant, the father becomes the father, the son gives birth",

he is "righteous" to "determine the identity" ([Doan, 1992, p. 77](#)). His "legitimacy" position carries more moral meaning than theoretical meaning. Mencius said, "If you don't know whether there is a father or a king, then (not a man but a beast)". He also has the name "king", saying: "One who robs co-humanity [ren] you call a `robber'; one who robs the right [yi] you call a `wrecker'; and one who robs and wrecks you call an `outlaw.' I have heard that [Wu] punished the outlaw Zhou – I have not heard that he murdered his lord" ([Richey, 2002](#)). Thus, Mencius' legitimacy also had a much more moral purpose. Mohism (Mòjiā) ([Fraser, 2020a](#)) and The "School of Names" (ming jia) ([Fraser, 2020b](#)), on the other hand, are righteous with a logical rather than a moral purpose. Xunzi writes "correct naming" is both to "clarify the rich and the lowly", and to "distinguish the things that are the same and different" (intelligence, merit, distinction) ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 163](#)). His correct naming theory includes both moral and logical meanings. Obviously, it is mainly to serve socio-political purposes.

3.2. Human nature is evil

During the time of Xunzi, in China, there were at least four theories of human nature. The first is the theory of "benevolent, unwholesome" (apparently that of The Master). The second is the theory that "human nature can make it good or bad" (whose it is not known). The third is "human nature is neither good nor not-good " (by Gaozi) ([Mencius, 2009, p. 123](#)). The fourth is "human nature is good" (of Mencius) ([Zhang, 2000](#)). These four theories are recorded in the book 6 (Gaozi) of Mencius ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 42](#)). In his own time, Xunzi opposed Mencius and established a new contradictory theory of human nature – "Human nature is evil" ([Goldin, 2018](#)).

Xunzi advocated evil, in contrast to Mencius advocated good. So, first of all, what is good? What is evil? Good and evil are two nouns that denote two opposing values. So what criteria must be followed to distinguish those two values? Xunzi defines good and evil like this: "In the past, people called good what was compatible with justice and equality, and called evil what was compatible with natural danger and rebellion. That is the point that distinguishes between good and evil" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 46](#)).

It is clear that Xunzi identifies good and evil with treatment and disorder: What is compatible with and leads to equality is good, on the contrary, what is compatible and leads to disorder is evil. Justice, according to Xunzi, is the standard that distinguishes good from

evil. For him, what is right with ritual and yi leads to equality, and what is contrary to ritual and yi leads to disorder. That is also true, hence, good is also in accordance with ritual and yi and vice versa.

Everything has a motive and a result and the motive is good, the result is also good sometimes, but not always. Sometimes the motive is good but the result is evil and the motive is evil and the result is good. It is up to the individual to judge behavior, based on motives or outcomes. Xunzi took equality as a criterion to distinguish between good and evil ([Doan et al., 1994, p. 421](#)). Egalitarianism can be understood as a motive for egalitarianism, but also as a result of egalitarianism. In chapter *Discourse on Ritual*, Xunzi said: "People are born with a will, if they want to, they can't help but seek and demand; Seeking, demanding without limits, limits cannot help but fight. Conflict is chaos, chaos is misery" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 47](#)). According to this sentence, the treatment and disorder in Xunzi refers here to the state of disorder treatment (as a result) rather than the treatment of disorder and disorder (the motive). So it is reasonable to say that Xunzi values action in terms of results, not motives. And, thus, in this regard, he is closer to the Mohism than to the Confucian ([Doan, 1999, p. 223](#)).

Because of advocating that human nature is inherently evil, Xunzi gave two arguments, one direct and one indirect answers to defend for his point of view.

