

READING CORPOREALITY IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE ERA

A Comparative Study of Seamus Heaney's and Hua Hai's Ecological Poetry

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Abstract

Few critics have paid serious attention to the corporeality depicted in the Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney's climate change poetry, despite the fact that the body has become an increasingly crucial topic in the climate change era. In a situation similar to Heaney's, the Chinese ecopoet Hua Hai has stressed the mutual transformations between different forms of bodies in his works, but there have been few studies on Hua's ideas of the body. These ideas are closely related to Confucianism and Daoism in particular. This article, referencing corporeal theories in the West and the East, is a comparative reading of Heaney's and Hua's ecological poetry against the backdrop of climate change. By representing various bodies, be they human or nonhuman, as interconnected and interdependent in different poetic ways, both poets provide fresh insights into the idea of corporeality, which is important to address in relation to the ongoing climate crises.

Keywords

animal suffering, affect, material agency, embodied experience, *qi*

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The issue of corporeality has become increasingly crucial in the current climate change era, and perhaps nowhere is this more salient than in the works of Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney and Chinese ecopoet Hua Hai,¹ both of whom deal with climate change and relevant ecological disasters through corporeal representations. Drawing on corporeal theories of the West and the East, this article compares the ecological poetry of Heaney and Hua by focusing on representations of different bodies and their interconnections. A comparative reading of Heaney's and Hua's poetic works is significant, as the different embodied experiences in their different cultural contexts provide fresh insights into the idea of corporeality that are instrumental in addressing the current climate crises.

In the West, there has been a lot of theorizing about the body from the lenses of New Materialism, critical feminism, and affective ecocriticism, which contribute a lot to ecocritical theories and practices alike. Scholars such as Donna Haraway, Cary Wolfe, and Rosi Braidotti have put forward posthuman theories that question ontological differences across species and advocate bodily engagement in nature. Sherryl Vint asserts that it is "only by remaining faithful to the material context in which we and other subjects are embedded that we can begin to negotiate a collective bodily ethics" (188). New Materialists have attempted to recuperate the legitimacy of bodies by stressing the co-constitutive materiality between human corporeality and nonhuman natures (Alaimo and Hekman 9). These new Western corporeal theories about material entanglement with nature have greatly disrupted the entrenched body-mind dualism. However, the contributions these new Western theories can make to address the current climate change remain inadequately explored. On the other hand, few scholars have seriously examined traditional Chinese corporeal ideas, which clearly antedate their Western counterparts. Nor has there been sufficient analysis of the role that these ancient Chinese legacies can play in grappling with environmental issues. Heaney and Hua, both deeply concerned about environmental degradation, reveal to us in their works how to reconnect our bodies to nature, a question that is of great significance in this climate change era.

Heaney's climate change poems have foregrounded embodied experiences and the visceral responses to environmental problems, and we can see this clearly in "Höfn" and "On the Spot," included in his 2006's collection *District and Circle*. "Höfn" describes a massive glacier melting as the poet recounts his journey to Iceland. This poem connects different bodies that are all victims of climate change. The "three-tongued" melting glacier is likened to "undead grey-gristed earth-pelt, aeonscruff" (Heaney 52). Although it is an old poetic device to compare a landscape to an animal, the implication of animal suffering caused by climate change is obvious here.

The connection between climate change and suffering animal bodies has become a much-discussed topic in both reality and literature. The image of a skinny polar bear struggling to find food on ice packs has become ubiquitous. While I was working on this paper, a gut-wrenching picture of a scorched kangaroo body caught in the fence after an Australian bushfire caused quite a stir. We now have sufficient evidence to prove that the blaze was largely due to climate change, since abnormal ocean circulation and years of drought caused by ever-increasing Green House Gases (GHG) have jointly made the country prone to fire. Cli-fi and climate change poetry often portray animal bodies so as to evoke compassion for the victims and to raise our environmental awareness. *The Guardian* has twice invited contemporary British poets—including Andrew Motion, Simon Armitage, Kathleen Jamie, Michael Longley, and others—to compose new works to respond to climate change. Many of these poems published on *The Guardian* website feature animal suffering caused by global warming and biodiversity depletion.²

Considering the fact that Heaney is a poet who shows great concern about the environment and who believes that “environmental issues have to a large extent changed the mind of poetry” (O’Driscoll 407), it is reasonable to suggest that he intentionally represents the animal body in “Höfn.” The animal in the poem is both absent and present. The compound words “earth-pelt” and “aeon-scruff” each contains an animal body part and are suggestive of animals endangered by global warming and its associated environmental disasters. The poem is an uncomfortable reminder that animal bodies, just like human bodies, are permeable and vulnerable to the climatic disaster. To compare the disintegrating glacier to disintegrated parts of an animal body, therefore, is not only an innovative figure of speech, but an effective strategy that reminds readers of the fact that animals are also victims of climate change.

