ABSTRACT

Bao Zhao (鲍照 414?-466 AD), a literati in the Liu Song (刘宋) Dynasty, was suppressed by powerful clans and autocratic rulers due to his humble background. As such, his poems often reflect a strong sense of dejection. This academic exercise attempts to explore the artistic style and themes of Bao Zhao's poems and aims to establish their literary value.

This dissertation consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 examines and discusses the five different aspects and characteristics of the theme of dejection, with reference to the political scenario of the Liu Song Dynasty. Chapter 2 evaluates Bao Zhao's literary style of writing, paying particular attention to the stylistic appraisal made by Zhong Rong (钟嵘) and Du Fu (杜甫). Chapter 3 explores the literary contributions of Bao Zhao's courtly style poems and border poems, followed by a summary of findings.

This dissertation shows that Bao Zhao's poems though often considered abstruse and unrefined, have great literary significance. These poems were truthful reflection of the reality and emotions of the commoners, and thus were a breakthrough in traditional poetry which reflected solely the feelings of individuals.

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