

# Zen Buddhism Origin of Wu Weiye

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**Abstract**—As a famous scribe in the substitute time of Ming and Qing Dynasties, Wu Weiye received continuous attention from the academic circles. However, scholars have always focused on Wu Weiye's songs, poems and traditional opera creations, and rarely talk about his origin with Buddhist Zen. Looking into the literature, Wu Weiye and the Zen Buddhism are inextricably linked, and he eventually failed to leave his original life to become a monk. It is also because of his delicate emotions, soft personality, and intelligence.

**Keywords**—Wu Weiye; Buddhism mind; Zen poetry; adherents

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, as one of the "three masters of south of the lower reaches of the Changjiang River" in the early Qing Dynasty, Wu Weiye has continued to receive academic attention, and the related research results are regarded as great. However, scholars have always focused on Wu Weiye's songs, poems and traditional opera creations, but rarely talk about his origin with Zen Buddhism. At present, there are four articles about Wu Weiye's buddha-mind and Zen poems: Liu Shouan's "Meicun and Zen Buddhism",<sup>1</sup> which reveals Wu Weiye's contact with the Sangha in the Buddhist temple during his seclusion in Mei Villiage and his mindset for the Buddhism. Wang Xiaohui's "Perching in Zen Lamp and Dream Shadow — On the "Circular" Program of Wu Meicun's Thought of Escape from Zen"<sup>2</sup> tells people about Wu Weiye's dream of escaping from Zen for survival in the gap between retreating and confessing, the road to escape from Zen presents a circular program that cannot be broken. Han Sheng's "'He Didn't Become a Buddhist Eventually' — the Relationship Between Wu Meicun and Buddhism and Its Influence on His Poetry",<sup>3</sup> points out that Wu Meicun was deeply influenced by the social atmosphere and family environment of Confucianism, Buddhism, and

Taoism at that time, and in order to seek spiritual relief, he contacted with the monks. Jiang Junzheng's "Wu Weiye's Mind of Poetry and Buddhism",<sup>4</sup> from the perspective of Wu Weiye's Zen Buddhism and Buddhism poetry, the influence of Buddhism on his poetry and the reasons why he did not become a monk, which comprehensively combed the relationship between Wu Weiye and Buddhism and got a lot of clear conclusions. A detailed examination of the literature reveals that Wu Weiye is inextricably linked with Zen Buddhism. His ambiguous attitude toward Zen Buddhism typically reflects the helplessness and fear of the scholar-officials at the time of the substitution of the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Based on the above-mentioned literature, this paper further explores the origins of Wu Weiye and Zen Buddhism, and analyzes the reasons why he failed to become a monk, so as to obtain a more comprehensive grasp of Wu Weiye's mentality of the survivors.

## II. WU WEIYE'S BUDDHISM MIND AND ZEN POETRY

Wu Weiye (1609-1671), his style name was Jungong, and his pseudonym was Meicun, also known as Meicun Jushi, Waishi Shi etc. He was from Taicang, Jiangsu Province, and he became a Chin-Shih (a successful candidate in the highest imperial examinations of ancient China) in the 4th year of Chongzhen (1631). At the beginning, he was sent to the Hanlin Academy to compile and edit. And then, he was appointed to the East Palace as a reading attendant and sub-supervisor of Nanjing Imperial College. In 1644, he was appointed as Shaozhanshi (an ancient Chinese official position) of South Ming Hongguang Dynasty. Because he was not in line with people like Ma Shiyong and so on, after taking office for less than three months, he claimed his illness and went back to hometown. He lived in the village for nearly ten years. Later in 1654, he accepted the imperial decree and went to the capital to be as Jijiu (an ancient Chinese official position) of the Imperial College. After three years, he resigned and went back to his hometown, and cut off his attempt to become an official.<sup>5</sup> He was the author of "Home Collection Manuscripts of Meicun", "Record of Sui

<sup>1</sup> Refers to Li Xuan, The Stylistic Breakthrough and Value of "Meicun Value" [J]. *Literary Heritage*, 2017(03): 168-181. Guo Yingde, Research on the Writing Time of Moling' Spring by Wu Weiye [J]. *Journal of Tsinghua University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 2012, 27(06): 67-74. Ye Junyuan, On the "Meicun Style" [J]. *Journal of Chinese Language and Culture School Nanjing Normal University*, 2002(02):100-106.