Both “On the Spot” and “Höfn” stress material agencies of nonhuman elements on different bodies. “On the Spot” highlights the agency of climate. When the poet finds some rotten bird eggs in the leaf-mold, he is reluctant to acknowledge that something has “conspired on the spot to addle / Matter in its planetary stand-off” (53). Scientific studies have suggested that climate change can greatly affect the migration, hatching, and reproduction of birds (Carey 3321; Crick 48). Here in the poem, the verbs “conspired” and “addle” emphasize the agency of the climate that can cause effects. Climate change, despite its invisibility, exhibits ability to wreak havoc on birds. This agency of nonhuman elements is more obvious in the penultimate stanza of “Höfn”:

And [I] feared its coldness that still seemed enough
To iceblock the plane window dimmed with breath,
Deepfreeze the seep of adamantine tilth (52)

Here, the disappearing glacier has showed potential power that can “iceblock the plane window” and influence agriculture. Western theories have long embraced the separation between humans and nature, as Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann rightly point out in *Material Ecocriticism*:

Compared to a human endowed with mind and agentic determinations, the material world—a world that includes “inanimate” matter as well as all nonhuman forms of living—has always been considered as passive, inert, unable to convey any independent expression of meaning. The drawbacks of this vision are considerable. (2)

The melting glacier in the poem manifests multi-fold capabilities which greatly challenge the idea of seeing nonhuman elements “as passive, inert, unable to convey any independent expression of meaning.” Rather than being an enclosed or a self-isolated entity, the glacier becomes a vibrant force that can affect different bodies, both artificial (a plane) and natural (the tilled ground).

Seen in this way, the melting glacier in “Höfn” becomes a text which has “narrative agency,” that is, the power to create stories. According to Iovino and Oppermann, matter is “storied . . . , embodying its own narratives in the minds of human agents and in the very structure of its own self-constructive forces” (“Material Ecocriticism” 83). This “storied matter” has profound implications for how we imagine and conceptualize our corporeal embeddedness in the material world, since, as Oppermann explains, “storied matter compels us to think beyond anthropocentricity and about our coexistence and coevolution in the story of the earth itself” (412). Meaning and matter are inextricably entangled. The glacier in the poem is “storied matter” in which landscape is biologically and sociologically interrelated with human and nonhuman bodies.

The melting glacier in “Höfn” and the rotten eggs in “On the Spot” elicit visceral responses from the poet’s body, which are evidence of the embodied experiences of nature. Panicked by the disintegration of the glacier, the poet fears that the coldness will freeze “every warm, mouthwatering word of mouth” (52). When talking about this experience of seeing the Icelandic glacier from which “Höfn” grows, Heaney confesses, “I felt a wild primitive fear that the plane would go down and we’d perish in the absolute *frigor* of the place . . . As a ‘child of earth,’ I’ve rarely felt more exposed” (O’Driscoll 411). This “wild primitive fear” and the sense of exposure are worth special attention. The affective response is indicative of human bodily engagement in ecological crises, which can help us to reconnect and re-embody ourselves with nature. Similarly, in “On the Spot,” Heaney goes into great detail to display his inner feelings from touching the icy-cold rotten eggs: “This sudden polar stud / And stigma and dawn stone-circle chill / In my mortified right hand” (53). Diction relating to wide geographical places—“polar” and “stone-circle”—reinforce the

sense of shame which reminds us that we are corporeally and viscerally open to the material world. In order to further understand the mechanisms and effects of the ultimate fear and stigma depicted in the two poems, it is necessary to recall the concept of affect—the embodied capacity—which is essential to my analysis here.

