Law, Society, and Culture in China

Philip C. C. Huang and Kathryn Bernhardt, Editors

THE OPENING OF archives on legal case records and judicial administration in China has made possible a new examination of past assumptions about the Chinese justice system. Scholars can now ask where actual legal practice deviated from official and popular conceptualizations and depictions. In the process, they can arrive at a new understanding not only of the legal system, but of state-society relations and the nature of the Chinese social-political system as a whole.

Studies of Chinese justice also permit the joining together of social and cultural history. Historians of society and economy, on the one hand, and of mentalities and culture, on the other, have long tended to go their separate ways. Law, however, is a sphere of life in which the two are inseparable. Legal case records contain evidence for both practice and representation. A study of law can tell us about the interconnections between actions and attitudes in ways that segmented studies of each cannot.

The series comprises major new studies by the editors themselves, as well as other contributions from a new generation of scholarship, grounded both in the archives and in new theoretical approaches.

Social Power and Legal Culture

*Litigation Masters
in Late Imperial China*

Melissa Macauley

STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

Stanford University Press
Stanford, California
© 1998 by the Board of Trustees of the
Leland Stanford Junior University
Printed in the United States of America
CIP data appear at the end of the book

For William M. Macauley, Sr.