

## The Chinese *Jiaxun* (Family Precepts) in Pre-Qin (Before 221BC) Literature

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### Abstract

*The jiaxun (family precepts) is a key family education media in China from ancient time to the Qing Period (2100 BC-1911). In China, most of family precepts aim at cultivating spirituality of individual in the art of interacting with other people, managing one's family and sustaining one's family and its status in the society. The Pre-Qin family precepts is a neglected area in this field as current researches normally focus on family precepts from the Han Period (206 BC-220) to the Qing Period (1644-1911). The family precepts in the Pre-Qin literature mainly appeared as extracts of written monologues or dialogues in collections of prose which were not intentionally written for family juniors. This paper discusses Pre-Qin family precepts in the following areas: (1) definition of Pre-Qin family precepts; (2) extant works that fit the proposed definition of family precepts; (3) spiritual features of these Pre-Qin family precepts; (4) role of these works in the research of Chinese family precepts.*

**Keywords:** Family precept, Chinese culture, Chinese spirituality, Pre-Qin literature, family education

### 1. Introduction

Based on a framework of “human body-two genders-family clan”, Zhang Zailin claims that family in China is existent, gender-interactive and diachronic and accordingly Chinese cultural subjects such as cosmology, religion and many others were imprinted with reflections on family (Zhang, 2009). Zhang has pointed out the importance of family in Chinese culture. Xu and Chen (2003) and Zhu (2008) believe that family precepts emerge as early as in the Pre-Qin period (before 221 BC). In the Pre-Qin period, family precepts in literature appeared as written monologues or dialogues. This paper addresses family precepts through following questions: (1) What do family precepts mean in China? (2) Are there any written works of the Pre-Qin period that fit the proposed definition of family precepts in this paper? (3) If yes, what are their spiritual features? (4) What is the role of these works in the research of Chinese family precepts? To understand Chinese culture, one has to study Chinese family precepts because pre-modern Chinese personhoods were mainly shaped by family precepts in the socialization process.

### 2. What does *Jiaxun* mean in China?

As observed by Mai (1990), “family” is specifically referred to as a unit formed by parents and children in western world but its meaning extends to clans with blood relations in China. Zhu (2008) argued that *jiating* (families) and *jiazu* (clans) belonged to one concept in traditional China. The *yimen* (the clans in which members lived together and shared resources) established in the Eastern Han period (25–220) came to peak in the Song period (960-1279) and typical examples were the Chens of Jiangzhou (3,700 members), the Shes of Tonglin (1,300 members) and the Zhangs of Hanyang (3,000 members) (Xu 1992). Under these big clans, there were numerous families. In some clans, leaders were selected and rules were laid down to unify members and future development. These clans were unified by ancestral temples and specific rules as evident from genealogies after the Song period (Zhu, 2008). These specific precepts from seniors to juniors and from husbands to wives can be in form of personal writings or records of verbal instructions (Zhu, 2008). In China, family precepts have been recorded in various carriers such as bronze vessels, bamboos, silk products, monuments and paper (Hong, 2010). There are also many different terms for family precepts in China and examples are: *jiashu* (family letters), *jajie* (family commandments), *jiayi* (family norms), *jiagui* (family rules) (Zhu, 2008; Hong, 2010). Bao (2007) argued that the aim of ancient Chinese family precepts were to cultivate the individual in the art of interacting with other people, managing one's family and sustaining one's family and its status in the society.

His views points to connectivity of the individual to the society in terms of self-cultivation, inter-personal relationship and sustainability of clans. Thus family precepts can be defined as a major source of spiritual education from clan seniors to juniors and from husbands to wives in ancient China which aims at guiding people to understand themselves and maximize their personal potential so as to sustain their clans in the inter-connected society.

