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“To Jail or Not to Jail: Bureaucratic Discipline in Ming China (1368-1644)”

Donnerstag, den 24.11.2022 um 18:00 Uhr s.t.

Institut für Sinologie, Kaulbachstr. 53, Raum E04



This research examines the intended and unintended roles of jailing in shaping the Confucian-educated elite’s professional lives as government officials in Ming China. Drawing on mundane impeachment cases—ranging from visiting parents during business trips to embezzlement, it reveals how jailing was deployed as an investigative procedure, how officials and emperors appropriated it, and how the individuals’ experiences with this procedure inspired debates and reforms. This complicated history compels us to rethink the familiar dichotomies such as “morality vs. law” and “jail vs. prison” in Chinese historiography and prison studies.