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CONSTRUCTING AN IDEAL SOUTHERN SONG IN *BIJI*: A STUDY OF ZHOU MI'S *ANECDOTES OF WULIN*

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As an important *biji* 筆記 (jottings) of the late Southern Song and early Yuan periods, Zhou Mi's 周密 (1232–1298) *Wulin jiushi* 武林舊事 (*Anecdotes of Wulin*) is conventionally regarded as historical records of urban lives of ordinary people, written under the direct influence of the famous memoir, *Dongjing menghua lu* 東京夢華錄 (*A Dream of the Eastern Capital*). Zhou Mi, a leading literati during the late Song and early Yuan period, is deeply interested in history and is committed to preserve historical records of the fallen dynasty. Compare to his later works, *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 and *Guixin zashi* 癸辛雜識, *Anecdotes of Wulin* is more than a collection of historic data. It is generally believed that the *Anecdotes* was written shortly after the downfall of the Song dynasty. Possibly, at the time, Zhou was overwhelmed by the shock and sadness, and was unable to judge or criticize. What he needed most at that time was to pacify his emotion, and so he turned to remembering and writing about the heyday of the Southern Song. This article argues that the primary meaning of the *Anecdotes* is to strongly express the author's loyalty and identification with the imperial court of the Southern Song dynasty, especially its virtue values. Unlike *Dongjing menghua lu*, Zhou has spent over two-third of his book on describing events related to the emperor and the imperial family. Instead of focusing on the common folks, he is more eager to show the lives and virtue values of the imperial court and the elite class. In the *Anecdotes*, Zhou reconstructs, fragment by fragment, a benevolent and prosperous society of the Southern Song, a memory that the author would like his readers to have and to identify with.

Keywords: Zhou Mi, *Wulin jiushi*, loyalists, rituals, collective memory.

СТВОРЕННЯ ІДЕАЛЬНОЇ ПІВДЕННОЇ СУН У ЖАНРІ БІЦІ: ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ «МИНУВШИНИ З УЛІНЯ» ЧЖОУ МІ

Вай Цзуй

Як важливий біцзі (筆記) періодів пізньої Південної Сун і ранньої Юань збірка «Улінь цзюши» 武林舊事 («Минувшини з Уліня») 周密 Чжоу Мі (1232–1298 роки) традиційно вважається історичними записами про міське життя звичайних людей; вони були написана під безпосереднім впливом відомих мемуарів «Дунцзін мен хуа лу» 東京夢華錄 («Мрії про розкоші східної столиці»). Чжоу Мі, провідний літератор періоду пізньої Сун та ранньої Юань, глибоко цікавився історією та прагнув зберегти історичні записи про династію, що занепала. Порівняно з його більш пізніми творами, «Цідун є ю» (齊東野語) та «Гуйсінь цза ши» (癸辛雜識), «Минувшини з Уліня» – це більше ніж просто збірка історичних даних. Уважається, що збірка була написана незабаром після падіння династії Сун. Імовірно, у той час Чжоу Мі був приголомшений та засмучений і не міг судити чи критикувати. У той час йому найбільше потрібно було вгамувати свої емоції, тому він удався до спогадів та почав писати про період розквіту династії Південної Сун. У статті стверджується, що основним змістом «Минувшин» є яскраве вираження вірності й ідентифікації автора з імператорським двором династії Південної Сун, особливо з її цінностями. На відміну від «Дунцзін мен хуа лу», Чжоу Мі присвятив понад дві третини своєї книги опису подій, пов'язаних з імператором та імператорською родиною. Замість того, щоб зосередитися на простих людях, він прагнув більше показати життя та цінності імператорського двору й еліти. У збірці «Минувшин» Чжоу Мі фрагмент за фрагментом реконструює доброзичливе та процвітаюче суспільство Південної Сун, спогад про яке автор хотів би розділити зі своїми читачами.

Ключові слова: Чжоу Мі, Wulin jiushi, лоялісти, ритуали, колективна пам'ять.

1. Zhou Mi and the Writing of *Wulin jiushi*

Zhou Mi (1232–1298), courtesy name Gongjin 公謹, is a key figure of Song loyalist and literati in Hangzhou during the late Southern Song and early Yuan era. He is widely known for his poetry, *biji* (jottings) and his connoisseurship. As Zhou is a prolific writer and an intriguing loyalist, research of him centers on his loyalism, poetry, and his erudite knowledge in art collection and historiography [Xia 1961; Jay-Preston 1991; Jin... 1993; Weitz 2002; Liu 2012]. This article examines one of his early jottings, *Anecdotes of Wulin* (hereafter *Anecdotes*) [Cao 2013]. The purpose of writing the *Anecdotes* for Zhou Mi is primarily an exploration of the prime time of the demised Southern Song dynasty. The book consists of 10 *juan* (chapter), with a total of seventy-one essays, recording rituals, festivals, imperial events, names of imperial buildings, famous sights-seeing spots, entertainment quarters, street performances and vendors in the city of Hangzhou.

