ABSRACT

Zhuang Zi (庄子) (approximately 369 B.C. — 286 B.C) and Yan Fu (严复) (1854 — 1921) were two important philosophers and thinkers of China, where their philosophical achievements had injected both great influences to China’s philosophical culture and created a new arena in modern Chinese philosophy respectively.

This thesis is on the analytical and comparative study Zhuang Zi and Yan Fu’s perspectives on the notion of “Freedom”. It will evaluate Zhuang Zi and Yan Fu’s historical position and philosophical preferences in relation to their views on “Freedom”.

The data of this study was based on the original text—Zhuang Zi《庄子》 and Yan Fu’s Qun Ji Quan Jie Lun《群己权界论》which he had translated from the original text of John Stuart Mill’s On Liberty. In addition to the raw sources, other relevant materials were also being used.

This study made the following observations:

1. Social-Historical background of Zhuang Zi and Yan Fu had resulted in vast differences in their perspectives and pursuit of “Freedom”.

2. Besides noting the differences, similarities were discovered in Zhuang Zi and Yan Fu’s pursuit of “Freedom” as a political ideology.

3. The pros and cons, regarding to Zhuang Zi and Yan Fu’s
interpretations of “Freedom” in respect to both individual and social context.