<sup>2</sup> Liu Shouan, Meicun and Zen Buddhism [J]. *Dongyue Tribune*, 1993(6): 96-100.

<sup>3</sup> Wang Xiaohui, Perching in Zen Lamp and Dream Shadow — On the "Circular" Program of Wu Meicun's Thought of Escape from Zen [J]. *Academic Exchange*, 2009(11): 163-165. (in Chinese)

<sup>4</sup> Han Sheng, "He Didn't Become a Buddhist Eventually": On the Relationship Between Wu Meicun and Buddhism and Its influence on the Poetry [J]. *Journal of Suzhou College of Education*, 2012, 29(4): 58-61.

<sup>5</sup> Jiang Junzheng, Zen Buddhism and Wu Weiye Poetry Study [D]. *Ocean University of China*, 2014. (in Chinese)

Invaders", "Record of Fushe", "Notes on Poetry", "Legend of Moling' Spring" and so on.

Wu Weiye wrote in the preface to the poetry collection of his friend Zhou Zhao: "Zhou Zhao likes to study the way of Huang Lao, I like to participate in the Buddhism."<sup>6</sup> ("Preface of Zhou Zichu Donggang Manuscripts") His addiction for Buddhism was generally influenced by two aspects:

First of all, it is the influence of the ethos of the times. Liang Qichao once said: "The society is more and more chaotic. The thought of misanthropy is generated spontaneously. For this turbid world, people have all kinds of sorrows in their mind, and they want to seek for a safe and secure place to live. Those who have a little wisdom would become a monk."<sup>7</sup> Since the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, the already-declining Buddhism had prospered. The turmoil of society and the decay of politics have filled the sense of disillusionment with all walks of life. Buddhism, which is based seeing through the world, had catered to the needs of the times, so it had been revived and the believers were extensive. The scholar-bureaucrats regarded discussions on the Zen Buddhism as elegance, and the ethos of Zen had become flaming. In this kind of environment, Wu Weiye borrowed Buddhism to sell his worries and ease the inexhaustible pains of the broken country and home. It was also the meaning of the title.

Second, it was the influence of the family atmosphere. There was a family history of Wu Weiye's favor in Buddhism. His mother Zhu's grandfather Cao Luchuan was a neo-Confucianist who believed in Buddhism and believed that Confucianism was connected with Buddhist teachings. He had written a book of hundred volumes to clarify this meaning.<sup>8</sup> Wu Weiye also mentioned in the "Prefaces of Qin's Mother Grand Lady Yu of Her Seventy": "My mother, Zhu, carefully served the Buddha, once established a high court in Dengwei Mountain, and sincerely dedicated a Tripitaka"; he also wrote in the epitaph of Chen, mother of Bai Brothers: "My mother, Zhu, has served the Buddha and been ordained for more than 30 years... At the end of her life, three sons surrounded her. She warns everyone not to cry. She said that she saw the flag is leading the way, and she followed the Buddhas and went away."<sup>9</sup> These all indicate that his mother was a devout Buddhist. Wu Weiye returned to his hometown to serve his mother in the 12th year of Chongzhen (1639). It was inevitable that he would be influenced by his mother.

<sup>6</sup> Refers to Feng Qiyong, Ye Junyuan, Wu Meicun Chronicle, Culture and Art Publishing House, 2007 edition.

<sup>7</sup> Wu Weiye, Complete Works of Wu Meicun [M]. Shanghai Classics Publishing House, 1990, p706.

<sup>8</sup> Liang Qichao, Introduction to Academics in the Qing Dynasty [M]. Phoenix Publishing & Media Group, 2007, p92.

<sup>9</sup> In the "To Zen Master Zhaoru: Preface", he wrote: "吾州先达如管东溟、曹鲁川两先生研宗六经，穿穴训诂，而又能得佛法大旨，于教律论藏皆有所参究。(Ancestry masters in my state like Guan Dongming and Cao Luchuan, they studied the 'Six Classics' intensively and made explanations. They could also comprehend the substance of Buddhism, which they had penetrated in both Vinaya-pitaka and Abhidharma-pitaka.)" Refers to: Complete Works of Wu Meicun, p657.

Among the existing poems of Wu Weiye, there are more than one hundred poems referred to Zen Buddhism, and there are as many as eighteen monks mentioned, such as monk Cangxue, Master Yuanyun, and monk Juye. Among them, his interaction with monk Cangxue was particularly eye-catching.

