ABSTRACT

Liu Zong-yuan (柳宗元, AD 773-819) was one of the most prominent, unconventional and influential poets of the Mid-Tang Dynasty. As most studies of Liu Zong-yuan concentrated on his classical prose, landscape records or philosophical thoughts, his landscape poems had never been thoroughly and systematically analysed. Hence the objective of this academic exercise is to consider the value of his landscape poems and help to establish his position in this literary genre.

This study begins with an introductory chapter which defines landscape poem and provides a brief literary background of landscape poetry. The objective and approach of the study are also highlighted. Chapter two and three form the main body of this study, concentrating on Liu Zong-yuan's landscape poems themselves, Chapter three analyses the thematic significance in four aspects: (1) Sorrows of banishment; (2) longing for home and friends; (3) yearning for reclusion; (4) the pleasures of being carefree. Chapter four explores the artistic techniques of his landscape poems: the general structure, depiction of Landscape and expression of emotions.

The fourth chapter critically evaluates Liu Zong-yuan's landscape poetry and the concluding chapter summaries and establishes the values of the contribution to this poetic genre.