### **3. Are there any written works of family precepts in the Pre-Qin period?**

Fu and Shi (2008) claimed that Pre-Qin period was the infancy stage of family precepts in China. Zeng (2006) proposed that Duke Dan of Zhou (?-1105 BC) was the founder of Chinese family precepts and his precepts to his junior clan members were clearly recorded in the *Shangshu (Book of Documents)*. Currently, the most comprehensive collection of Chinese family precepts is the *Zhonghua chuanshi jiaxun (ZHCSJX)* by Li (1998). In the collection, 89 pieces of prose and poem covering nine themes are interpreted as Pre-Qin family precepts: *Lizhi (Aspiration, 5 pieces)*, *Mianxue (Encouragement of learning, 2 pieces)*, *Xiushen (Self-Cultivation, 4 pieces)*, *Chushi (Way of life, 11 pieces)*, *Zhijia (Management of family, 16 pieces)*, *Weizheng (Administrative skills, 22 pieces)*, *Cixiao (Mothers' care and children's filial piety, 17 pieces)*, *Hunlian (Marriage and love affairs, 9 pieces)*, *Yangsheng (Health care, 3 pieces)*. Are they all authentic works of the Pre-Qin period? Do they fit into the definition of *jiaxun* of this paper?

These 89 pieces of extracts are from the *Guoyu (Discourses of States)*, *Lüshi chunqiu (Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Lü)*, *Zhanguo ce (Stratagems of the Warring States)*, *Lunyu (Analects)*, *Liji (Book of Rites)*, *Mengzi (Mencius)*, *Zhuangzi*, *Shijing (Book of Songs)*, *Zuozhuan (Zuo's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals)*, *Hanfeizi*, *Yijing (Book of Changes)*, *Shangshu*, *Laozi*, *Shiji (Records of the scribe)*, *Shuoyuan (Garden of Persuasions)*, the *Lienü zhuan (Biographies of Chastity Women)* and the *Konzi jiaxu (School Sayings of Confucius)*. Among them, it is clear that the *Shiji*, *Shuoyuan*, *Lienü zhuan* and *Konzi jiaxu* are commonly accepted as works of the Western Han period (206 BC-8). The others are attributed to be works of Pre-Qin period. Among the 89 works in the *ZHCSJX*, the *Mianzi zhixue (1) (Encourage my son to study hard (one))* (Li, 1998, p.197), is not a part of the chapter of "Jianben" (Establishment of foundation) of the *Lüshi chunqiu* but is a part of the "Jianben" of the *Shuoyuan* (Lu, 1988, p.89). In addition, the *Junchen* and the *Caizhong zhi ming* are from the Old Text chapters of the *Shangshu* which have been proved fake works by Yan Ruoju (636—1704) in his book *Shangshu guwen shuzheng (Commentaries on the Old Text Book of Documents)*, published by Yan Xuelin, grandson of Yan Ruoju in 1745 by the *Juanxi Tang*. After taking out the works of the Western Han Period and the two pieces of the old text chapters of the *Shangshu*, and conforming to the definition of *jiaxun* of the paper, only 26 pieces of works are left: 7 pieces from the *Guoyu*, 2 pieces from the *Lüshi chunqiu*, 2 pieces from the *Zhanguo ce*, 2 pieces from the *Lunyu*, 1 piece from the *Zhuangzi*, 1 piece from the *Zuozhuan*, 5 pieces from the *Hanfeizi*, 5 pieces from the *Shangshu* and 1 piece from the *Liji*. Following the themes of the *ZHCSJX*, titles and page numbers of the identified Pre-Qin family precepts from the *ZHCSJX* are listed with their original sources in Table 1 Categorization of Pre-Qin Family Precepts.

### **4. What are the spiritual features of the Pre-Qin family precepts?**

Among the 26 pieces of Pre-Qin family precepts, 10 pieces are from fathers to sons, 3 pieces are from mothers to sons, 5 pieces are from elder brothers to younger brothers, 3 pieces are from husbands to wives, 4 pieces are from uncles to nephews or cousins and 1 piece is from mother-in-law to daughters-in-law. In terms of social classes, there are 5 pieces of extracts on the royal family of Zhou and all of them are from Duke Dan of Zhou to his juniors. The other 15 pieces are on federal lords and senior officials. The remaining 6 pieces are on middle class people (educated people) such as Kongzi, Zeng Shen, Lie Youkou and a rich family of the Song. Therefore, the precepts in these works can be taken as expectation of clans of upper class on their juniors. However, we have to bear in mind that unlike the family precepts in the Han and later periods which are composed with literary awareness (Huang and Liu 2009), these 26 pieces of Pre-Qin family precepts were not specially written as precepts by clan seniors to educate their juniors. Rather, they are extracts from literature which recorded precepts of clan seniors to clan juniors. Li (2011) claimed that family education was viewed as the key to production, accumulation of knowledge, moral development and administrative competency in early China; she also argued that family precepts is a kind of personhood education, holistic education, and mandatory process of education that actualizes the unification of affection and regulation. In the western world, some scholars refer to goals of spiritual development as "wholeness".