Monk Cangxue's name when he was not a monk was Zhao, and he came from Chenggong (now Yunnan). His Dharma name was Duche, his style name was Cangxue, and his pseudonym was Nanlai, and the Huayan patriarchal clan. He was an inheritor of the Hua-yen school. When Cangxue was young, he followed my father, Bitan, to become a monk at Miaozhan Temple at Kunming. At the age of eleven, he went to the Jiguang Temple in Jizu Mountain to worship eminent monk Shuiyue as the teacher and took charge of the secretary. At the age of 19, he "generously traveled" to Wu area. He was imparted by monk Chaosong and monk Yurun. Later he hosted the Zhongfeng Bodhimanda and became the master of Southeastern Buddhism. Cangxue was once praised by Wang Shizhen as "the first monk poet of the three hundred years Ming Dynasty." He loved to talk about poetry and loved to write poetry. His poems were "desolate and deep, delicate and experienced, depressed and delighted", and there are four volumes of "Nanlaitang Poetry Collection".

Wu Meicun and Master Cangxue had been very close, and had solid affection. In addition to Buddhism, they also had communication on poetry. In the first year of Shunzhi, Master Cangxue came to Taicang to sermon. Weiye had written a poem entitled "To Cangxue". In the poem, Wu Weiye praised Master Cangxue for coming to Taicang to sermon as a "倒驾慈航" (reversing back to the suffering world, re-cultivation, driving the boat to get the people out of the sea of suffering) and "闻声救苦" (hearing someone else's call for help). Wu Weiye also described Cangxue as "欲使菩提树，遍荫诸国土" (he wants to make the Dharma spread across the land of various countries) to praise the vastness of Cangxue's heart of compassion and the profound willingness of Cangxue, which can be seen Wu Weiye's admire to Master Cangxue.

In the second year autumn of Shunzhi, Wu Meicun sent a poem to Cangxue, and Cang Xue replied with "The Second Rhyme Sent to Wu Jungong":

国破家何在？山深犹未归。不堪加皂帽，宁可着缁衣。夜气含秋爽，空香湿露微。遥怜玄度梦，时傍月乌飞。(The country has been overturned, so where is my hometown? Entering the mountains, I have not yet returned. I can't stand wearing a black hat, preferring to wear the mafors. The atmosphere of the night contains the coolness of autumn, and the aroma in the air makes the dewdrops slightly wet. I am thinking about the dream of promoting Buddhism, always flying in the moonlight night along with crows.)

Cang Xue was a patriotic monk poem. After the subversion of Ming dynasty, he even joined the activities of rebelling Qing dynasty and rebuilding Ming dynasty. In the poem, the sentences of "不堪加皂帽，宁可着缁衣 (I can't stand wearing a black hat, preferring to wear the mafors)", categorically expressed his standpoint of not compromising the Qing dynasty after the national change. His other poem

"Meditation on the Past in Jinling" (the first one), "石头城下水淙淙，水绕江关合抱龙。六代萧条黄叶寺，五更风雨白门钟。凤凰已去台边树，燕子仍飞砚上峰。抔土当年谁敢盗，一朝伐尽孝陵松。(The river is rushing in the south of Nanjing, and the water is around the river passes presenting as folded, just like a dragon. Huangye Temple experienced six dynasties of depression, and Baimen Bell witnessed five changes of ups and downs. The phoenix has left the tree on the side of the table, and the swallows still fly to the rocky ledge. Who dared to steal a handful of soil in the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum? Now all the pine trees there have been cut down in a day.)"<sup>10</sup>, even poured his feelings of lament and sadness of the broken country. It is no wonder that he has been regarded as the "adherent among the monks" by Quan Zuwang.

The relationship between Wu Weiye and Cang Xue lasted for more than ten years, and there were many poetry exchanges. In the four years of Shunzhi (1647), the two men started the responsorial poems with the theme of chrysanthemums.

Chrysanthemum is one of the most common subjects in traditional Chinese poetry and has always been regarded as a symbol of being decorous and free from vulgarity. Wu Weiye borrowed the chrysanthemum to sigh that although he did not have the temperament of Tao Qian's charm and wit in the hermitage, he admired the tolerance and moral integrity of Bo Yi's never eating the food of Zhou dynasty. Cangxue's response was to express his love for the homeland by the quality of the chrysanthemum that bears the coldness and stands in the frost, and always shows the heart toward the sun.