The *Anecdotes* is often regarded either as one of Zhou's historic writings in reflecting the downfall of the Song dynasty which contains valuable historical information to supplement official histories, or simply an emulation of *Dongjing menghua lu* which shows a kaleidoscopic view of urban life of commoners [Liu 2012; Shang 2016]. While the *Anecdotes* does contain historic information that can supplement official history, especially in the chaotic period, but other than a passive repository of miscellaneous information, what can be its function in its social

context? In research Zhou Mi's writings, scholars emphasize on Zhou's identity as loyalist and his jottings being a loyalist's urge to preserve the lost memory. A careful scrutiny of the *Anecdotes*, however, will show that it has a different orientation from his other jottings. In this article, I intend to examine the *Anecdotes* by observing how Zhou encounters the past, and how his personal motives and cultural position influence and enrich his construction of the past. This enables us to understand more about Zhou Mi both as a loyalist and an intellectual of early Yuan period, and this approach also demonstrates the function of jottings as an important vehicle of cultural production.

Notably, in the *Anecdotes*, Zhou is not giving a personal record of the extravagance of the Southern Song dynasty. In fact, he has not experienced the era being written in this book. His records come mainly from either what he read from his family library or heard from retired eunuchs. The book, however, is written in a "past as present" approach that readers are unaware of historic time, as the author also describes his feeling as "I thought life is always like this". Compare to his later works, *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 and *Guixin zashi* 癸辛雜識, Zhou has no intention to reflect on the reasons leading to Song's downfall in the *Anecdotes*. It is generally believed that the *Anecdotes* is written during shortly after the downfall of the Song dynasty. Possibly, when writing the *Anecdotes*, he was overwhelmed by the shock and sadness, and was unable to judge or criticize. What he needed most at that time was to pacify his emotion, and Zhou turned to writing. He writes many of his *ci* poetry almost in a compulsory manner [Liu 2012]. In the *Anecdotes*, he reconstructs the heyday of Southern Song and writes about the imperial court with great admiration and respect. By writing about the "objectivized culture", such as rituals, festivals and monuments, Zhou offers readers a composite picture of Wulin (another name of Hangzhou 杭州. The name comes from Mount Wulin 武林山 of Hangzhou) the capital of Southern Song, and presents a different kind of historical engagement than those of official history [Assmann 1995]. He depicts in vivid details of a bygone life (*jiushi* 舊事) that he wants himself and the posterity to remember as the Southern Song. This marks the main difference of the *Anecdotes* from his other two *biji* which focus on political history [Shang 2016]. Concerning its relation to *Dongjing menghua lu*, whereas the *Anecdotes* shares some characteristics of the "menghua ti" 夢華體, Zhou has proposed a different emphasis and organizational structure [Yi 2009]. More than two-third of the book are devoted to writing about rituals and important events of the imperial family. Even when writing about the festivals, Zhou always describes the imperial way of celebration before going into details of the commoners. The meaning conveyed by the *Anecdotes* is thus closely related to this focus of interest and writing strategy.

2. Reconstructing a Realm of Order, Virtue and Prosperity

Extant research of the *Anecdotes* is mainly about what historic information it has retained, thus focusing mainly on its historic value. When evaluating Zhou's intention in writing it, scholars tend to give a generalized conclusion that it is a reflection of Zhou's loyalty for the fallen empire. This conclusion, however, is hardly satisfactory, for most of the writings written at during the transition of dynasties exhibit such characteristics. What makes the *Anecdotes* different from other works that also explore the past and written during the same period?

I will argue that the primary meaning of the *Anecdotes* is to strongly express Zhou's political and cultural identification with the Southern Song. In the *Anecdotes*, he builds an ideal society and he can totally relate himself as a member of it. Unlike his later works, *Qidong yeyu* and *Guixin zazhi* which contain personal comments that reflect on the history of Song, the *Anecdotes* is a serial of descriptive essays written in an objective tone, and the author rarely intervenes to give personal comments or to show his feelings. On the surface, he seems only to record passively on the miscellaneous of urban life, but by using a third person view and a factual tone, he has depicted a self-explanatory picture of a society that is so orderly guided by rules and virtues which become the pillars of its prosperity. The author declares, in an "as-a-matter-of-fact" manner, that this is what life is like during the reign of Southern Song. This is his ideal world and he identifies himself with it, even though it has vanished.