For instance, Alexander and Carr (2006, p.86) claimed “nurturing of wholeness” as goal of development of spirituality while Hull (2001) defined “wholeness” with three levels of meaning: “wholeness of knowledge” that refers to comprehensive and integrated knowledge; “wholeness of person” that refers to integrity of individual with multiple identities; and “cosmic wholeness” that unifies and embraces all lives and the world. Hyde (2006, p. 26) described this sense of wholeness as “ultimate unity” and perceived it as the final goal of spiritual development. Their views imply that the human instinct or innate orientation to get beyond oneself towards a much more comprehensive connection to others and the world through which one extends to the stage of “cosmic wholeness”. This extension and integration process likewise leads to self-transformation essential that is indispensable for “wholeness”. In this regard “wholeness” can be conceived as the goal of spiritual development. Being at infancy stage in the Pre-Qin period, what kind of spiritual features do the 26 pieces of family precepts possess?

The term “spirituality” is etymologically originated from the Greek word *pneuma* and its later Latin translation *spiritus* that refers to breadth, source and dynamics of life (Wong, 2005) was initially adopted in the New Testament as description of the Holy Spirit. The concept is linked to Christianity referring to understanding of God, human identity and the world for human transformation (Sheldrake, 2007). However, it is not a synonym of religion but a broader concept in recent studies (Hull, 2001). Alexander and McLaughlin (2003), for instance, have defined spirituality in terms of five elements: search for meaning, cultivation of inner space, manifestation of spirituality in life, distinctive responses to different aspects of the natural and the human world and the collective/communal dimension. They regarded spirituality as the integration of all these parts of human life, including inner self, others, society and environment. Recent discussions on spirituality in the western world can be summarized into three domains: (1) ultimate meaning and value of life; (2) transformation of human nature; and (3) relationality. Ryle (1993) and Hyde (2003) linked spirituality to the inner self and the nature of human beings, and regarded spirituality was an inborn and universal quality commonly shared by all human beings that embraces the self, innate potential and creativity. Scott (2007) claimed that spirituality was relevant to life, values, morality or self-connection. In this regard spirituality is perceived as a source of human dynamics, potential and creativity for the development and extension of human nature (Hull, 2001).

In addition, according to Haldane (2003), spirituality “is a domain of thought, feeling and action that is concerned with discerning the ultimate truth about the human condition and with cultivating an appropriate mode of being or demeanor in response to that truth” (pp. 18-19). In this sense, spirituality as the search for ultimate meaning and value consequently associates with knowledge and development of the self. The quest for the ultimate meaning and value is a transformation process. Hull (2001) has defined spirituality in terms of human instinct of transcendence, which is essential for development of human nature since formation of personhood requires development of potentials like language, symbolic functioning, conscience, self-awareness, inter personal relations and creativity. Spirituality is not limited to individuals as it embraces communal and cosmic dimensions of humans. Hay (1996) proposed that “relational consciousness” is awareness of oneself and various relationships wherein one is placed. It means an individual is not a solipsistic self but rather closely connected to other people, environment and even the cosmic. Based on the above understanding, Hay’s idea of “relational consciousness” demonstrates relationality is an essential component of spirituality which embraces various relationships of humans.

