

***The Great Qing Code•Criminal Law•Fights and  
the Imagination of Harmonious Orders: The  
Debt Disputes and Violence among Immigrants  
in Areas of Sichuan, Shanxi and Hubei in  
19-Century China***

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**Abstract**

The 19-century China was chaotic and inundated with rebellions. The daily violence was intensified. It's worth discussing over how the people of the time treat violence and take advantage of violence to respond to the changes and threats in living environments.

In this paper, the common fights in daily social life were employed to probe into the attitudes towards the violence. First, debt disputes and fight cases among immigrants in the areas of Sichuan, Shanxi and Hubei recorded in the *Selected Compilation of Historical Materials about Society in the Routine Memorials to the Ministry of Justice During the Jiaqing Reign, Qing Dynasty* are investigated to observe the significant violence phenomena in the particular circumstances, such as frontier society and further connect them with the common daily violence. Second, from the perspective of legal culture, it separately discussed over how local governors practice legal norms and the significance of public legal behaviors (false accusation of causing bodily harm) to understand the social attitudes towards fights and its application. In this part, *Fan shan Pi pan* (樊山批判) written by Fan Zengxiang in late 19<sup>th</sup> century was used.

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The cognition, memory and attitudes towards civilian disputes, fights and violence of 19-century China can be dated back to ancient Chinese cultures, such as collectivism, harmonious views, benevolent policies, etc., above which were repeatedly demonstrated by the emperors and senior bureaucrats.

The foregoing elements, i.e. nation and society, emperor, officers and citizens, political thoughts, legal thoughts and common sense of civilian laws, social circumstances as well as other factors create a space for tolerance of violence; it can be said that fight and violence were deeply rooted in the daily order of 19-century China.

Keywords: Fights, Violence, Debt Disputes, Qing Dynasty, Areas of Sichuan, Shanxi and Hubei