ABSTRACT

Bing Xin (冰心) (pseud. of Xie Wanying, 1900-1999) from Fujian was one of the most well known women writers in modern Chinese literature. Her writing expresses true emotion and is full of poetic feelings. The psychologies of Chinese women, mother-love, the charming naivete of children, the scenery of the seaside are all expressed through her pen. The representative characters and superior female souls she created in her works have already left an indelible impression on the minds of tens of thousands of readers. Her death in February 1999 came as a loss to many of her fans and family.

Starting from 1919 to 1988, Bing Xin has created a total of seventy-six short stories. Her stories covered different time frame and political turbulence such as the May-fourth student movement, civil wars between the communist and nationalists, Japanese Occupation, the big leap, Cultural Revolution etc. Thus, the writing of this thesis hopes to locate what are the common themes reflected in her short stories in the hope that it will lead to a better understanding of her thoughts.

Chapter One of this thesis deals with the aims and scope of the study. Chapter Two gives a brief description of Bing Xin's history from 1900 - 1999. The following three chapters' deal with the themes reflected in her works, divided into three periods. Starting from i) 1919-1930; ii) 1931-1950; and iii) 1951-1988. Chapter Six examines Bing Xin's artistic style. Chapter Seven, the concluding chapter, provides a round up of the earlier discussion.

The studies of the themes in Bing Xin's short stories give an insight into the Modern Chinese society in different periods of China's history and provide a glimpse of the social problems prevailing at that time.