In the *Anecdotes*, the first three chapters are accounts of rituals performed during imperial ceremonies and festivals, and as a supplement, Chapter Eight adds details on a few other special occasions in the court. When reading these essays, one is impressed by the details being offered. He is not preserving history, but making it alive. One can vividly "see" the rituals down to minute details. For example in "Simeng jiachu" 四孟駕出 (imperial procession during the first month of the four seasons), the author traces the procession from its preparation. Under the command of Three Capital Guards (also known as *sanya* 三衙, refers to Palace Command *dianqian si* 殿前司, the Metropolitan Cavalry Command *majun si* 馬軍司 and the Metropolitan Infantry Command *bujun si* 步軍司) six thousand two hundred soldiers help to clear up the alleyways [Wang 1983].

Thereafter, Zhou records a list of 98 bureaus, of which their officials will participate in the procession. The name of the bureaus and number of participants of each department are listed according to the order of precedence. At the end of this episode, the author records how the guards of honour give salute when the emperor pass. By giving a panoramic view, readers find themselves walking down the procession and watching the entire event. This episode is important in giving readers a general impression of what is needed when the emperor go out of the palace, as Zhou continues to refer back to this procession, when recording other rituals being performed outside the imperial palace. For example, in "Da Li" 大禮 (the Great Sacrifice) at the southern suburb 南郊, when mentioning the procession, Zhou simply says "same as the procession of *simeng*" 儀從並同四孟.

In the episode of the Great Sacrifice, apart from recording the preparation which takes nearly a year, the author gives a detailed run-down of the rituals performed by the emperor on the three-day ceremony. On the first day, the emperor needs to dress up and starts fasting, preparing himself for holding the ceremony. The next day, leading a procession from where he fasts, the emperor will conduct rituals first in Jingling 景靈 Palace and then proceeds to the Ancestral Temple (太廟). At night, he will lead the group of entourage to the south suburb altar, and the sacrifice starts at 1:15 am. The emperor offers sacrifice to Heaven, Ground and his ancestors, and performs a serial of rituals on the altar. Thereafter, the emperor gets changed and returns to the Duancheng 端誠 Palace to be received by the officials. By tracing the itinerary of the Great Sacrifice, readers follow the footsteps of the emperor and go through the whole activity. In addition, readers are offered with all the minute details, for example the different dress codes required by different ranks of the entourage at

each stage of the rituals, the size and decorations of the altar, the officials of different ranks who attend the ritual and many more details as such. By having these details in mind, one can visualize or even re-enact the whole event.

The first chapter and first half of the second chapter are all devoted to record the imperial ceremonies offered to Heaven, the ancestors and the emperor. After the first six chapters are finished, Zhou adds a supplement that becomes the last four chapters in the extant edition. The supplementary four chapters are dominantly about the imperial events, including the imperial visit to state university, crowning of queen, coming-of-age ceremony of prince, the wedding of princess, and welcome reception for envoys coming from north, all are arranged under strict rules and must be done with accuracy. By reading these episodes, the author repeatedly impresses his readers by how the court and its governance are guided by appropriate rituals and order. This is not only shown in various rituals and ceremonies, but also extended to the empire's administration from military training to the running of state university.

Li 禮 (rituals) is of great importance in people's life and statecraft of pre-modern China. [Elman... 2009; Puett... 2016] Confucian studies emphasize the political, institutional and educational functions of *li*. On a personal level, *junzi* 君子 (a gentleman) will follow the *li* in order to effectively express show his benevolence. On a state level, *li* builds a vision of statecraft. It is both a guiding principle and a binding force, not only to regulate the rulers, but also to educate and manage the populace. By showing the vivid details of the rituals and ceremonies (practice of *li*), Zhou wants to tell his readers that everything in Southern Song is well-organized, under the leadership of the imperial court, in an orderly and appropriate way, favoured by Heaven. When the emperor is about to perform the Great Sacrifice, Zhou Mi writes, "at that time, wind comes from the sky and brings the sound of jingling jade belts, just like music of the Shang dynasty coming from Heaven". 天風時送，佩環韶濩之音，真如九天吹下也。 This miraculous reaction from Heaven shows that Heaven is willing to accept the sacrifice given by the emperor.

Looking at the sequence of ceremonies recorded in the first two chapter: immediately after the Grand Sacrifice, there comes the amnesty during which some prisoners are pardon of their sins by the emperor on behalf of Heaven. Thereafter, the emperor would express thanks to Heaven and ancestors again. By performing meticulously the required rituals and ceremonies, the *Anecdotes* shows that the Song emperor gains support for his rule from divine powers, and this in turn legitimates his rulership. It is particularly striking as all these were written after the downfall of Song, but Zhou writes as it is still the way of life. For him, the Song court is and will always be the legitimate ruler. On the other side of this token, the Mongols, the actual ruler, is not accepted by him.

