Abstract

During the Ming dynasty, the notebook style *biji* was a very popular form of writing. There are many types of *biji*, and one of them is a collection of works that followed the style of Liu Yi Qing’s “Shi Shuo Xin Yu”. Amongst this collection is “Huang Ming Shi Shuo Xin Yu” by Li Shao Wen. By discussing on his views on various social aspects, this paper attempts to reconstruct the thoughts of Li Shao Wen through his work “Huang Ming Shi Shuo Xin Yu”.

The paper will first discuss his views on intellectual thoughts, literature and his observation of the merchant class during his era. Secondly, the paper will attempt to reconstruct his ideal scholar-officials through discussion of the behaviour of these ideal scholar-officials in the imperial court, in contrast with the lifestyle of the recluses who chose an early retirement from their official career.

Thirdly, the paper will then reconstruct his ideal images of women, and compare it with his ideal images of scholar-officials. Finally, the paper will discuss on his attitude towards daily life consumption, with emphasis on extravagant expenditure. Through his views on the various issues discussed, the paper will show the complexity of Li Shao Wen’s thoughts.