ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to provide an exploratory insight into the works of Zhang Jinyan, a Singapore-Malayan writer in the late twenties.

Zhang Jinyan ( 张金燕, 1902 - 1980) was one of the most prominent writers in the early Singapore-Malayan Modern Chinese Literary World. He played an important role in introducing local "colours" into the literary works of local writers. His emphasis on local consciousness and flavour was unusually significant among Singapore-Malayan writers in the twenties.

This dissertation is a comprehensive study of Zhang Jinyan's collection of literary works, focusing on the themes and artistry of his works, which can be classified into four categories, namely fiction, poetry, prose and essays.

Materials for this dissertation was collected from 3 sources: published texts, magazines and newspapers. These data are mainly retrieved from the library collections of the National University of Singapore.

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. The introductory chapter consists of a brief description of Zhang Jinyan's literary works and the reasons for selecting his works for analysis. Chapter Two is an account of his life and literary activities. The following three chapters are in depth analysis of his literary works. The final chapter sums up the entire exercise with an overall assessment of his works.
The findings show that Zhang Jinyan’s literary works arose from his love for “Nanyang” (南洋), as epitomised in his many works which reflected the society he lived in.