Zhou's admiration and respect for the Southern Song imperial court can be further explored in the episodes devoted to the writing of filial piety in the *Anecdotes* [Hsieh 1959; Wei 1969; Nylan 1996]. Zhou has written extensively about this important moral value being cherished and practiced in the imperial family. Apart from essays about sacrifice to Heaven and the ancestors, Zhou praises filial piety of Xiaozong 孝宗 (1127–1194, reign time 1162–1189) time and again. The first essay of the *Anecdotes* "Qingshou cebao" 慶壽冊寶 (Celebration of Birthday and Conferment of Seal) is a ceremonial event of which the emperor celebrates the birthday of the Emperor Emeritus and pays homage to the Empress Dowagers. In this essay,

Xiaozong is praised as the most filial son in history who takes care of the Emperor Emeritus and Empress Dowagers with all he has, and the celebration of Emperor Emeritus is regarded by the emperor (and the author) as the most important event. To further demonstrate and praise Xiaozong's sincerity, Zhou Mi devotes Chapter Seven, the first chapter of the supplement, "Qian Chun fengqin" 乾淳奉親 (Serving Parents in Qian and Chun periods) to give details on the acts of filial piety. As ceremonies and rituals can sometimes be reduced to performance, filial piety needs to be proved through daily actions. "Qian" and "Chun" refer to Qiandao 乾道 and Chunxi 淳熙 respectively, the reign names of Xiaozong from 1165 to 1189, nearly covering Xiaozong's entire reign. Zhou selects vignettes from over three decades in order to show how Xiaozong has served Gaozong 高宗 (1107–1187, reign time 1127–1162), his adopted father, modestly and unswervingly.

Xiaozong is not fulfilling filial piety as a duty only, but he cares for Gaozong from the bottom of his heart. For instance, on one occasion, Gaozong invited one of his favourite officials, Shi Hao 史浩 (1106–1194) to the imperial family banquet. Gaozong was so happy to see Shi that he ordered various native street food of Bianjing 汴京 (the capital of Northern Song, nowadays Kaifeng 開封). This perhaps had aroused an aura of nostalgia, and Gaozong and Shi Hao started drinking wine. Zhou records that when a servant secretly reminded Shi Hao not to pour too much wine, Xiaozong immediately permitted him to continue as he knew Gaozong was so excited, and he did not want to disappoint his father. Zhou writes immediately after, "The Emperor Emeritus is overjoyed".

On another occasion, Gaozong invited Xiaozong to Peak Feilai 飛來 in order to cool down from the summer heat. Peak Feilai is on a hill, west to the West Lake. The place Gaozong and Xiaozong went for cooling was decorated with rockery, bamboo groves and ancient pine trees that it was entirely shaded from the sun. The author writes, "One cannot see sunlight here and feels no summer heat" (不見日色, 並無暑氣). The servants, however, were not aware of the coolness and they offered Gaozong *hangxie jiang* 沆瀣漿 (dew syrup), a cooling drink, and iced white wine. Xiaozong stood up and suggested Gaozong not to drink them. At first, Gaozong dismissed him as he loved these cooling drinks, but Xiaozong continued to persuade Gaozong that these drinks might hurt his gastroenteric system. Eventually, Gaozong agreed with Xiaozong. The narrator then points out again that this place is actually quite cool (此處涼甚).

Chapter Seven is made up of these seemingly trivial events between father and son, but these vignettes have shown some most heart-warming scenes inside the imperial family. While the "Qingshou cebao" narrates Xiaozong as a model emperor who follows the rituals strictly, the "Qian Chun fengqin" gives a vivid description of a filial son who serve his father with sincerity and love.

Filial piety is not only important within one's immediate family, but can be extended to the society through the notion of *sangang* 三綱 (Three Bonds), in which the relation of father versus son is a simile to emperor versus his subjects. By demonstrating filial piety towards senior members and ancestors of the imperial court, the ruler set an example of a filial son, and his model is to be followed by his people. In the preface to "Qian Chun fengqin", Zhou talks about the objective of recording the acts of filial morality being:

使觀之者錫類之心，油然而生，其於世教民彝，豈小補哉！

(These records) can impel others' (the thought of filial piety) naturally. This is not of little significance to the upholding of moral standard of society.

“Xilei” 錫類 alludes from the poem “Jizui” 既醉 (Drunk) of *Shijing* 詩經, praising filial piety as an important virtue that will bring fortune not only to the filial son, but also to their posterity [Legge 2016]. Zhou emphasizes the power of role model and relates filial piety to rulership. This is in line with the concluding remarks of “Qingshou cebao”,

後三日，百官拜表稱賀於文德殿，四方萬姓，不遠千里，快睹盛事。都民垂白之老，喜極有至泣下者。

Three days after (the Emperor Emeritus' birthday celebration), hundreds of officials submit their congratulations at Wende Palace. People from all directions and distance are happy to watch the great event. Elder citizens of Hangzhou are overjoyed that they even shed their tears.