According to Zhang (2009), (1) family is where people really exist concretely and only in the family can people find a place to establish their life and goals, and from there relate themselves to society and the world; (2) relationship between husband and wife is based on harmony; and (3) a native family is connected with other families through marriages while father and son interaction brings about the tradition of “respecting the elderly”. Family is a place where people set their ultimate meaning and value of life, husband and wife learn how to communicate with opposite genders in harmonious situations, time is an importance factor in genealogy for family connections and the ladder of relationships. The relationship between the 6 themes of the Pre-Qin family precepts and the three features of spirituality is presented in Figure 1 Spirituality of Family Precepts in the Pre-Qin Period. These 6 themes are inter-connected. In ancient China, “aspiration” was placed at a very high status. Kongzi (551 BC-479 BC) said that the commander of a large army can be taken away but not the aspirations of a man (Chapter 25 of “Zi Han”, *Lunyu*; Legge 1960, V.1, p. 224). People of various social classes were shaped by their parents or clan seniors to have different “aspirations” in ancient China. Once they had set their aspirations, they would always be encouraged by seniors to try their best to achieve the set objectives.

There are two extracts in the theme “aspiration”. In the “Making a will with good intention”, Zhao Jianzi, before his death, told his son to go to Mount Xiawu to have a look at the prosperity of the country Dai. After the funeral ceremony, Wuxu follows his father’s last order and understand his father wants him to have great aspirations by making reference to achievement of the neighboring country Dai. In the second extract “Encouraging the son to have achievement”, after the exile of King Min of Qi, Wangxun Jia’s mother inspires him to do something for the court of Qi. Wangxun Jia then runs to the market and calls four hundred common people to kill the rebel Nao Ci with him. Zhao Wuxu is taught to aim at being a lord who cares for living standard of his people while Wangxun Jia is taught to be a loyal official who cares for sustainability of his lord and stability of his state. The ultimate meaning and value of life for a lord or a court official is clearly presented by the extracts.

Once aspirations are set, people have to learn relevant knowledge to achieve their aims. The second theme “encouragement of learning” includes 2 pieces of precepts from Kongzi to his son Kong Li and the extract “Satirize on the son calling his mother’s name”. In the “Encourage my son to study hard (No. 2)”, Kongzi teaches his son Li to learn basic knowledge of the world through regional songs “Zhounan” and “Shaonan” of the Guofeng in the *Shijing*. In the “Encourage the son to study hard (No. 3)”, Kongzi encourages Li to learn speaking skills through the *Shijing* and learn how to position oneself through the *Liji*. There are 11 songs in the “Zhounan” and 14 songs in the “Shaonan”. Among these 25 songs, 17 are on love affairs, rites and roles of couples; 2 are on roles of parents, sons and daughters; 6 on human relations with particular emphasis upon roles of lords and officials (Lin, 2006). This is a framework of ethics starting from personal relations to social order. Hence, by studying them, people should be able to develop an ethical framework on roles of husbands and wives, parents and sons, lords and officials which are regarded as basic knowledge by Kongzi.

In the Chunqiu period (Spring and Autumn period, 770 BC-476 BC), it was a common practice to quote poems in social and diplomatic communication. In the *Zuozhuan*, there are 266 quotations of poems which are selectively used as references of rites or social orders according to the needs of speakers and recipients (Zeng, 2008). The *Shijing* is a depository of examples of creative communication and that is why Kongzi said if you did not study the poems you did not know how to communicate with others. In addition, he also reminded his son to learn how to position himself through the *Liji* because rites could be regarded as social orders in ancient China. In the “Satirize on the son calling his mother’s name”, the son calls his mother’s name when he returns to Song after studying three years in other states. His reason is that as virtuous as Yao and Shun, and as great as heaven and earth, people just address their names. His mother is neither as virtuous as Yao and Shun nor as great as heaven and earth and therefore addressing her name is kind of respect. The mother satirizes his son for not learning well enough and encourages him to reflect on his learning through application of knowledge so as to avoid embarrassments in social communication. The precepts of Kongzi and the mother reflect learning is a self-transformation process in which people develop social skills.

