ABSTRACT

Wang Anyi (1955—) has been regarded as one of the most important woman writers in modern China. This thesis discusses her representative works, fiction about educated youth, and offers criticisms from a feminist perspective. It aims to explore some new ideas that are hidden in her fiction about educated youth. Having experienced both physically and spiritually the hard life in the poverty-stricken countryside, and having held in mind a strong desire for depicting the female crowds, Wang Anyi successfully wrote stories about educated youth, which strikingly display not only her unmatched literary style but also her particular perspective in observing the world.

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter One is an introduction: the subject, the purpose and the method involved in this study. A detailed analysis of Wang Anyi’s fiction about the educated youth is represented in next four chapters. The chapter two analyses her writing during 1978—1980, which demonstrates the natural characteristics of woman, and her work in 1981’s, which reveals more than slightly the evidence of bewilderment in her writings. However, in the second period, the heroine in her story has been remolded into the character with “masculinity” deliberately in order to cover up her real sex identity. Chapter Three shows her deep concern for self-development and her doubts about the traditional value system in the male world. The meditation of the relationship between two sexes, which was presented in her fiction, is analyzed in chapter four, where the position of the woman in such relationship was emphasized as well as the self-identification of the female. Chapter Five presents an analysis of the doubt of the traditional androcentrism for the woman writer, which shows that the woman writer strongly criticizes the distortedness of images of female figures and the false descriptions about the relationship between the two sexes in the works of man writers. The last chapter is the summary of this dissertation.

This thesis employs the criticizing method of feminism in analyzing Wang Anyi’s fiction about educated youth. It is expected to reveal “the weaker sex” — the living status of the feminine world through the eyes of a famous female writer in contemporary China.