Apparently, the officials and common people are deeply moved by the emperor's behaviour and shows their recognition to him. By portraying a filial emperor who is recognized by Heaven, ancestors, his father and his subjects, the emperor's rulership is legitimized. He is deserved of loyal subjects just like how he has been loyal to his father. In fact, the Song imperial family is not as harmonious as Zhou described here. In *Qidong yeyu*, Zhou does not avoid talking about ruthless power struggle among the royal family and nobles. In the *Anecdotes*, however, he selects only the positive side. In this sense, the *Anecdotes* is not aiming at analyzing or reflecting on the downfall of the dynasty, but a construction of an orderly, virtuous and prosperous society through careful selection of historic materials.

In addition to the relation between son and father, along the line of the Three Bonds, Zhou continues to write about a harmonious relation between the emperor and his officials and populace. In writing the various rituals, the participating officials are always recorded to be paying great respect to the emperor. The emperor, in return, also shows his mercy to them. For example, in the banquet after the Gongxie 恭謝 (Offering Thanks of Ancestors), the emperor will bestow flowers to his officials and guards. Zhou Mi quotes a poem written by Jiang Kui, and it reads,

六軍文武浩如雲，
花簇頭冠樣樣新。
惟有至尊渾不戴，
盡將春色賜群臣。

The army and officials from the administration and military are gathering like clouds.

Flowery embellishments on the hats are all brand new.

Only the emperor wears no (flowery) accessories,

As he has bestowed all the colours of spring to his officials.

The poem suggested that the rituals of bestowing flowers is an expression of kindness from the emperor. Moreover, this kindness is a sacrifice made from emperor as he is refrained from wearing any flowery accessories.

Another example is Chapter Nine, a rundown of Gaozong's visit to Zhang Jun 張俊 (1086–1154), one of the four prominent generals in his reign. Although by Zhou's time, Zhang has long lost his fame and is blamed for plotting against Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103–1142), Zhou has no intention to discuss this controversy here, instead, his focus is to reveal an extravagant event during which the emperor shows his

care and trust to a loyal official, and this is demonstrated through a meticulous plan and rituals according to the principles of *li* [Li 2013]. Needless to add any personal comments, the royal visit itself is already an ideal interaction between the emperor and his officials.

By following rituals and filial piety, people are under rule of benevolence which is fundamental to a strong, stable and prosperous society. Therefore, when the author then goes on to describe the prosperous business and urban life of Hangzhou in Chapter Five and Six, he would not be misunderstood as to show off of luxury and desire. Moreover, being a benevolent ruler, the emperor always shows mercy and care to his people, and in return he has also won their support. The *Anecdotes* demonstrates this political ideal by repeatedly mentioning the excitement of the spectators during imperial procession and how the emperor also enjoys tours to West Lake, with commoners in his proximity. Zhou even “criticises” the court to provide too much welfare for the people of Hangzhou that they become too proud of themselves. In the essay of “Jiaomin” 驕民 (Arrogant People), Zhou has not shown the arrogance of the people of Hangzhou, but he happily writes about the welfare they enjoyed. The court has provided nearly everything from birth to death for everyone. Below is an excerpt,

病者則有施藥局。童幼不能自育者，則有慈幼局。貧而無依者，則有養濟院。死而無殮者，則有漏澤園。

There is pharmacies for the sick. There is orphanage for the children who cannot support themselves. There is home for the poor and homeless. There is public cemetery for the death whose families are unable to afford funerals.

These few lines are especially striking as they draw a picture similar to the Confucian idea of *Datong* 大同 (Great Union), an ideal society in which everyone will get what they need and all are ruled under fairness. The Great Union is described in “Liyun” 禮運 (the Movement of Rites) in *Liji* 禮記 (Records of Ritual) as a perfect society that existed in antiquity. The Confucius describes it as “employment of the able-bodied, and the means of growing up to the young. They showed kindness and compassion to widows, orphans, childless men, and those who were disabled by disease, so that they were all sufficiently maintained. Males had their proper work, and females had their homes” (使老有所終，壯有所用，幼有所長，鰥寡孤獨廢疾者，皆有所養。男有分，女有歸) [Legge 2016]. No wonder the author exclaims, “How fortunate are the people!” (民生何其幸歟).

When writing the *Anecdotes*, Zhou is trying to piece together not only the heyday of Song dynasty, but an ideal realm that he relates to as the past. To write about this glorified past means to cherish it and reconnect himself with it. In the *Anecdotes*, the Song dynasty is portrayed as not only the legitimate political ruler, but perhaps more importantly the symbol of high culture and virtue of which Zhou builds and confirms his identity that he might otherwise take for granted if there has not been a change in dynasties. This construction of the past is closely related to his present situation [Maurice Halbwachs 1992]. The strong expression of Zhou’s admiration and loyalty toward the past implies his disapproval to the present Mongol rule, both politically and culturally.

