

DOCTORAL THESIS

A critical study on wenyi and wenyi film in republican China

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Abstract

Wenyi film has long been a research focus of Chinese film studies since the 1980s. An abundance of scholars has been writing on the topic of *wenyi* film, defining its generic nature as “literature and art film” or film adaptation of great literature, or understanding it in relation to themes of love and human relationships. Many scholars have explored the role of *wenyi* films in post-war Hong Kong and Taiwan cinemas. Yet, in terms of Republican Chinese cinema, only brief accounts on some *wenyi* directors or works can be found.

This dissertation aims to answer the question of “what is *wenyi* film?” by studying materials from the 1910s to the 1940s. *Wenyi* film as a discursive notion was never static in that period of time and the notion intersects with different discourses and practices. By investigating the interaction between the notion and those discourses and practices, this dissertation aims to present a taxonomy of *wenyi* film as grouped under the themes of romance, family, national character, heroism and the people.

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