

The Social Status and the Image of Prison Officials in the Ming Dynasty

Lien, Chi-Yuan

Abstract

The Prisons was established across the country in the Ming Dynasty and the special apparatus to administer the prison affairs was established only above the provincial level. The officials in charge of the prison need to superintend the daily life, the diet and the work of the prisoners. The background of such officials generally was not very well in the Ming dynasty and therefore had the adverse impact on the social status. This article intends to discuss the group of the officials in charge of the prison in Ming and interpret the operation of the duties and power, as well as the relationship between the prison affairs and the judicial system. Then from the perspective of the penitentiary system, prison officials may be one of the factors which affect the social order and security.

Keywords: Ming Dynasty, prison official, jail, social status, Three Prison Officials in Fujian