

The Meaning of the Legal System for the Hell Judgment in T'ang Dynasty: a View from Tai Fu's Kuang I Chi

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Abstract

In T'ang dynasty, the "Judgment in the Hell" has a courthouse, a judge and an instrument of torture, which are similar to the legal system in the living world. Basically, this kind of image intends to reflect the fact that the criminals should be punished. This renew appearance about the image of the hell is influenced by T'an Lin's "Min-Pao Chi" in the beginning of the T'ang period. An essential book is the book "The Scripture on the Ten Kings (Fou So Shi Wang Chin 佛說十王經)" written in the late T'ang dynasty. Alternatively, Tai Fu's "Kuang-i chi" is another book written in the mid of T'ang Dynasty., representing a transition in the T'ang Dynasty. In addition, it is also a significant and indispensable resource for investigating the legal system of the "Judgment in the Hell" in this period.

Keywords : T'ang dynasty, the history of legal system, Tai Fu, Kuang-i chi, the judgment in the hell