The third theme “self-cultivation” also includes two extracts. In the “Observation of the son’s behavior”, Fan Xuanzi reminds his son Fan Xianzi to develop management skills for families and states. However, Fan Xianzi thinks that inter-personal relationship and cultivation of virtues are also important for state management. In the “I got the right way of life and could die for that”, Zeng Shen, before his death, reminded his son Zeng Yuan to observe the rites not to use a mat not corresponding to his rank and love others. Observance of rites and loving others are self-transformation processes which emphasize the social aspects of self-cultivation. The fourth theme “way of life” is an extension of “self-cultivation” focusing on how to survive in the societies. In the “Kind words to the son before death”, Xunshu Ao, before his death, told his son that if he wanted to avoid suspicion from his lord he could only accept the poor and horrible land Qin Qiu.

In the “Sticking the son to teach him to be modest”, after knowing that his son Fan Wuzi, being a junior court official, has answered three questions proposed by an ambassador of Qin, Fan Wuzi feels angry and tells Wuzi their family will be destroyed very soon because of Wuzi’s arrogance in court. Then Wuzi sticks heavily on Wuzi and breaks Wuzi’s cap and hairpin. This family percept underlines the importance of humility as a virtue to safeguard officials and their families. In another event “Knowing the son can avoid disasters”, when Fan Wuzi enters the capital following the leader of the military force Que Xianzi after the victory of Miji, Wuzi praises his son’s modest behavior and tells him firmly that he can be far away from disasters. These two events not only reflect humility is a way to protect oneself but also demonstrate the possible impact of one’s behavior to one’s family and other people. Wuzi’s punishment and reward to his son provide different learning experiences to Wuzi and let him able to aware the connectivity of himself and various relationships wherein he is placed.

In the “Whether to practice filial piety to father or be loyal to the lord”, brothers Dou Xin and Dou Huai have a debate on “loyalty” and “filial piety”. In this event, the army of Wu has invaded Capital Ying of Chu, King Zhao of Chu escaped to City Yun. The Duke of Yun, Dou Huai, younger brother of Dou Xin wants to kill King Zhao because King Zhao’s father King Ping has killed his father. However, Dou Xin tells his younger brother as subordinate, he has to keep obligation to his lord. Dou Huai does not follow Dou Xin’s words. Eventually, Dou Xin follows King Zhao to escape to Sui. When King Zhao returns to Capital Ying, he awards both Dou Xin and Dou Huai because Dou Xin has observed ritual requirements of officials to lords while Dou Huai followed ritual requirements of father and son. This case brings out an important debate between “loyalty” and “filial piety” and challenges the superior status of seniors in early China. In the “Not receiving any gifts from someone who do not know me”, Liezi and his wife live poorly in Zheng and always demonstrates a hungry face. To avoid criticism of not respecting virtuous people, senior official Ziyang sends some rice and corn to Liezi. Liezi refuses to accept the gift in a very polite way and teaches his wife that Ziyang is just a man strongly influenced by public opinion who does not really know virtuous people. Avoiding suspicion from lord, practicing humility, observing filial piety and loyalty and rejecting offers politely are what people should behave to sustain themselves and their clans in contexts with different hierarchy of social classes.

All these are high level social attributes people have to learn and develop so as to transform themselves to be socially accepted people. The 3 extracts in the theme “management of family” are also cases on development of social attributes. In the “Clanship”, Shu Zhong, a member of the royal clan, teaches his nephew Xiang Zhong attitudes toward relatives. Shu Zhong quotes the words of the *Shiyi (Lost History)* to remind Xiang Zhong to attend Gongxun Ao’s mourning and cry for him because that is what relatives should do. In the “Commandments for the concubines of the son”, Gongfu Wenbo died and his mother Jing Jiang reminds Wenbo’s wife and concubines to observe mourning rites but keep silent so as to demonstrate the virtues of Wenbo and avoid public criticism. This is a kind of family education for noble women in the Pre-Qin period. The case also reflects goodwill of a single member is also important for the whole family. In the “Zengzi killed a pig”, in order not to bring her son to market, Zengzi’s wife cheats her son she will slaughter a pig and cook it for him when she returns. Zengzi teaches his wife that parents are learning model for children and if parents cannot keep their words, their children will also not keep their words. These three extracts are precepts on what a member should behave in a relational context of family.