In the thirteenth year of Shunzhi (1656), Master Cangxue was parinirvana. Wu Meicun was mourning unceasingly after hearing the news, and he wrote "Two Poems Wailing for Master Cangxue".

The first:

忆昔穿云到上方，飞象夹路笋舆忙。  
孤峰半榻霜颜白，清磬一声山叶黄。  
得道好穷诗正变，观心难遣世兴亡。  
汰公塔在今同传，无著天亲共影堂。

(I remember that when I came to the Buddhist temple through the clouds, there was a spring running along the path. The bamboo sedans came and went, seemed very busy. Seeing the solitary mountain peak, half of the bed is white hair. The bell rang and the leaves in the mountains turned yellow. You were an enlightened monk and liked to explore the positive changes of poetry. Observing the mind is difficult to dispel the grievances of the rise and fall of the world. The Taigong Tower is still there, and it is impossible to be listed in the ancestral temple with the families.)

The second:

说法中峰语句真，沧桑阅尽剩闲身。  
宗风实处都成教，慧业通来不碍尘。

<sup>10</sup> Complete Works of Wu Meicun, p813.

白社老应空世想，青山我自哭诗人。  
纵教落得江南梦，万树梅花孰比邻？

(The Buddha dharma sentences you preached in the main peak were pure, and you had read the vicissitudes of life, leaving only this body without official positions. Where the Buddha dharma has been implemented has been moralized, and the karmic connection of wisdom has been getting through without being blocked by the mundanity. Imaging the thousands of phenomena of the world in the seclusion, there is only me who am wailing for the poet in the green hills. Even if I could only get the dream of Jiangnan, who can be the neighbor of the tens of thousands of the plums?)

These two poems not only praised the infinite merits of Cangxue spending his life in preaching Buddhism, but also expressed Wu Weiye's inexhaustible memory of his friends, which are deeply touching.

### III. THE REASON WHY WU WEIYE FAILED TO BE CONVERTED TO BUDDHISM

According to the current historical data, Wu Weiye once had the thought of conversion, but he didn't fulfill throughout his life. The reason for this has caused people to speculate. According to the author, there are three main reasons why Wu Weiye failed to be converted to Buddhism:

First of all, Wu Weiye's emotions were delicate. Wu Weiye's good friend Wang Han became a monk in anger after the national change in the year of Jiashen, with the Buddhist name of Yuanyun. He had made an appointment with Wu Weiye to enter the mountain together, but Wu Weiye could not make it because he was worried about his family.<sup>11</sup> In the 16th year of Shunzhi, Yuanyun toured back from Lushan Mountain and once again advise Wu Weiye to join in the Buddhism. At this time, the poet refused Yuanyun again with the reason that his parents were old. The family's importance to Wu Weiye is an unobstructed view in Wu Weiye's poems: "最是伤心看稚女，一窗灯火照鸣机 (I feel sad when I see my young girl, and a window of light shines on the loom)", "十年顾妻子，心力都成虚 (In the past ten years, in order to take care of my wife and children, my mind has long been turned into nothing)". It can be inferred that the bond of family is an important reason why Wu Weiye can never convert to Buddhism. Zhao Erxun also defended him in the "History of Qing Dynasty: Literary World Biography": "(梅村) 性至孝，生际鼎革，有亲在，不能不依违顾恋，俯仰身世，每自伤也。(Wu Weiye is very filial. He was born in the turbulence times of the dynasties. There were his relatives, and he had to be restrained and he had to be sentimentally attached to his family. When thinking of his own experience, he was always in self-pity.)"<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Shi Duche, Supplement to Nanlitaing Poetry [M]. p95.

<sup>12</sup> "王翰国变后痛愤出家，受法于具德和尚，释名戒愿，字愿云。翰尝与伟业相约入山，伟业以牵恋骨肉未果。(Wang Han became a monk in anger after the national change in the year of Jiashen, with the Buddhist name of Yuanyun. Han had made an appointment with Wu Weiye to enter the mountain together, but Wu Weiye could not make it because he was worried about his family.)" Refers to: Wu Meicun Chronicle, p119.



