Abstract

Xu Zhimo is a highly-regarded figure in the history of Modern Chinese Literature. Having been educated in the West, his literary works display a most spectacular blend of both Eastern and Western literary thoughts and influences. He is especially fondly remembered for his poetry and prose. Till date, the studies of his works have focused much on these two genres. In comparison, studies on his fiction have been quite limited.

Xu Zhimo has written 16 pieces of fiction. Though modest in number, these novels should not be neglected. Not only are these works a representation of his thoughts and real-life experience, they also serve as his contribution to the diversity of Modern Chinese Fiction. Unlike the conventional novels, Xu Zhimo emphasises a display of emotions in his fiction. As such, the structure of these works appears incoherent and the ending does seem to be incomplete at times.

Through a study of his fiction, this thesis attempts to extend the studies on Xu Zhimo to a level beyond his romance and poetry. The focus of this thesis lies on the presentation of "mood" being a theme in his fiction. Chapter 1 is an introduction to this study. Chapter 3 which is essentially the crux of this study seeks to analyse the presentation of four types of moods in his fiction. Before zooming into this, Chapter 2 presents some sketches of his life experience and shows how these events have helped to shape his thoughts and the underlying factors behind the moods reflected. Chapter 4 aims to discuss the different techniques used in presenting these moods and Chapter 5 serves as a round-up of this study.

It is a unanimous fact that the sudden demise of Xu Zhimo has deprived Modern Chinese Literature of a most zealous promoter and experimenter. Today, Xu Zhimo's rank among the Modern Chinese Poets is undoubtedly a high one. However, it would be very sad if his attempts at writing novels were to be forgotten. Through a study of Xu Zhimo's fiction, it is hoped that readers can fully appreciate the one side of this writer that has not been presented too readily.