The sixth theme “administrative skills” includes 11 pieces of works. Among them, five events are precepts of Duke Dan of Zhou to his junior clans on how to manage the nation in the “Zhoushu” of the *Shangshu*. In the “Admonition to Kang”, Duke Dan teaches his younger brother Kanshu to promote virtue and be cautious when implementing punishment. In the “Admonition of wine”, Duke Dan reminds Kangshu to prohibit consumption of wine since alcoholism may confuse people’s moral conduct and cause instability. In the “Do not live in pleasure”, Duke Dan reminds his nephew King Cheng of Zhou not to live in pleasure before knowing difficulties of farming and pay attention to care the life of the people. In the “As in working with the wood of the rottlera”, Duke Dan encourages Kanshu to keep on managing the people of Yin in a generous way so as to maintain harmonious relations with them. In the “Establishment of political achievement should employ good officials”, Duke Dan reminds King Cheng to employ virtuous officials in court.

The purpose of Duke Dan is to educate his juniors to rule in a harmonious way so as to substantiate the reign of Zhou. In the “The law of the inner gate”, King Zhuang of Chu teaches his son to observe the well-established laws so as to secure the reign. In the “To have good soldiers through enforcement of laws”, Hu Yin teaches his nephew Duke Wen of Jin that food, clothes, low tax rate, light punishment, jobs, satisfaction are reasons that the people follow their lords but military service is dangerous task which must be enforced by laws. In the “Loving fish but not bribery”, Gong Yixiu tells his younger brother that he loves to eat fish but will not accept any bribery of fish as this will cause him to lose his position of prime minister. In the “Teaching the son how to be an official”, clan member of the royal family, Tian Wei teaches his son Tian Zhang that court officials should always give up personal benefits and possess competency if they want to survive in court. In the “Views on industrious and luxurious life”, Jing Jiang reminds her son that living in difficult situations leads to good behaviors but living in luxurious situation leads to evil behaviors. In the “Palace affairs should not involve court officials while court affairs should not involve palace people”, Gou Jian, Lord of Wu, instructs his wife to take care of palace affairs rather than his court affairs. All the above mentioned administrative skills and attributes are important for sustainability of reigns or families in relational contexts.

### 5. The role of Pre-Qin family precepts in the research of Chinese family precepts

These fragments of monologues and dialogues in the Pre-Qin literature have been neglected by academics in the research of *jiaxun* because Pre-Qin family precepts were not written with self-awareness in independent pieces of work (Kang 2009). There are two major categories of research outputs in family precepts in China. The first category is compilation of and commentary on existing family precepts. In addition to the *ZHCSJX*, typical examples are the *Lidai jiaxun xuanzhu (Commentary on selected family precepts of various periods)* (Shi, 1988), *Zhongguo jiaxun jingdian (Classics of Chinese family precepts)* (Zhai, 2002). The second category includes studies on history of family precepts and specific compilations of family precepts. The *Zhongguo jiaxunshi (History of Chinese family precepts)* by Xu and Chen (2003), the *Chuantong jiaxun sixiang tonglun (General discussion on the thoughts of traditional family precepts)* by Wang (2006), the *Zhongguo jiaxunshi lungao (Discussion on history of Chinese family precepts)* by Zhu (2008) and the *Hanwei liuchao jiaxun yanjiu (Study on family precepts of the Hanwei and Liuchao periods)* by Kang (2009) are examples on history of family precepts. Regarding specific compilations of family precepts, there are quite a lot of outputs on the *Yanshi jiaxun (Yans family precepts)* like the *Yanshi jiaxun yufa yanjin (Study on the grammar of the Yans family precepts)* by Liu (2006), the *Yansi jiaxun yizhu (Translation and annotation of the Yans family precepts)* by Zhuang and Zhang (2006) and the *Yansi jiaxun jiedu (Interpretation of the Yans family precepts)* by Lin (2007). The Pre-Qin family precepts have never been a main focus of research.

