ABSTRACT

Ou-Yang Hsiu (欧阳修 A.D. 1007-1027) was an eminent official, a literary giant and a historian of the Sung Dynasty. He played an important role in the literary reform movement of Northern Sung period and brought out a whole set of new literary theories. This together with his abundant creative writing had a great influence on the contemporary literary style of Sung period.

The main aim of the present study is to identify his prose and poetry theories which were expounded, often in a bits-and-pieces manner in his writings and to present them in a more systematic and composite form. This exercise also attempts to seek evidence through analysing Ou-Yang Hsiu's literary works that he did write according to what he preached in his literary theories.

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which states the purpose and scope of the study. Chapter two examines the historical background leading to the development of Ou-Yang's literary theories and analyses the contents of such theories. The following three chapters discuss the distinctive features of Ou-Yang's prose, shi (诗) and ci (词) respectively. The last chapter is the conclusion which highlights several aspects to prove
that Ou-Yang practised what he preached in his literary theories. Besides, this chapter also affirms his achievement and contribution to the world of literature during the Sung Dynasty.