

***Secrets of Ministry of Penalty and Secrets in The Pillow, Re-discussion of the “Autumn-assizes Documentary” in Qing Dynasty***

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**Abstract**

The *Autumn-assizes Documentary* in Qing dynasty means such a special kind of legal historian documents and books which were written or compiled by the legal experts during the process of autumn-assizes, and in return deeply impressed the building of autumn-assizes system very much. Its coming out, existing and wide spreading clearly show many too complicated judicial skills of judges during the autumn-assizes, with the aim of bringing the highest and ultimate fairness and justice to every parties involved in the criminal cases.

Based on the former studies, firstly this paper tries to make a renew combing about the category of autumn-assizes documentary. Then, as the judicial system of Qing government has the character of Over-concentrating of power in the central government, and that the imbalance of judicial structure between the central and local governments, this paper focuses on discovering how the professional legal secret books took their shapes, and how these documentaries were brought into the judicial practice from the Central penalty to the provinces.

Autumn-assizes documentaries were initiated in the confidential inners, and were kept very secretly by the legalists and officials. However, finally the terms, laws and cases of autumn-assizes were taken out of the

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central Criminal penalty, and inherited by the other legalists and their disciplines and old follows of minor officials. Even so, in the judicial process of autumn-assizes of Qing dynasty, the strained relations between the central and local judicial authorities had never changed radically.

Keywords: Autumn-assizes Documentary, Justice of Autumn-assizes, Secrets of The Criminal Department, Secrets in the Pillow, Over-concentration of power in the central government