However, it is interesting to see concepts such as learning, loyalty, fidelity piety and self-cultivation of virtues appeared in the Pre-Qin family precepts have become key concepts of Confucianism in the Han and later periods of China. Although the Pre-Qin family precepts only appear as extracted monologues and dialogues in the literature, they are valuable primary source of materials for studying what ancient Chinese family education is and how they are incorporated to the development of Confucianism in the Han Period.

### 6. Conclusion

As a major source of spiritual education in clans, the *jiaxun* guides juniors to understand themselves and maximize their potential to become recognized members in the society. There are 26 extracts of the Pre-Qin literature being identified as family precepts in the paper. The three spiritual dimensions, search for ultimate meaning and value, self-transformation and relationality, are linked with the themes aspiration, encouragement of learning, self-cultivation, way of life, management of family and administrative skills, to form the spiritual framework of the Pre-Qin family precepts in Figure 1. People set their ultimate meaning and value of life, transform themselves and relate themselves with other members in their families. Although the 26 pieces of family precepts are mainly related to expected political attributes of upper classes, the theme aspiration is a kind of ultimate meaning and value of life while learning and self-cultivation are life-long processes of self-transformation. The development of way of life, family management and court administration are also self-transformation processes that contribute to the actualization of ultimate meaning and value in a relational context. The study of Pre-Qin family precepts can be a good means to sort out reasons and ways how concepts such as learning, loyalty, fidelity piety and self-cultivation of virtues are incorporated to Pre-Qin Confucianism and family precepts in later periods.

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**Table 1 Categorization of Pre-Qin Family Precepts**

Theme	Title	Relationship	Social class
Lizhi Aspiration	<i>Kuxin li yizhu</i> (Making a will with good intention, p. 8) from the section Changgong (Emphasizing Results) of the chapter “Xiaoxing lan” (Examination on filial and virtue) of the <i>Lüshi chunqiu</i> (Chen, 2002, p. 799)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Lizi chengshi</i> (Encouraging the son to have achievement, pp. 8-9) from Section 6 of “Qi ce” (Stratagems of Qi) of the <i>Zhanguo ce</i> (Wang and Han, 1998, pp. 324-325)	Mother and Son	Noble or Senior Official
Mianxue Encouragement of learning	<i>Mianzi zhixue</i> (No. 2) (Encourage my son to study hard (No. 2), p. 198) in Section 10 of the chapter “Yanghuo” (Legge 1960, V. 1, p. 323).	Father and Son	Middle Class
	<i>Mianzi zhixue</i> (No. 3) (Encourage the son to study hard (No. 3), p. 198) of Section 13 of the chapter “Jishi” (Legge 1960, V.1, pp. 315-316).	Father and Son	Middle Class
	<i>Cizi huan muming</i> (Satirize on the son calling his mother’s name, pp. 1505-1506). This event is extracted from chapter three of the “Wei ce”(Stratagems of Wei) of the <i>Zhanguo ce</i> (Wang and Han, 1992, p. 732) This extract is included under the theme “Administrative Skills” in the ZHCSJX.	Mother and Son	Rich Family
Xiushen Self-Cultivation	<i>Guanzi zhi xing (Observation of the son’s behavior</i> , pp. 492-493) from Section eight of “Jinyu” (Jin’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 215)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Wu de zheng er biyan</i> (I got the right way of life and could die for that, p. 493) is taken from the <i>Lüshi chunqiu</i> in the ZHCSJX. However, this should be a passage in the “Tangong” of the <i>Liji</i> (Jiang, 1998, p. 1277.)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
Chushi Way of life	<i>Linzhong huiyan jiezi</i> (Kind words to the son before death, pp. 803-804), the section on Yibao (Alternate Treasures) of the “Mengdong ji” (Almanac of Early Winter) of the <i>Lüshi chunqiu</i> (Chen, 2002, p. 558)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Zhangzi shuo qianrang</i> (Sticking the son to teach him to be modest, p. 805) is extracted from Section 5 of the “Jinyu” (Jin’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 186)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Zhizi mianhuo</i> (Knowing the son who can avoid disasters, pp. 805-806) is extracted from Section 5 of the “Jinyu” (Jin’s	Father and Son	Noble or Senior

	discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 186)		Official
	<i>Shi xiaofu haishi zhongjun</i> (Whether to practice filial piety to father or be loyal to the lord, pp. 810-811) of the lower section of “Chuyu xia” (Chu’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, pp. 269-270)	Brothers	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Bushou bu zhijizhe de zengwu</i> (Not receiving any gifts from someone who do not know me, pp. 812-813) is an extract from the “Rangwang” (“Kings who have wished to resign the throne” of the <i>Zhuangzi</i> (Zhuang, 1996, p. 603)	Husband and wife	Middle or Lower Class
Zhijia Management Of family	<i>Qing zhi dao</i> (Clanship, p. 1155) in Section 10 of “Wengong shiwu nian” (Fifteen years of Duke Wen) of the <i>Zuozhuan</i> (Legge, 1960, V. 5, p. 269)	Clan uncle and nephew	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Jiezi zhi qie</i> (Commandments for the concubines of the son, pp. 1155-1156) is extracted from the lower section of “Luyu” (Lu’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 97)	Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Zengzi shazhi</i> (Zengzi killed a pig, pp.1158-1159) of the upper left section of “Waichu shou” (Outer Congeries of Sayings) of the <i>Hanfeizi</i> records Zengzi’s precept to his wife (Fu and Lai, 1997, pp. 440-441)	Husband and wife	Middle Class
Weizheng Administrative skills	<i>Kang Gao</i> (Admonition to Kang, pp. 1485-1487) of the <i>Zhoushu</i> ( <i>Book of Zhou</i> ) (Legge, 1960, V. 4, pp. 383-398)	Brothers	Royal Family
	<i>Jiu Gao</i> (Admonition of wine, pp. 1487-1488) of the <i>Zhoushu</i> (Legge, 1960, V. 4, pp. 403-412)	Brothers	Royal Family
	<i>Wuyi</i> (Do not live in pleasure, 1488-90) of the <i>Book of Zhou</i> (Legge, 1960, V. 4, pp. 465-473)	Clan uncle and nephew	Royal Family
	<i>Ruozuo zhicai</i> (As in working with the wood of the rottlera, 1490-91) of the <i>Zhoushu</i> (Legge, 1960, V. 4, pp. 415-417)	Brothers	Royal Family
	<i>Lizheng yong jishi</i> (Establishment of political achievement should employ good officials, p. 1491) of the <i>Zhoushu</i> (Legge, 1960, V. 1, pp. 519-520)	Clan uncle and nephew	Royal Family
	<i>Zhonghua chuanshi jiaxun</i> , the <i>Maomen zhi ling</i> (The law of the inner gate, pp. 1497-98) is recorded as a passage in the upper right section of “Waichushuo” of the <i>Hanfeizi</i> (Fu and Lai, 1997, 503-504)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Hanfeizi</i> , the <i>Xingfa zuyi zhanmin</i> (To have good soldiers through enforcement of laws, pp. 1498-1499; Fu and Lai, 1997, pp. 509-510)	Clan uncle and nephew	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Shiyu er buxiu</i> (Love fish but not bribery, p. 1505) is extracted from the lower right section of “Waichushuo” of the <i>Hanfeizi</i> (Fu and Lai, 1997, p. 527)	Brothers	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Lun Laoyi</i> (Views on industrious and luxurious life, pp. 1499-1501) is extracted from the lower section of “Luyu Xia” (Lu’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, pp. 94-95)	Mother and Son	Noble or Senior Official
	<i>Neizheng wuchu waizheng wuru</i> (Palace affairs should not involve court officials while court affairs should not involve palace people, p.1503) is extracted from the “Wuyu” (Wu’s discourses) of the <i>Guoyu</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 289)	Husband and wife	Noble or Senior Official
<i>Jiaozhi wei chen</i> (Teaching the son how to be an official, pp. 1504-1505) is extracted from the lower right section of “Waichushuo” of the <i>Hanfeizi</i> (Wai, 2008, p. 526)	Father and Son	Noble or Senior Official	

Figure 1. Spirituality of Family Precepts in the Pre-Qin Period

