

Excerpts from *Da Ming huidian* Collected Statutes of Great Ming, translated in about 1992 by Sarah Schneewind studying with Professor Pei-yi Wu, Columbia University.

Ming Huidian 78/1818 my notes pp.24a-c

a small part of the section entitled

Confucian Schools (Ru xue)

Wanli 3 ... Item: [Recognition of] illustrious officials, local worthies¹, filial sons, chaste women, and guest of honor at the community wine-drinking ceremony are important ceremonies of the state, closely related to education and the level of behaviour/way of living (*feng jiao*). Recently the authorities have been careless about transforming people through education.² The schools are unjust/un-public-spirited in determining right and wrong.³ They indiscriminantly recommend people and fail in truthfulness. What stimulating and persuading [to goodness] is there? From now on, education intendants should take as their own responsibility the ethical norms/moral laws. If a petition or request comes along, they must investigate its truth. Unless there has long been a consensus about someone, he should not be selected as a local worthy or illustrious official. Unless someone has not been criticized from beginning to end, s/he should not

1. Or sages, as Wu Pei-yi would prefer.

2. *Jiao hua*, the phrase used in Ming Taizu's initial call for community schools.

3. Wu Pei-yi: the schools make recommendation for these honors, which entail tax exemptions, and the officials follow them. **Jesse suggests that the CWDC might be a way for the officials to see at a glance the configuration of the community.

be selected as a chaste woman or filial child. Those that have not been fully supported by their village or Community should not be selected as guests of honor at the Community wine-drinking ceremony. If officials incorrectly recommend someone who improperly requested it himself, teachers and shengyuan [who are involved] will be punished for misconduct.⁴ Those who in the past entered into the ranks of the worthies and disgraced the illustrious law shall be investigated and quickly expelled according to the recent regulations.

Item: The schools in the jurisdictions of wei-so military garrisons should all promote good administration. The sons and younger brothers of the military profession are all ordered to practice reading the 7 military classics and the 100 biographies of generals, and to drill in the military arts. If one of them wants to engage in preparations of the civil exams, that is permitted.

The teachers and students of the COMMUNITY SCHOOLS will all as a body be uniformly examined. The officials shall spare no effort to find good teachers to take responsibility. [The students] are partially exempted from tax and corvée. If there are any with failures in their behavior, or if their comments or parsing or pronunciation contain errors, or if they write characters incorrectly or write bad prose, then they shall be dismissed.

4. A bit foggy but this is the gist.