In fact, Wu Weiye also cherished friendship very much, often moistening the ink brush to write for the friendship, using ink as a splash, and pouring his praise and concern for friends. In addition to the above-mentioned poems about Cangxue, Wu Weiye also wrote for Yang Tinglin: "Memorizing Yang Jibu in the Army", "Recalling Yang Jibu" (Yang Tinglin's style name was Jibu), "Reading Yang Sangjun's Poems of Grieves on Julu", and "Canjun of Linjiang". He wrote several poems for Bian Yujing: "Xijiangyue: Spring Thoughts", "Zuichunfeng: Spring Thoughts", "Linjiangxian: Meeting with the Old", "Singing for Listening to Female Taoist Bian Yujing Playing Zither", and "Sensing the Old on Qinhuai the River" (Four poems). For Liu Jingting, he wrote down "Chuliangsheng Xing", "Qinyuanchun: To Liu Jingting", "Biography of Liu Jingting", "Praise of Liu Jingting", "Requesting Preface for Liu Jingting". For Wu Zhiyan, he wrote "Crying for Zhiyan", "Sending Zhiyan to Shu area" "Writing a Poem for Zhiyan's Landscape Painting", "Biography of Zhiyan", "Writing to Zhiyan in Nan Zhong" and so on. It is really difficult for some people with such delicate feelings to break off the common thoughts and worship the Buddha.

Secondly, his character was indecisive. Wu Weiye wrote a song: "Song of Yuanyuan". He borrowed the story of Chen Yuanyuan and Wu Sangu's gathering and distracting to reflect the rise and fall of a generation, and smothered Wu Sangu's crime of going to the Qing court for personal honor and disgrace. The opening of the poem used the words of "恸哭六军皆缟素，冲冠一怒为红颜 (The whole army is crying and smearing with white mourning cloth, but who knows that the general's anger is for the sake of the beauty)" to sentence Wu Sangu. It is said that Wu Sangu once "赏重币求去此诗 (required to remove this verse with a huge sum of money)", and Wu Weiye refused with a firm hand. This story is legendary and reflects the poet's arrogance, but it is also doubtful. Because Wu Weiye was often uncertain when faced with important choices, there were few cases that he would be angry. If this story is true, it is only an example, showing a certain aspect of the poet's character rather than the mainstream.

In fact, indecision and cowardice accompanied with Wu Weiye in his whole life. When he was young, he had the gratitude of the emperor's help and encouragement and won the supreme favor: In the imperial examination in the 4th year of Chongzhen, he was praised by Emperor Chongzhen as "正大博雅，足式诡靡 (being sufficient to give a model to those who do not conform to the norm)"; then he was granted permission from the emperor to go home to complete the marriage; in 9th year of Chongzhen, he was only 28 years old and he was appointed as the main tester of Hubei and Hunan provincial examination; in the 10th year, he was ordered as a teacher of the East Palace; in the 11th year, when the crown prince was permitted to study out of his palace, he taught in the Wenhua Hall. Emperor Chongzhen was there and personally asked the cardinal principles of righteousness of "Book of Documents". During the national change in Jiashen year, Chongzheng died. He had thought about suicide, but was stopped by his family and failed. He even used the words of "我因亲在何敢死? (How dare I suicide

when my loved ones are still alive?)" to defend himself.<sup>13</sup> Despite his deep affection in the past Ming Dynasty, he was promoted to the new dynasty in the 11th year of Shunzhi (1654), and was promoted to Jijiu (an ancient Chinese official position) of the Imperial College. He resigned and returned to his hometown after three years because he could not bear the fierce political struggle of the court. Although his time of being an official in Qing Dynasty was short, it became a shame that he could not erase in his life, which made him strongly condemned by public opinion. He did not dare to die for his motherland like Chen Zilong, and he could not be as calm as Gong Dingzi to be an official in Qing Dynasty. He was in a dilemma and a source of misunderstanding, being caught in a dilemma. This kind of personality made him unable to resolutely abandon his family to hide in the mountains and forests and accompany with an oil lamp before the statue of Buddha. But this can not be left behind, and it can not be left behind. He couldn't give up many things and relations. For the rest of his life, he wandered between the world and the Buddhism.

Lastly, he was conceited that he was talented.