Direct argument, Xunzi argues that: Human nature is bad because human nature inherently wants too much things and always tends to get more. People want to eat meat, to wear embroidery, to have a carriage, to accumulate wealth. Thus, a lifetime is still not enough" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 48](#)). In chapter Human nature is bad, Xunzi emphasized the tendency of lust as follows: Human nature is born filial piety, according to that nature, it becomes a rivalry with each other, but self-concession does not exist, born envious, according to that trait, becomes a thief without loyalty, then they lose all ritual and yi. Thus, according to people's nature, it is inevitable that competition will arise, violate the fate (i.e., each other's interests), mess with reason and make a brutal mistake. Therefore, they must need a teacher to guide them ritual and yi for nurturing their nature. It is clear that people's nature is evil, it's because of people's merit that it can be turned into good. The words "following the nature, following the desire" are repeated again and again to emphasize the tendency of the human nature to go too far. The excessive direction of the heart of wanting more, "not knowing enough in a lifetime" is the germ of all harm: Everyone wants a lot,

everyone's desire are the same. Everyone wants the same thing, but the resources are limited, if you let go of your temperament, which you love to go too far, you will inevitably fall into a situation of insufficient goods, creating conflicts, leading to chaos and misery. Xunzi's criterion of distinguishing between good and evil is the public interests: what leads to peace is good, and what leads to disorder is evil ([Doan, 2005, p. 164](#)).

Indirect argument, this argument is based on a practical observation, which is considered as a psychological principle: We do not seek what we have, on the contrary, we seek what we have not. Similarly, Xunzi states that the reason why people want to be good is because their character is inherently evil, [...]. If the inside is available, the socks cannot be found outside. People nature are not good, so they wish to learn ritual and yi to become better ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 50](#)). This argument is called indirect (or antagonistic) because it is used not to prove directly that one's character is evil but to prove that one's character cannot be good ([Ngo & Vuong, 1994, p. 89](#)).

The principle that is considered the basis on which Xunzi is based and for the above argument, cannot help but raise questions. Because in reality, it is true that the poor want to be rich, the cowards want to be rich...but what else is there for those who have a lot of money but they have a cold and dark heart, collecting every penny, to get richer? There is no shortage of individuals wearing high customs but still stooping and bending their knees to be more luxurious. We found that "We do not seek what we have" is true in most of cases, but it is not always true. So the fact that "beings desire to do good" is not necessarily a strong enough proof to believe that human nature is evil. Even though social life has deteriorated, there are still "poor and peace" cases. "There is no inside" does not mean to "find something outside". So "beings desire to do good" is not a firmly evidence to conclude "The evil nature of man" ([Durant, 2011, p. 824](#)).

Yet, each of these questions is not enough to refute Xunzi's theory of evil because Xunzi once advocated that "humanity is wanting more", greed has no bottom: having one wants to have ten, people never feel "satisfaction". The rich people still want to be richer because they don't think being rich enough. Then what is really "rich still wants to get richer, rich still wants to be more luxurious" does not deny the exact value of the principle "inside is available, everything is not found outside". As for "rice basket, water gourd" but still happy as in the case of Yan Hui (521 –481 BC), the most important Confucius's disciple. For Xunzi, it is not

"according to the temperament" of people, but that joy arises. from the elaborate "initiating apocalyptic nature" of the gentleman.

In summary, the Xunzi's theory of human nature is based on the postulate "humanity is wanting more" ([Doan, 1999, p. 51](#)), so he vehemently rejected Confucius' theory of "humanity is to want less" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 51](#)), but that postulate is not always true, so Xunzi's theory "human nature is evil" is not very strong.

3.3. Theory of society

When studying the origin of the social system, Xunzi showed that human beings differ from animals in having hierarchical distinctions, social organization and social activities in the community. He said: Man is human, not only because he has two legs and a heart but also the abilities to distinguish what is right or wrong. Animals have fathers and sons but no paternity. There are males and females without any distinction between men and women ([Duong, 2003, p. 93](#)).

