ABSTRACT

This study aims at examining the important contributions made by Xie Zhen (谢榛 1495-1575) in the field of Chinese literary criticism. The findings prove that a probe into Shi Hua does provide us with an indepth understanding and a more rounded picture of Xie's poetic theory. Hence, Shi Hua is an essential source of material which should not be ignored in the study of Chinese literary criticism.

The discussion in this exercise focuses primarily on Xie Zhen's Si Ming Shi Hua (四溟诗话) As this study focuses on the analysis of the poetic theory of Xie Zhen, only those relevant aspects which reflect Xie's view on poetry are included. These include the viewpoint from which he assesses the poems and comments given to both the poets and their work.

The comments are often disorganised, fragmented and unsystematic in Si Ming Shi Hua. This may be traced to the fact that analysis of the poetic theory of critics is, by and large, a difficult task. It is in this respect that the author attempts to piece together the scattered comments and views. Every effort is made by the author, which includes the methods of inductive and deductive reasoning, to reconstruct the theoretical framework of Xie Zhen's poetic criticism.
The findings prove that a probe into a Shi Hua does provide us with an indepth understanding and a more rounded picture of Xie's poetic theory. Hence, Shi Hua is an essential source of material which should not be ignored in the study of Chinese literary criticism.

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