

The Legal Control of the Mob-gathering Behavior in Qing Dynasty — Take the Case of Pettifogger Zhuang Wuke for an Example

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Abstract

According to the research on the case of pettifogger Zhuang Wuke gathering a mob to against the legal system happened in Wujin County, Jiangsu Province in 1828, and in comparison with the evolvement and application of the act of local government irritating residents, this article is attempting to create a new interpretation to the legal control of the behaviours of gathering a mob in Qing Dynasty. It was worth noting that local officials of high ranks had obviously different attitudes toward the case of gathering a mob to take lawsuits, and they also had obviously different methods to deal with it. On one hand, because the law was too strict, and diverged from the morality and convention, the enforcement of the law was getting more difficult, and the efficiency of the law declined. On the other hand, with the decline of the centre government's ability of country controlling, once the conspiracy was exposed, the pettifoggers, who were capable of helping people evade the legal system, would create reckless move to gather a mob to against the legal system and try to protect himself.

Keywords : Pettifogger, mob-gathering, Legal control, Zhuang Wuke