For Xunzi, the reason why humans live in a community is because each member of the society obeys a certain position and responsibility, called "duties", those members to live. In order to survive, it is necessary to rely on each other, relate to help each other naturally, inevitably because there is no one can do everything. So the jobs of a hundred workers is to feed each individual in the community. Moreover, if people do not integrate into society, they cannot combine their powers to conquer nature and ensure their own survival. Xunzi emphasizes that "People are not as strong as buffaloes and can't run as well as a horse, but the buffalo and the horse are all caught by people, so what? It's because people know how to gather a group" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 263](#)). What do people gather together? Xunzi replied that we should take the *yi*. If we use the *yi* for superiors and inferiors ([Xunzi, 2014, p. 218](#)), we will live in peace and harmony, then we will unify into one.

In the union of mankind means the most precious because people know how to divide the hierarchy and order to keep the activities in stable. People under the Heaven must gather together, however, they need to know their duties. Then, there will be no struggle, no chaos. So, correct naming is a great benefit to everyone under the heaven and the King is the main key to govern the society ([Tran, 1971, p. 327](#)). So people need to have the King to keep the society in order.

In theory of society, Xunzi upholds humaneness, respects ritual and music in the way of governing the country, considers "the King is the trigger, the right one is the right shadow" ([Gian & Nguyen, 1994, p. 285](#)). The King is the mold, the model, the people must follow him to know how to behave. And Xunzi states that "the King is the source, the clean source makes the fresh water, the dirty source makes the contaminated stream" ([Nguyen, 2004, p. 95](#)). Thus, the man is Son of Heaven who have to love his liege, then the people love him back. If the King wants a strong, stable and happy country, there is nothing like going back to the bridge where the people are, and wanting the people to submit to him is nothing like going back to the bridge in the right place. If you want to make the country beautiful, there is no way but finding talented people.

Moreover, if the ruler wants the people love him and cherish him, he must have a benevolent benevolence. End humanity with the world, end with the world, end with the world. When everyone is out of kindness to the world, everyone is dear, when they are completely loyal to the world, everyone is precious, when they are completely majestic, no one can compete.

Xunzi also said that the ruler is concerned about the lack of virtue, because with virtue, everyone has power. The gentleman takes the ritual, the petty man takes strength. Strength is to let virtue dictate. The strength of a hundred clans waits for the virtue of the ruler to succeed, the gathering of a hundred clans waits for the virtue of the ruler to get along, the property of a hundred, waits for the virtue of the ruler, and then gathered, the power of a hundred clans waits for the virtue of the superior and then rests, the life of a hundred clans waits for the virtue of the superior, and then lasts forever" ([Tran, 1971, p. 331](#)). Xunzi wants to say that the person who is the king conquer his liege by his virtue, then people of a hundred families use their strength to serve the king.

In addition, Xunzi also criticized the way in which the country was ruled by brutal power. He said that people respect the ruler because of their benefit. And the station of Son of Heaven is not just throne of a particular clan or a family but also of all people under Heaven. That idea is the central idea of Confucianism, that means those who become kings and lords must use virtue to change the world, use their righteous mind to benefit the world. A person holds the station of Son of Heaven but he does wrong thing then he does not deserve as a ruler anymore. Because "Heaven gave birth the people not a king, the king holds the station of Son of Heaven because people under heaven offer him this honor" ([Tran,](#)

[1971, p. 332](#)). Although people must honor the king, but when the king is brutal, people have the right to discard his position. Xunzi also agreed with Mencius on this view, who said: killing a tyrannical king is just like killing a cruel person. Therefore, whoever knows how to rule the world with benevolence, the world will be at peace, and if anyone uses cruelty to rule the world, it is dangerous. “The king is the boat, the people are the water then water can carry boats but also sinks the boat” ([Tran, 1971, p. 331](#)). Therefore, the ruler wants a peaceful and strong kingdom, there is better than respecting and honoring the sages and following their advice. That is the great lessons for the king in all time.