Everyone's evaluations were different on Wu Weiye insulting himself to be an official in Qing Dynasty. According to what his friend You Dong said in "Miscellaneous Sayings of Genzhai": "梅村文采风流，照映一时。及入本朝，迫于征辟，复有北山之移。予读其诗词乐府，故君之思，流连言外，临终一词云：‘脱屣妻孥非易事，竟一钱不值，何须说’其恨恨可知矣。(Wu Weiye's literary talents are enough to be glorious for a period of time. Entering the Qing Dynasty, he was forced to become an official. When I read his poems and Yuefu, I can feel that his thoughts on the Emperor Chongzhen are beyond words. He wrote such words at the end of his life: 'It is not a simple matter to abandon the wife and the children. I have nothing to say about this life. What else can I say.' We can know his regret.)"<sup>14</sup> it can be seen that his friend thought that he was completely forced by the situation and could be forgiven. Another view is diametrically opposed. Liu Shengmu said: "人生一有系念，必不能以节烈称。祭酒所系念有四：官也，母也，妻也，子也，宜其不克以身殉义，得享令名。后虽悔恨，屡见之诗词，然已无及矣！(If there are concerns in one's life, he must not be known in the name of being courageous and upright. Wu Meicun had four things to worry about: the official position, his mother, his wife, and his children, so it is a matter of course that he couldn't get the good name by martyrdom. Later, although his remorse often appeared in poetry, it was useless after all!)"<sup>15</sup> Liu Shengmu directly pointed out that Wu Weiye had too many thoughts in his life, especially lusting for the power.

<sup>13</sup> Zhao Erxun, etc. History of Qing Dynasty [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1977, p13326. (in Chinese)

<sup>14</sup> "五月初闻国变讯，号恸欲自缢，为家人所阻，自此旧疾弥剧，病店两月，几不自支。(At the beginning of May, Wu Weiye heard the news of the demise of the Ming Dynasty. He cried and wanted to be self-sufficient. But he was stopped by his family. Since then, the old disease has recurred and he had been ill for two months. He can hardly survive it.)" Refers to: Wu Meicun Chronicle [M]. p119.

<sup>15</sup> You Dong write, Li Zhaoxiang, Li Fubo orginazed, Miscellaneous Sayings of Genzhai [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1992, p99.

The author believes that the latter statement is closer to the truth.

Some commentators have pointed out that in Wu Weiye's works, "unconscionable self-consciousness" frequently flashes. In the cases of the "Meicun style" poems, the protagonists can be roughly divided into four categories, the royal family, the civil and military officials, the entertainers and singing-girls, and precious and odd things. After abstraction, it can be found that "self-realization corresponding to identity talent" is the common goal pursued by all the protagonists of "Meicun style" poems. This consciousness also runs through the legends made by Wu Weiye. His drama "Linchunge" tells the story of the Lingnan female military governor Xian in Chen Dynasty, who was enlightened by the imperial senior concubine Zhang Lihua and entered the mountain for monasticism after the extinction of Chen Dynasty. Xian's life goal was to make a contribution to the country, but the drastic changes in her country had shattered her ideals. When she left, she lamented: "I am a military governor of six states. It will be a pity for me to go home to be an old lady." The spilt-over emotion of being unwilling to give up is expressed by these words.

It is not difficult to see that Wu Weiye's great expression and praise of the protagonists in his works revealed his expectations and recognition of himself. As a young Chin-Shih, he had enjoyed the glory of the intellectuals' dreams and carried the high hopes of his predecessors. After Ming Dynasty being conquered, he lived in seclusion for ten years, but he was not really in despair like Chen Zhenhui and Huang Zongxi who were disappeared in the mountains and embraced the attitude of not cooperating with the Qing court. Instead, he frequently participated in social activities in order to expand his influence.

On March 3rd and 4th in the 10th year of Shunzhi, after Qian Qianyi's repeated adjuration, Wu Weiye came to Huqiu, Suzhou to preside over the conference. The participants were mainly the scholars of the two major social organizations of Shenjiao club and Tongsheng club. "Renxia Miscellaneous Copy" described the grand occasion at the time: "会日，以大船廿余，横亘中流。每舟置数十席，中列优倡，明烛如繁星。伶人数部，歌声竞发，达旦而止。散时如奔雷泻泉，远望山上，似天际明星，晶莹围绕。(On the day of the conference, more than 20 large ships were used on the water. There were dozens of banquets on each ship, and the in middle there was lined with performers. The candles were brilliant like stars. There were a few groups of actors or actresses, and the songs sounded up and down all night long. When the meeting was over, it was like rushing thunder and lightning and pouring spring. Looking far from the mountain, it seemed like the stars of the sky, sparkling and surrounding around.)"<sup>16</sup> At the conference, Wu Weiye was jointly promoted as the sovereign, and vigorously worked for the "和合之局 (integrated situation)" of the two communities and played a huge role. After the conference, he came to Nanjing in April of the same year to visit the ruins of the former dynasty. His inspirations on poems were like the gushing spring. In the first month, he

wrote more than 20 poems, which led everyone to response. His fellow Chen Hu said: "不见白门双桨急，一天诗思动江云。(People haven't seen the rushing boats in the city of Nanjing, in one day, his inspirations on poems will be able to alarm the clouds over the river.)"

