

# 十八世紀蘇州城的工資糾紛與工作規訓

( Wage Conflicts and Work-Discipline in Eighteenth-century Suzhou )

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## 摘要

十八世紀的蘇州城固然是人文匯萃以及雅俗消費、旅游興盛的所在，但同時也存在人數眾多的工人。特別是在棉布加工與絲織這兩個行業，由於有商人資本的直接介入生產活動，同樣受僱特定商人的工人數目，更較其他行業平均工匠人數為多，那些經常伴隨工資糾紛而來的工人與商人間的激烈抗爭，有時甚或演變成雙方互控的案件。這些工資抗爭事件在十七世紀即已出現，到了十八世紀則更引人側目，從工資抗爭規模與頻繁程度看，蘇州在十八世紀實已是中國發生工人抗爭事件的中心，而略微誇張點說，十八世紀的蘇州城幾乎已成爲中國的「罷工之都」。

絲織與棉布業是當時中國國內兩項重要的手工業，兩類手工業產品後來也與茶葉並列爲十九世紀初年中國外銷的三項最大宗商品，而在此之前，十八世紀江南地區的棉布、絲織商品則早已廣銷國內各地，形成以手工業產品交換其他地區農產品與工礦原料的全國區域分工格局。做爲江南地區絲織與棉布加工業的中心，蘇州城眾多外來工匠以及經常發生的工資抗爭事件，既標誌著十八世紀江南地區經濟的發展程度與變化規模，也透露當時中國經濟變遷與都市發展的軌跡。

儘管過去已有學者由不同角度分析過明清蘇州城市工人的抗爭活動，但本文則欲將工資糾紛結合到「工作規訓」的問題脈絡中。我將著重分梳當時蘇州絲、棉兩業內部的生產結構與品檢驗收程序，藉以呈顯工人面對的不同工作環境，以及這個工作環境所形塑的一套新的工作規訓，希望能以此呈顯十八世紀蘇州工資糾紛與工人抗爭事件的關鍵意義，進而增加我們對當時中國經濟變遷與都市化現象的理解。

## Abstract

Suzhou was certainly one of the most beloved cities by the contemporary literati and the tourists in eighteenth-century China. However, besides the exuberant visiting by tourist and shopping crowd there still resided many workers in this flamboyant city. Particularly in the industries of silk and cotton there attracted many merchants who

found their interests at investing these two industries, the amount of workers hired in one same merchant were often much higher than the average worker per workplace in other Suzhou industries. The critical mass of both cotton and silk industrial workers empowered the scale and frequency of wage conflicts. The wage conflicts and even the subsequent lawsuits lied between the merchant and his workers turned out to be the conspicuous events in the eighteenth century Suzhou. Not much exaggerated to say, Suzhou had become “a city of strikers” in Late Imperial China.

Both silk and cotton were the two most important industries in China, and later on both cotton and silk had joined tea to constitute the trio of Chinese exported commodities in the early nineteenth century. Before that, Jiangnan had already submitted other macro-areas inside China into its hinterland. Every year there were millions of bolts of cottons and silks wholesaled from Jiangnan in exchange with rice, wheat, timber, copper, and other primary resources; hence after having established a division of labor among macro-areas in the eighteenth century China. Being the most important center of both cotton and silk industries in Jiangnan, Suzhou and its frequent wage conflicts incurred upon mass workers manifested not only the zenith of economic development but also the path of urbanism in Late Imperial China.

Dozens of papers have ever put the topic of Suzhou’s wage conflicts under their scrutiny; nevertheless, my article shall engrave the work-discipline problematique on the Suzhou workers’ protests per se. Highlighting the crux of how the structure of production and superintendence evolving and operating in the putting-out system of both cotton and silk industries, I will argue that the workers were submerging into, and sometimes struggling over, a brand-new established work-discipline meanwhile in the Lower Yangtze delta. Hope that this analysis may externalize the historical meaning of the workers’ protests and wage conflicts in eighteenth-century Suzhou, and even shed some light on the trajectory of economic and urban development in Late Imperial China.