

ON TU-CH'A-YÜAN (THE CHIEF SURVEILLANCE  
OFFICE) 都察院 IN THE HŪNG-WU 洪武 ERA  
OF THE MING 明 DYNASTY

In 1382 (Hŭng-wu 15) there was founded the Super Surveillance Office of which administrative aim was to superintend the Investigating, Sensors (chien-ch'a yŭ-sain) 監察御史, and of which general mission was to accuse injustice of the officials and to investigate their executive actions. It has been generally considered that this new office was changed from the Tribunal of Censors (Yŭ-shih t'ai) 御史台 already established in the early years of the dynasty. However, the author thinks this was newly created only as the surper-constructed one, the old sub-section of the Tribunal of Censors in order to solve the inconvenient state which was brought out from abolition of the Tribunal in 1389 (Hŭng-wu 13), for the Office of Surveillance. In fact, the officials belonging to this office were not given so high status as the Censors-in-chief (Yŭ-shih ta-fu) 御史大夫 or the Vice Censors-in-chief (Yŭ-shih chung-ch'eng) 御史中丞 under the old Tribunal of Censors by T'ai-tsu 太祖 who was anxious about their tyranny in future. But, against the original aim, the new office soon came to form the "Big Three Organizations" 三大府 of the dynasty, together with Six Ministers 六部 (the general administration office) and Five Chief Military Commissions 五軍都督府 (the military administration office), Though this Tu-ch'a-yüan was firmly established in 1384 (Hŭng-wu 17), every duty of this office were fixed in 1393 (Hŭng-wu 26) in detail in the book collecting every official's duty (Chu-szu Chih-chang) 諸司職掌. The book reads that every duty of the Censorsin chief (Tu-Yŭ-shih) 都御史, the Vice Sencors-in-chief (Fu-Tu-Yŭ-shih) 副都御史 and the Assistant Censors-in-chief (Ch'ien-Tu-Yŭ-shih) 僉都御史 under the Super Surveillance Office in the capital must be executed by the hands of the Investigating Sensors, paralleling the Provincial Surveillance Commissioner (An-ch's-shih) 按察使

dispatched to twelve provinces (Tao) 道. This principle, which seems to have been maintained during the Hūng-wu era, was afterwards apt to be neglected by the Sensors-in-chief. Taking this fact into consideration, the author thinks the character of the Super Surveillance Office in the Hūng-wu era must be given more precise analysis.

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