Xunzi believes that Way-of-kings [wangdao] are always the same, and people's temperaments are always the same. He said that there were a hundred of sage kings, we do not know whom to imitate. If we want to understand circumstances in a thousand years ago, we should look at the Zhou Dynasty. If we want to know the religion of the Zhou Dynasty, we should clearly examine the king that people value. Before the Five Emperors era, there were no legends left by anyone, not because there were no sages, but because it was so old. In the Five Emperors era, there is no policy left, not because there is no righteous cause, but because it is so old. Yu the Great, King Tang of Shang passed on their policies, but not as clearly as the Zhou Dynasty ones, not because it did not have good intentions, but because it was so old. The long-standing tradition is a summary, the recent one is more details. According to Xunzi, we should learn about the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties when discussing the king's path in the Warring States period. If you look at it too much, it's very far away, hard to believe it's authentic, and using magic is according to the permission of the current king, but you shouldn't leave it and go looking for it in a far place. That is Xunzi's special thought on the political path ([Vu, 1991, p. 279](#)).

In his socio-political views, Xunzi follows the contemporary thought movement and divides it into three ways: Humane Authority (王道) or moral authority (**wang dao**) ([Hui, 2012](#)), Hegemonic Authority, and losing the country ([Tran, 1971, p. 348](#)). That is, whoever chooses wisely will be ruled by the price; if he does not choose wisely, the price will prevail. Xunzi followed the principles of Confucianism, so he was very reverent to the moral authority and expressed clearly his regal method of ruling the world.

Although Xunzi criticized the rule of the country by brutal force, he also paid great attention to the method of ruling the country by legal means. For Xunzi, although ritual is the source of rule, but sole ritual is not enough to govern the country and educate the people.

We need to severely punish in some cases, and combine ritual and lawfulness to make the strong nation. Xunzi advocated: "the principle of governing the country is ritual and yi – punishment" (Doan, 2004, p. 327). He explained: "The king is to use etiquette to rule the world, but if there are still people who stubbornly refuse to follow the teachings, they must resort to punishment. Lawfulness is one root of the world for forbidding tyranny, abstaining from evil is to warn of things that have not yet happened" (Iran, 1971, p. 339). Punishment of the guilty is to prevent the wicked from doing illegal things, and the royal reward and punishment must always be just and worthy. It is to advise those who do good, the punishment is reduced, but the authority is exercised like flowing water, the command is very clear, the transformation is fascinating.

Thus, in the thought of respecting the law, Xunzi always attaches importance to both rewards and punishments. He believes that strict laws can prevent tyranny, hate evil, deter bad things that haven't happened yet, enforce laws, and good customs. From Xunzi's ideas, the philosophers of the legal school such as Han Fei and Li Si have inherited, developed, and changed completely from the ritual and yi method to the lawful method which contributing to help Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇 (259–210 BC) (Raphals, 2020) reunified ancient China after many years of fierce war.

4. Conclusion

Xunzi's socio-political thought was born and developed during the Spring and Autumn period - Warring States period, the period of "hundred flowers blooming" of ancient China with "hundred Schools of Thought", thus it reflects the most basic features of ancient China's philosophical thought, which is aimed at social transformation from chaos to prosperity through improving people's perception. Not beyond the above purpose, the socio-political thought of Xunzi shows a very new vision on these seemingly old issues. Studying all of Xunzi's socio-political thought highlights the thinker's aspiration to bring society from chaos back to prosperity, re-establish order and civility, and create a better political system.

Xunzi's socio-political views also have idealistic elements, reflecting the close relationship with the interests of the new aristocratic landlord class, actively defending the feudal autocracy. rising at the end of the Warring States period. However, his thought

represented a very long step in history and had great influence in the social period in which he lived. Xunzi built a legitimate doctrine associated with the social moral meaning, requiring everyone to properly perform their position and position (i.e., naming). He does not advocate the transmission of titles according to family lineage, but believes that people in power must be virtuous and talented, regardless of their level of origin. The head of the nation must achieve humanity and the divine way - to become a wise ruler, an upright superior. The king must ensure the well-being of the people, must build a strong military force and especially win the trust of the people. Those are really positive values worth inheriting and developing today. On the one hand, Xunzi emphasized political morality, on the other hand he mentioned very strongly the law in community life. This is the fundamental thought that later Han Fei and many other philosophers inherited and developed to form the doctrine of Legalism.

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