ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the peculiar and tortuous life of WEN YI DUO ( 闻一多 ), and his contributions to the studies of The Songs of The South (CHU CI) 《楚辞》and QU YUAN ( 屈原 ). It is hoped that the vigour of his meticulous scholarship will inspire others to study literature with conscientiousness and seriousness of attitude. The academic exercise is divided into two sections.

Section one concentrates on the life of WEN YI DUO and it has four chapters. This section focuses on the description of WEN's life time and the turbulent historical events which he had experienced. Furthermore, his cultural background, educational conditions, his stay in America for advanced studies, his official career, and his relationship with QU YUAN will also be explored. The latter part of this section also illustrates the circumstances leading to his drastic change from a poet-cum-scholar to an honest patriot.

Section two also consists of four chapters. It discusses the central theme in WEN's study of CHU CI and illustrates with examples the difficulties and factors affecting research work in ancient classics. It also evaluates the contributions WEN has made towards the study of CHU CI.

The study concludes with a summary of the arguments in the various chapters and compare the personalities of WEN YU DUO and QU YUAN, thereby confirming their respective status in the history of Chinese literature.