

MASTER'S THESIS

Toward a schizo-natural writing: exploring the production of nature in Dung Kai-Cheung's Natural histories trilogy

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Abstract

How should nature be written? Writing has long been a way for people to understand nature. Still, we have come to an age that we need to reconceptualize our relation with nature. Nature can no longer be regarded as a passive stage upon which human beings act. How should we understand nature so that nature is made inanimate? I propose that the solution, known as “Schizo-Natural Writing,” can be found in Dung Kai-cheung’s *Natural Histories Trilogy*.

Hong Kong is commonly seen as a city. Correspondingly, when it comes to Hong Kong literature, the term appears frequently will be “city writing”. It is not surprising, given that Hong Kong has always been recognised as a highly-developed city, one of the most densely populated cities in the world. Famous literary works in Hong Kong like Xi Xi’s *My City* (西西，我城), *A Dictionary of Two Cities* co-written by Hon Lai Chu and Dorothy Tse Hiu Hong (韓麗珠、謝曉虹，雙城辭典), Wong Bik Wan’s *The City of Lost* (黃碧雲，失城), just to name some. This phenomenon is closely related to the historical background of Hong Kong. According to Chan (2009), the connection between Hong Kong literature and its cityscape can be dated back to 1950s. Though it does not mean that there are no non-urban writings, those were not in the mainstream.

However, in 2000s one of the most influential local writers, Dung Kai Cheung (1967-), has begun his *Natural Histories Trilogy*. He is the director in The House of Hong Kong Literature, a folk organisation of local literature. His publication includes, *Androgyny: Evolution of a Non-existent Species* (1996), a story about a female scientist who went into the wild and sought a nonexistent species, named as androgyny and *Atlas: The Archaeology of an Imaginary City* (1997), an imaginary archaeology in the future Hong Kong, which has been translated into English. During 2005 to 2010, he published *the Natural Histories*

Trilogy, including firstly, *the History of the Adventures of Vivi and Vera* (2018, which titled in Chinese, 天工開物 · 栩栩如真), secondly, *the Histories of Time: The Light of Nga Chi* (2007, 時間繁史 · 啞瓷之光) and thirdly, *on the Origin of Species: The Rebirth of Bui Bui - The Age of Apprenticeship* (2010, 物種源始 · 貝貝重生之學習年代).

In the trilogy, Dung Kai-cheung, echoing Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "nature=industry", highlighted the productivity of nature, or the naturing of nature. As such, he no longer writes nature. He writes schizo-naturally. I further adopted the term "ecology", which on the one hand pointed out the close relation between the item produced during the schizo-natural writing; on the other hand, echoed Guattari's *the Three Ecology*. In this thesis, there are four parts investigating four types of ecology: mental ecology, social ecology, environmental ecology and spatiotemporal ecology.

Through examining the trilogy, love, being standing outside oneself, is advocated to be the way out of the fragmented world.

Keywords: Dung Kai-cheung, the Natural Histories Trilogy, nature writing, Gilles Deleuze, Ecology

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