ABSTRACT

The May-Fourth Movement was a time when there emerged a large number of great thinkers, philosophers, literati. Most of them, such as the likes of *Lu Xun* (鲁 迅), *Chen Duxiu* ( 陈 独 秀), *Hu Shi* ( 胡 适), had received considerable amount of academic attention for the past seventy years. However, to date, *Wu Yu* ( 吴 虞), who was deemed as “an old hero who single-handedly attacked the Confucian ethics” by *Hu Shi*, was never given much attention which he deserved.

This dissertation aims to fill in the gap, which left *Wu Yu* a largely forgotten figure in the Chinese history, with a more detailed and extensive study of the thoughts of this maverick. The four main aspects of *Wu Yu* which this thesis aims to highlight are: his biography, his anti-Confucian advocations, the characteristics and effect of such advocations and lastly, its limitations. In addition, this study also furnishes a comprehensive survey of the social and political conditions of China from the 1910s to the 1920s. This provides a background for a better understanding of the rise of *Wu Yu*.

This study reveals that there are a number of limitations in *Wu Yu*’s thoughts. Great contradictions also exist between his personal life and his anti-Confucian remarks. Nevertheless, having provided a new perspective of tackling the problems of Confucian ethics, *Wu Yu* undoubtedly remains a significant figure in the era of the May-Fourth Movement.