Abstract

Partings were very important social events to literati of the Southern Dynasties. Besides, literati realised that parting was an inevitable element in life. Thus the writing of farewell poetry became very popular during the Southern Dynasties. The number of farewell poems written were unprecedentedly enormous and these had great influence on Farewell Poetry of the Tang Dynasty.

This dissertation aims to examine the characteristics of Farewell Poetry of the Southern Dynasties, the influence of literary theories of the Southern Dynasties on farewell poetry, and to explore the relation between life-consciousness of literati in Medieval China(中古文人的生命意识) and the writing of farewell poetry during the Southern Dynasties. Lastly, it also studies the influence of Farewell Poetry of the Southern Dynasties on the writing of farewell poetry in the Tang Dynasty.

Very often, Farewell Poetry of the Southern Dynasties was written at parting banquets(饯别集宴), accompanied with the playing of Ch'in Music(琴曲). Also, farewell poems written by different poets with the same title were very common. In addition, Literary Revolution of the Yongming Era(永明新变) had caused poets to adopt the writing of regulated verses in farewell poetry and some of the farewell poems were deliberately written to manifest courtly glamour. Besides, the time and space elements manifest in most farewell poetry of the southern dynasties symbolised the inevitable constant change in life caused by parting and thus evoked a gloomy sentiment in most farewell poetry of the southern dynasties. This style of writing became the model for future farewell poetry writing and had great influence on Farewell Poetry of the Tang Dynasty.