Summary

Being one of the poets in Early T'ang, Wang-Ji was known as a drunkard and a recluse more than a poet. His work was not in the mainstream of the Early T'ang poetic tradition. His poems emphasize on private experiences and emotional feelings. As a result, Wang-Ji's poetry has long been neglected by researchers.

This six-chapter thesis attempts to offer a comprehensive and critical analysis of Wang-Ji's poetry.

As an introduction, Chapter One explains why Wang-Ji is picked for study and outlines the scope and approach of the thesis.

In order to obtain a thorough understanding of Wang-Ji's poetry, Chapter Two offers two parts of study: part one provides a sketch of the Early T'ang poetic tradition and part two portrays the life of Wang-Ji. It considers the impact of Wang's time on his life and his poetry.

Chapter Three and Four discuss the intrinsic qualities of Wang-Ji's poetry. Chapter Three explores the theme and the "world" in Wang's poetry as reflection of his earthy experiences and personal emotion. It probes into three main aspects: (i) Wang's thoughts of pursuing scholarly honour and official
rank, (ii) the happiness in his reclusive life and (iii) the feeling of loneliness in life.

Chapter Four analyses the artistic techniques of Wang-Ji’s poetry. The analysis concentrates on three types of poetic skills that Wang-Ji had frequently adopted: (i) the creation of images, (ii) the employment of allusions and (iii) the construction of contrasts.

As an evaluation, Chapter Five examines Wang-Ji’s poetry in synchronic as well as diachronic perspective. It consists of two sections: (i) a thorough analysis of existing assessment of Wang-Ji’s poetry and (ii) an examination of the importance of Wang-Ji as a poet in the development of Chinese classical poetry.

Chapter Six is a concluding chapter that summarises the finding of this thesis.

This study proves that the poetic achievement of Wang-Ji is far greater than that accorded to him by previous scholars. In his works, Wang-Ji expresses the complex feelings which seldom appear in the court poetry. His poetry also reflects some characteristic qualities of “T’ang poetry”. Although he cannot be considered as a pioneer poet in the development of “T’ang poetry”, there are indication that he is an important link between the Early T’ang poetry and the High T’ang poetry.