During this period, the turbulent situation had gradually subsided, and the social situation had stabilized. The Qing Dynasty's ruling strategy began to shift from the initial military conquest to the hearts of the people. Some of the scholars who had already enjoyed the world's reputation had become the primary goals of the Qing Dynasty. Wu Weiye had long been famous in Southeast scholars. It was impossible of him to not know that he was the focus of the court. What's more, in the 9th year of Shunzhi, the governor-general Ma Guozhu, who governed Jiangnan and Jiangxi provinces, had already recommended him to the court. It can be said that he was likely to be decreed at any time. In this case, he still did not know to hide his tracks and often appeared. It must be suspected that he had the desire to be evaluated. There is no doubt that Liu Shengmu would say: "吴梅村祭酒伟业，才华绮丽，冠绝千古，及其出仕国朝后，人怜其才，每多怨词，盖不知当时情形也。祭酒因海宁陈相国之遗所荐起，时在顺治十五年。当时相国独操政柄，援引至卿相极易，未荐之先，必有往来书札，虽不传于世，意其必以卿相相待，故祭酒欣然应诏，早已道路相传，公卿饯送。(Wu Weiye was talented and rare in ancient and modern times. After he became an official in the Qing Dynasty, people loved his talents. They didn't know the situation at that time so when talking about him, there were a lot of forgiving words. Wu Meicun was famous because he was recommended by Chen Zhilin of Haining in the 15th year of Shunzhi. At that time, Chen Zhilin's power had covered the whole court, and it was easy for him to recommend Wu Weiye to the position of Qingxiang (a high official position equal to prime minister in feudal China). Before the recommendation, there must be correspondence between them. Although it had not been circulated in the world, but it could be inferred that Chen Zhilin must promise to give him the position of the Qingxiang, so Wu Weiye happily agreed to the decree. This matter has long been known to everyone, and the aristocracies came to Wu Weiye to see him off."<sup>17</sup> Being conceited of his own talents and wanting to get a corresponding position to make a difference were not only the important reasons that Wu Weiye was willing to serve two dynasties, but also the strong obstacles in his way to become a Buddhist.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Under the influence of the times and the impatience of the family atmosphere, Wu Weiye was fascinated with Buddhism, had a high degree of Buddhist studies, and wrote a lot of Zen poems with deep realm. He had a good relationship with eminent monks like Cangxue and Yuanyun. He also had the idea of becoming a monk, but eventually failed to implement. The main reasons were that his emotions were delicate, his character was indecisive, and he was conceited that he was talented. According to "Mr. Wu

<sup>16</sup> Liu Shengmu, *Qing Dynasty Historical Materials Series · Essays of Changchuzhai* [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1998, p160.

<sup>17</sup> Cheng Muheng, *Annotation of Mr. Wu Meicun's Chronological Poetry*, from *Wu Weiye: Complete Works of Wu Meicun · Appendices* [M]. p1383.

Meicun's Brief Biographical Sketch", Wu Weiye had such a passage in his will: "吾死后，敛以僧装，葬吾于邓尉、灵岩附近，墓前立一圆石，题曰：‘诗人吴梅村之墓’，勿作祠堂，勿乞铭于人。(After I died, lay my body in the coffin in monk's clothes, and burry me at a place near Dengwei and Lingyan. Set up around stone in front of the tomb with the words: 'Tomb of the Poet Wu Meicun'. Don't build the temple, and don't ask others for the epitaph.)"<sup>18</sup> Being hesitant when alive and laying in tomb with the mafors, it not only made Wu Weiye be able to relieve himself from the embarrassment of being as a "two-sided person" after his death, but also gave himself a denouement of his love of Zen Buddhism for decades. His special experience was also a typical expression of the helplessness of the scholar-officials during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

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<sup>18</sup> Liu Shengmu, Qing Dynasty Historical Materials Series ·Essays of Changchuzhai [M]. p160.