3. The Past and Present in the *Anecdotes*

In *Social Memory*, James Fentress and Chris Wickham talk about how past and present are connected with each other in memory, and “we experience the present

as connected to the past” and “our experience of the present is embedded in past experience” [Fentress and Wickham 1992, 24]. Even if the present is inconsistent to the past, one can easily find an explanation. So, the significance of memory of the past “is not its capacity to provide an unshakeable foundation for knowledge, but simply, its capacity to keep us afloat” [Fentress and Wickham 1992, 24]. Their views on the connection of past and present can help us to understand the “past” and “present” in the *Anecdotes*. More than just a wistful looking back to the good old days, Zhou is in fact experiencing the past, constructed by him, and he finds himself living in it. In the writings about the past, the sense of time is of great importance, and the author and readers are going back and forth in past and present. On the one hand, the past is forever lost, on the other hand it resurrects and is coming back into the author’s mind. In the preface to the *Anecdotes*, Zhou has expressed a strong emotion when he has to face the difference between past and present. He repeatedly uses the imagery of awakening from a dream to express the feeling of losing, an inspiration from *Dongjing menghua lu*. But whenever he thinks of the glorified past, he indulged himself in and feels himself still living in it. He describes his feeling as “like a small child watching performance day and night but does not feel tired at all” 如小兒觀優，終日夕不少倦。In this metaphor, the neglect of physical tiredness means the child is unaware of past and present. He is so occupied by the performance that he has not noticed the pass of time which is indicated by physical tiredness. A few lines after, Zhou writes, “I think life is always like this, and at that time I am not aware that this peaceful and happy life is hard to come by” (意謂人生正復若此，初不省承平樂事為難遇也). The life he recorded in the *Anecdotes* is what he thinks will go on forever and he presents them in an “ever-lasting” manner.

In the narration of the *Anecdotes*, there is minimum indication of historic time. In the preface, the author reminds readers that what he wrote was mainly happened during the era of Gaozong and Xiaozong, but once we start reading the essays, historic time is seldom mentioned, except for Chapter Seven in which he gives a chorological record to show Xiaoaong’s consistent acts of filial piety. Most events are written not as a piece of historic record or a memoir, but rather like presenting a painting in which time is frozen. The events, especially the ceremonies and rituals, are seldom specified to a particular period in history, but they are narrated as they happen year after year, in a continuum of time. The author seems to tell the readers that what he has recorded has happened and are still happening, and that one can visualize and even re-enact every single detail in these ever-lasting ceremonies, rituals, festivals, places of interest and business on the streets. The bustling city of Hangzhou seems to exist without the dimension of time. Therefore, the author is not writing about the “past”, but he is writing the “present”. “Past” is constructed as “present” in the *Anecdotes*. In this sense, Zhou is experiencing this ideal and ever-lasting realm when he constructs it. As he said, he has once thought life will continue just like what he has written in the *Anecdotes*, and when he reads this jottings after finishing it, everything seems to be just happened yesterday.

4. A Comparison to *Dongjing menghua lu*

Dongjing menghua lu has attracted many scholarly attention in the research of Song dynasty jottings as it has exerted great influences on later writings, and the *Anecdotes* is regarded one of them [West 1985]. Indeed, the *Anecdotes* shares many similarities with *Dongjing menghua lu*.

First, the background of the two books is related to changes in dynasties. The author of *Dongjing menghua lu*, Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 was forced to flee Bianjing (also known as Dongjing) in 1127 when the Northern Song fell, after residing there for twenty-four years [Deng 1982]. *Dongjing menghua lu* is his reminiscences of the heyday of the Northern Song. Both Meng and Zhou have experienced the downfall of their country and they look at the past from a survivor's point of view. Both books write about festivals, imperial events, business in the capitals, and customs and traditions, preserving valuable historic information that is often neglected in official history. By recording these seemingly miscellaneous urban life, both writings build a collective memory of the vanished past. Both adopt an objective tone in their narration and description, and the narrator seldom intervene to express personal feelings, aiming to show readers a picture (mimicking) rather than to tell a story (narrating). By adopting these distinctive characteristics of the "style of Menghua", it is fair to say that the *Anecdotes* is heavily influenced by *Dongjing menghua lu*. In fact, Zhou does mention *Dongjing menghua lu* as his inspiration of writing when he refers to his memory of the past as awakening from a dream in the preface to the *Anecdotes*. Despite their similarities, however, Zhou obviously has his own agenda.

First, Zhou has a strong interest in the Song imperial court. Apart from writing about the imperial events, when recording the annual festivals, he always starts with what happens in the court, and sometimes he only writes about the celebrations in the court. For example, in the essay of the 1st Day of the Year 元正, traditionally the most important Chinese festival, Zhou's entire focus is at the court, leaving only a couple of sentences to describe the celebrations of commoners. In the essays about *Taiocai* 挑菜 (Picking vegetables, 2nd Day of the 2nd Month), *jinchai* 進茶 (Tea Offering), *shanghua* 賞花 (Blossom Appreciation), Zhou only writes about how the royals enjoy on these occasions.

