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Western Worship in Yu Dafu's Novels

—Representation of Women Characters

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Yu Dafu (1896–1945) is one of the representative writers in modern Chinese literature. He studied in Japan from 1913 to 1922, a stay which coincided with the period after the Meiji Restoration. Concurrently, Western thought, culture, and literature had been introduced and proliferated in Japan. Japanese culture had a significant impact on him, and this is strongly reflected in his novels. Through the special backdrop of the Taisho Era, Yu was able to experience the Western way of thinking while in Japan. In addition, he contemplated on Western thought that is reflected in his novels. After returning home, he led the literary modernization in his country. Accordingly, it is necessary to analyze the Western influence on his novels in order to understand not only his works but also modern Chinese literature and its development.

This paper consists of seven chapters: an introductory chapter, five main chapters, and a concluding chapter. In the introduction, the paper's purpose is stated, and previous studies related to the influence of Western literature and female images in Yu's novels are discussed. In *Chenlun*, the first chapter explores Yu's worship of Western thought and literature through the protagonist's suicide. The second chapter focuses on the Western languages that are frequently used in Yu's novels and discusses his contribution to stylistics in Chinese literature. The third chapter focuses on physical descriptions of the women characters in Yu's novels, identifying how his Western worship is reflected through his characterization of women. The fourth chapter analyzes and compares physical representations of women by other members of the Creation Society (Zhang Ziping, Guo Moruo, Cheng Fangwu, and Tao Jingsun) formed in June 1921 by other members and included Yu as well. These members studied in Japan simultaneously with Yu. By the analysis and comparison in this chapter, it clarified that Yu's depiction of women's bodies is unique. In the fifth chapter, the researcher investigates Yu's views on the image of the "Mother." Being influenced by

Western literature, he depicts the mother figure in a negative light. In the final chapter, a conclusion and future challenges are presented, and these have been mentioned below.

Though Yu was greatly influenced by Western literature, he took care not to compromise his own distinctive literary style while leading the New Chinese Literature Movement. He was inspired by Western literature and Western thought, and used them to evoke heightened sympathy toward his protagonists thereby enhancing the sentimentality in his novels. In future studies, it is necessary to compare Yu's works with works by writers who studied and did not study in Western countries, to compare and contrast the western influence in modern Chinese literature.