

# ABSTRACT

The poem Jiang Xue (Snow in the River) is always the first on my list whenever I recall any poetic writings on landscape written by the Chinese literati Liu Zhongyuan (柳宗元) of the Tang Dynasty. Jiang Xue is a popular Chinese poem well-received by many Chinese and could easily be recited by children. Its five-character quadruplet structure looks simple but carries much deep thoughts and meanings (Yi 意) which allows free associations and wanderings in the state (境) of spaces and landscape plotted by each word. As we wander and mediate in the poetic space, our imagination could go unconstrained in the landscape of greens and creeks created. It is a space for continuous imagination, a space for emotions and perceptions, a space for tunes and hues, a space to appreciate the beauty of Chinese characters. When we read his poems, we will be drawn into the feelings of the poet and felt the ups and downs, we may enter into the trance of “forgetting the subject and the object”.

This is an attempt to sift the essence of the literary state(poetics)of Chinese literature by analysing the poetic works of Liu Zhongyuan in various stages of his life which had reflected the marriage of his internal and external states. To make way for different perspectives, the ideas of Liu’ s contemporary Wang Changling (王昌齡) — another Chinese literati - on ‘the state of objects’ (物境)and the state of mind and the heart (意境) in his Si Ge (the rules of poems詩格) and the aesthetics features of state of the mind and the heart mentioned in the Si Pin the quality of poems (詩品) by Si Kongtu (司空圖) will be adopted in order to investigate the close relationship between the heart (mind 心) and the state(poetic space 境),i.e.the pursuit of the state of the objects(物境之追求). I will then proceed to the making and discovery of ‘ the state of the heart and mind’ (the experience) and the deep meaning of the state of dissolving the subject -I the state of forgetting the subject and the object). It is through this re-construction and analysis of the poetic works of Liu Zhongyuan that the essence of the state of the mind and heart(意境)in Chinese literature could be further experienced through different perspectives.