In the essay of *Yuanxi* 元夕 (15th Night of the First Month), Zhou writes extensively about the different styles of lanterns in the court and the performances at the Gate of Xuande 宣德 offered to the imperial family. Nearly the entire essay is devoted to the celebrations happened among the upper class. Below is an excerpt about preparing the lanterns in the imperial palace.

禁中自去歲九月賞菊燈之後，迤邐試燈，謂之「預賞」。一入新正，燈火日盛，皆脩內司諸璫分主之，競出新意，年異而歲不同。往往於復古、膺福、清燕、明華等殿張挂，及宣德門、梅堂、三間臺等處臨時取旨，起立鰲山。燈之品極多（見後燈品），每以「蘇燈」為最，圈片大者徑三四尺，皆五色琉璃所成。山水人物，花竹翎毛，種種奇妙，儼然著色便面也。其後福州所進，則純用白玉，晃耀奪目，如清冰玉壺，爽徹心目。近歲新安所進益奇，雖圈骨悉皆琉璃所為，號「無骨燈」。禁中嘗令作琉璃燈山，其高五丈，人物皆用機關活動，結大綵樓貯之，又於殿堂梁棟窗戶間為涌壁，作諸色故事，龍鳳噴水，蜿蜒如生，遂為諸燈之冠。前後設玉柵簾，寶光花影，不可正視。仙韶內人，迭奏新曲，聲聞人間。殿上鋪連五色琉璃閣，皆毬文戲龍百花。小窗間垂小水晶簾，流蘇寶帶，交映璀璨。中設御座，恍然如在廣寒清虛府中也。

After the exhibition of chrysanthemum lanterns from the ninth month of the previous year, the imperial palace continues to show different lanterns and is known as "advance appreciation". After the New Year, there hangs more lanterns and the palace becomes brighter. The eunuchs of the Imperial Construction Bureau

is responsible for it, and every year they compete with one another for new ideas. Lanterns are always hanged at Fugu, Yingfu, Qingyan, Minghua and other palace halls. As for the Gate Xuande, Plum Room and Three Idyllic Terrace, the “Mount of Sea Turtle” (mountains of lanterns) will be built by an ad hoc imperial order. There are myriads kinds of lanterns (see “Kinds of Lantern”), and lanterns from Suzhou are the best. The big ones’ circumference reaches three to four *chi*, made of five-coloured glass. On the lanterns, there are pictures of landscapes, characters, flowers and bamboos and (decorations of) feathers, all are very extraordinary, looking like coloured fans. Lanterns from Fuzhou are made entirely of white jade, shiny and eye-catching. Looking at them makes one feel pure and cool as like looking at the moon. Recently, lanterns from Xin’an are so remarkable that even their frames are made of glass, and known as “frameless lanterns”. The imperial palace also produces huge glass lanterns, high up to five *zhang*. The characters on the lanterns are all moveable. These lanterns are stored in decorated towers. Inside the towers, the roof beams, pillows, windows and doors are painted with stories and decorated with fountains imitating vividly shapes of dragons and phoenixes. This is, therefore, the best lantern. Around (this lantern) is a jade fence and blind, decorated with jewels and flowers, and it is too shiny that one cannot look directly into it. The imperial music performers will play newly composed music continuously, even people outside the palace can hear it. The windows besides the door of the halls are all made of glass with circular patterns, patterns of circus performance and various flowers. There are shiny crystal blinds with tassels decorated with jewels hanged upon the small windows. At the centre is the imperial seat. It is like being inside the Palace of the Moon.

Following Zhou’s viewpoint, readers can visualize the extraordinary scale of lantern festival celebration in the palace. Afterwards, Zhou goes on to describe the exciting performances in the court:

至二鼓，上乘小輦，幸宣德門，觀鼇山。擎輦者皆倒行，以便觀賞。金爐腦麝，如祥雲五色，熒煌炫轉，照耀天地。山燈凡數千百種，極其新巧，怪怪奇奇，無所不有，中以五色玉柵簇成「皇帝萬歲」四大字。其上伶官奏樂，稱念口號、致語，其下為大露臺，百藝群工，競呈奇伎。內人及小黃門百餘，皆巾裹翠蛾，傲街坊清樂傀儡，繚繞燈月之下。既而取旨，宣喚市井舞隊及市食盤架。先是，京尹預擇華潔及善歌叫者謹伺於外，至是歌呼競人。既經進御，嬪妃內人而下，亦爭買之，皆數倍得直，金珠磊落，有一夕而至富者。宮漏既深，始宣放煙火百餘架，於是樂聲四起，燭影縱橫，而駕始還矣。

