ABSTRACT

This academic exercise focuses on Hu-Shi's literary thought. Hu's greatest contribution to contemporary Chinese literature is the advocacy of the vernacular style of writing. In his *On the Historio-Evolutionary Conception of Literature* (《历史的文学观念论》), Hu analysed the trend of traditional and contemporary literary development using the historical evolutionary conception and reached the conclusion that "the Bai-Hua as the Orthodox". With this he concluded that the literary revolution was inevitable. Hu had established the "National Literature" with the aim of reforming Chinese literature, in actuality he had the more important ideology of making Chinese society democratic.

Hu's most important literary creation is his poetry anthology *A Book of Experiments* (《尝试集》). To put into practice his literary theories, he used solely the vernacular in this collection and it represents the first vernacular poetry anthology in China.

This exercise consists of seven chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter which provides the rationale for the study of Hu's literary thought and also a brief description of the approach to the topic. Chapter two gives an account of Hu's life and traces the origin of his literary thought. Chapter three expounds on Hu's activities in the literary revolution. It also describes his role in this movement. Chapter four is sub-divided into four sections and discusses his innovation and views on the form and content of traditional and modern literature. It also elaborates on Hu's conception of literary evolution. Chapter five analyses Hu's works to verify if he had practised his literary theories. Chapter six is a critical evaluation of Hu's thought and finally provides a summary of the study.

From this exercise, we can conclude that though Hu-Shi was not strictly a writer, he has had a penetrating understanding of Chinese literature. His proposals have formed an indispensable link in Chinese literary theories. He thus deserves an affirmative appraisal from us.