Abstract

Xu Dishan (1894-1941) was a writer in the May Fourth era. His works mainly consist of short stories and writings in prose. He also wrote a few poems, plays and children stories. Besides creative writing, he also did research on Chinese religions. As a creative writer, Xu was widely recognized in his days, however, up until today there are not many studies on him. This thesis will focus its discussion on his short stories, with occasional reference to his prose writings and poems as well.

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces Xu Dishan as a creative writer and current studies on him as well as the design of the thesis. Chapter 2 briefly outlines Xu Dishan’s life and the historical circumstances around it, and a two-stage periodisation of Xu’s creative writings with a table of summaries. Chapter 3 analyses the early stage of Xu’s works while Chapter 4 analyses the later stage, with both probing the shifting concerns in Xu’s works and the Christian humanism that undergirded his entire writing career. Chapter 5 is a conclusion to the argument presented in the thesis.