At nine o’clock in the evening, the emperor rides on the small sedan chair to Gate Xuande to see the “Mountain of Sea Turtle”. The sedan chair is facing backward when moving in order to give the emperor a better view. Mist and smell from incenses of borneol and musk, released from the golden burners, are like five-coloured clouds. There are dim and moving lights, shining around. Thousands and hundreds of lanterns are put together like a mountain, all are novel. Nothing can be more extraordinary than that. At the centre, there is a five-coloured jade made scaffold, with four characters “huang di wan sui” (ten thousand years to the emperor) upon it. On top of the scaffold are official musicians, playing music and saluting to the emperor. Under the scaffold, there is the big open stage, exhibiting hundreds of artistic works, competing with one another. More than a hundred imperial performers and

young eunuchs are all dressed up with shawl and butterfly shaped hair accessories, imitating popular music performance and playing puppet shows under the lanterns and the moon. After getting the imperial command, there comes the street dancers and street food platters. Presentable vendors who are good at peddling, selected by the capital mayor, now competes crying for sale. After the emperor is offered (with goods), all the others, from the royal concubines to the palace servants, scramble to shop around. They love buying jewels, and often pay a price that is few times more expensive. Some sellers, therefore, become rich overnight. Later that night, there comes hundreds of carts, releasing fireworks. At that moment, there is music, candle lights and shadows everywhere, and the emperor starts returning home.

Thereafter, Zhou goes on to write about the celebrations of nobles and the rich. At the end, he spends a short paragraph on the commoners, writing about their jewel decorations, food and dance performances. Although readers still feel the zest of the festival on streets but the description is rather terse. Apparently, writing about the popular customs and traditions of commoners is not Zhou's priority. Although *Dongjing menghua lu* also writes about imperial celebrations and important royal events, Meng is more interested in popular culture and lives of the common folk. The focus of interest of the two books is essentially different.

In addition, Zhou adds episodes of the ways of life of the elite class, which is also not of much interest to Meng Yuanlao. In Chapter Ten, Zhou quoted two essays of Zhang Zi 張鎡 (1153–1235) as an example of the elite class. The two essays record how and where the literati spend their time around the year. These records can be read as supplements to Chapter Two and Three, so that now readers have ideas about how the lives of the royals, the literati and commoners are like respectively. More importantly, the two essays have shown the rarefied world of the literati. The artistic names of the buildings in Zhang's home and his idyllic life style belong only to an elite class with erudite knowledge in literature. For modern readers of Chinese literature, such a life will probably recall immediately the *Tao'an mengyi* of Zhang Dai 張岱 (1574–1684) as a parallel [Spencer 2007; Kafalas 2017].

Zhou's preference in recording the court and the literati's lives makes a sharp contrast to *Dongjing menghua lu*. Meng's work is more like a city guide that provides many details on pleasure life, such as tea houses, wine shops, restaurants and brothels. Zhou, on the other hand, is more interested to present Hangzhou from the viewpoint of an elevated class, showing how the people (especially the ruling class) follow rituals and demonstrate virtue. *Dongjing menghua lu* tells its readers that Bianjing is the most bustling city, full of luxury and pleasure whereas the *Anecdotes* shows the Hangzhou as being a prosperous and virtuous place in accord with the Confucian values. What the authors select to write about, especially about one's past, is structured by group identities. In this case, Meng identifies more with the common people whereas Zhou identifies to the upper and elite class. Therefore, although both books write about urban life, they are making a vastly different point.

This difference in focus also exerts an impact on the style of language. One of the characteristics of the "Menghua style" is its vernacularism. Meng uses vernaculars and local slangs to capture popular culture in Bianjing. Thus the language is blunt and rustic, full of regional colour. Zhou, however, mentions in the preface that he would adopt a language of "elegance" 雅 which he distinguishes his work from *Dongjing menghua lu*. For the *Anecdotes*, while the language is

generally vernacular-like and easy to understand, the author uses more refined language including large amount of four-word phrases and quoting poems from famous poets, and he seldom uses slangs.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this article, I have evaluate the *Anecdotes* as an important piece of literary work of the early Yuan period. Despite being heavily influenced by the *Dongjing menghua lu*, the *Anecdotes* differs in its focus of interest and language. All the events and records of the *Anecdotes*, although seems to be fragmented, are thematically connected in order to recreate the heyday of Southern Song as both Zhou's memory and his imagination of an ideal society. He is largely successful in portraying the Southern Song as an orderly, virtuous and prosperous world, and he even hints at the Great Union of the Antiquity. By constructing such as a glorified past, Zhou is trying to construct his present life and identity. Even though Southern Song has demised and the country being under the Mongol rule, the *Anecdotes* serves a declaration for the author to confirm his identification and his loyalty to the political stand and cultural values of the Southern Song. The world created in the *Anecdotes* represents not only his past, but also his present and future.

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