

Title of Thesis: The Enlightenment and Environmental Discontent in Contemporary Anglophone Novels Total pages: 184

Key words: Ecocriticism, postcolonialism, animal studies, ecofeminism, science-fiction

Name of Institute: Department of English, Tamkang University

Graduate date: June 2018 Degree conferred: Doctor of Philosophy

Name of student: Iain Kelsall Brown Advisor: Dr. Iris Ralph
包俊傑 羅艾琳 博士

Abstract

In this dissertation, I provide ecocritical readings of a range of contemporary Anglophone novels. These novels highlight unfortunate legacies of the Enlightenment in our world today. I examine each of the novels from a different lens to see how the text responds to an ecocritical perspective. Chapter One deals with three novels. The first novel, Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, presents a bleak anti-Enlightenment vision of the imperial and ecological conquest of the American West. The second novel in Chapter One is Tim Winton's *Shallows*, which is mainly discussed in contrast with Giorgio Agamben's ideas about the animal and what Agamben calls the anthropological machine. The final novel of Chapter One is Tim Winton's *Breath*: the characters in this novel present different possibilities for the relationship between the human and the material world. Chapter Two discusses two novels by Linda Hogan, *Solar Storms* and *People of the Whale*, from an ecofeminist

perspective. Both novels have characters attempting to move on from trauma caused by Enlightenment traditions, although not all characters succeed in that quest. Chapter Three focuses on Nadeem Aslam's novel *Maps for Lost Lovers*, and examines how that novel deals with interactions between space, place, and climate change for a Pakistani diaspora community in northern England. Chapter Four looks at Paolo Bacigalupi's novel *The Windup Girl* in two main ways. First, the novel demonstrates how climate change is upending the environment and thereby destroying the "globalized" ecological niche inhabited by many of us today. Second, *The Windup Girl* presents interesting ideas about posthumanism in the literal sense of "after the human"—Enlightenment humanism is a dead end, and it is unclear if there is a path forward for humans. Chapter Five concludes the paper with two science-fiction novels, Iain M. Banks's *The Hydrogen Sonata* and Charles Stross's *Accelerando*. This chapter focuses on ecocritical ways of looking at the singularity, posthumanism, and our relationship with nonhuman animals, and how ideas of the singularity upend traditional hierarchies of human and nonhuman animal life—with the added complication of artificial intelligence presenting a new form of life, perhaps placing itself above the human in those hierarchies.

According to "TKU Personal Information Management Policy Declaration", the personal information collected on this form is limited to this application only. This form will be destroyed directly over the deadline of reservations.

表單編號: ATRX-Q03-001-FM031-02