ABSTRACT

Exile poems are a great tradition of Chinese classical poetry. They have been written by many poets. Shen Quan-qi (沈佺期) is one of them. However, his exile poems have never been examined in depth, as many studies to date have only focused their attention on his contributions to the perfection of regulated verse (律诗) and his court poems (宫廷诗).

This dissertation therefore aims to critically analyse Shen's exile poems in detail. First, a brief history of exile poems will be provided, highlighting the similarities and differences between Shen Quan-qi and prominent figures in this type of poetry. Then, the themes of Shen's poems are examined. This is followed by an exploration of the artistry of the poems.

Besides views from published literature on Shen Quan-qi and exile poems, personal interpretation is used for the analysis. The findings reveal that Shen Quan-qi, although influenced by Qu Yuan and Jia Yi, has his own characteristics. His exile poems express the state of mind of an ordinary official under the bureaucratic system and are more touching than his court poems. His style of writing was adopted by later poets. Thus, his exile poems should hold a significant place in the Early T'ang period.