

***Tian-Li* in the Judgements of Magistrates in Qing: Focus on the Legal Cases Connected to Women's Chastity**

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Abstract

The reality that judging legal cases in Chinese traditional period was not strictly based on codes is probably the main reason of criticism for of the haphazardness of Chinese traditional judicatory. To people who lives in modern time, the content of *Tian-Li* (天理) is generally thought to be extremely ambiguous, especially when *Tian-Li* (天理) was used as the bases of law in legal case judgments. Therefore basically, inexplicitness is considered to be a typical characteristic which belongs to Chinese traditional judicatory. Anyhow, this article is trying to explore the possible content of *Tian-Li* (天理) when it was used as the base of law in specific legal cases judgments and also to explore the well-regulated characteristic of the judicial activities, if there was any. Moreover, this article tries to prove that the words which people now commonly use to describe *Tian-Li* (天理) and Chinese traditional judicatory, such as hyper-abstract and hyper-uncertainty, exact to people of modern times, but not those who lived in traditional times.

Keywords: *Tian-Li* (天理), *Qing* (清)Dynasty, Judgment, *Lu-Li* (律例)

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