There is a growing number of studies on the connections between the body, affect, literature, and environment. In *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, Environment*, Kyle Bladow and Jennifer Ladino contend that affect “operates at the confluence of environments, texts, and bodies,” and affective theory “disrupts both discrete notions of embodied selfhood and static notions of environment” (8). The two critics point out how we feel materiality is inherently connected to environmental consciousness. In her influential book *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS* (2009), Deborah Gould defines affect as being

Nonconscious and un-named, but nevertheless registered, experiences of bodily energy and intensity that arise in response to stimuli impinging on the body. These experiences are registered in that the organism senses the impingement and the bodily effects, but unconscious in that this sensing is outside of the individual's awareness and is of intensities that are inchoate and as yet inarticulate ... affect is unbound: it has no fixed object, no prior aim; rather it is unattached, free-floating, mobile energy. (5)

The definition of affect as “experiences of bodily energy” that is unattached and free-floating indicates that affect itself is a transcorporeal communication between different bodies. As “Höfn” and “On the Spot” suggest, the intense experiences of climate change directly impinging upon the poet's body trigger immediate visceral responses. The human body therefore serves as a medium that connects the material and the emotion, the outside and the inside. Arguably, affective responses to climate change open up new possibilities to perceive the ecological problem.

In her article “Earth Felt the Wound: The Affective Divide,” Claire Colebrook calls for our attention to the lack of “panic, [or] any apparent affective comportment” that could have been helpful in addressing the climate crisis (53). Affects—such as dread, loss, and guilt—elicited by climate change indicate that we are not floating above the ecological crisis but are bodily engaged in it. These affective responses to climate change can in turn help address the ecological crisis because our visceral feelings are effective both in dispelling apathy and inertia, and in generating love and care. To borrow Heather Houser's words, “it is emotion that can carry us from the micro-scale of the individual to the macro-scale of institutions, nations, and the planet” (223). The fear and stigma depicted in Heaney's poems provoke an environmental ethics which may lead to actions. Affect is itself ecological.

By connecting different kinds of bodies that share the victimhood of climate change, be they human or nonhuman, and by stressing the visceral responses to the ecological disaster, Heaney reveals to us in both “Höfn” and “On the Spot” that we are corporeally and ecologically intertwined with the material world. These two poems indicate the importance and necessity of writing about corporeality in the ever-warming world, presenting an embodied strategy to heal the modern body/mind and self/world splits.

Like Heaney, Hua writes in a time when environmental issues, climate change in particular, have increasingly garnered people’s attention.³ Contemporary Chinese poets began to compose works with palpable environmental awareness in the 1990s (Wang 93; Long and Wang 88), thanks to rapid modernization in China which has resulted in large-scale environmental problems such as pollution, desertification, and loss of biodiversity. Poets including Yu Jian (于坚), Li Songtao (李松涛), and Tu An (屠岸) have spared no efforts to uncover detrimental effects brought by this modernization. These poets not only lament the degradation of nature but also unsettle the money-oriented mindset resulting from the idea of modernity. What makes Hua special among these poets is his strong interest in depicting corporeality. Mei Zhen and Wang Nuo perceptively observe that in order to understand Hua’s poetic works, readers need to use all kinds of bodily senses, including sound, taste, smell, and touch (45). However, the bodies and sensual experiences in Hua’s ecological poetry do not receive their due attention.

Human and nonhuman bodies are spiritually interwoven and interchangeable in Hua’s poetry. Different from Heaney, who emphasizes the material agencies of nature and the affective connections between human and nonhuman bodies, Hua in his works articulates spiritual unity between different bodies. The “Wound Poems,” which consist of nine poems all written in quatrain, record various ecological problems resulting from climate change and other associated disasters (species loss, wildfires, and so forth), emphasizing the interconnectedness between different bodies. “Wound Poems” no. 3 depicts the shared bodily suffering between people and butterflies:

Talking to one butterfly
Means talking to all butterflies
It flutters the pain of wing
In the depth of your vein, exciting a storm
(Translated by Fu Jun, Selected Micropoetry 31)

The poem indicates in concise diction that injuries afflicted on animals can also provoke bodily and emotional responses from people, as if the pain is contagious across species. To those readers who are familiar with the story “Zhuang Zhou Dreams of a Butterfly” (庄周梦蝶), the corporeal boundaries between the human and the nonhuman animal in the poem are fundamentally breached.⁴ “The Transformation of Things” (物化),

which the Daoist Zhuang Zhou accentuates in the story, maintains that there are no distinctions between humans and animals, either physically or mentally. By adapting the household Chinese transformation story against the background of environmental degradation, Hua points out that animal suffering caused by ecological issues is closely connected to human suffering. Hence, human and nonhuman bodies communicate in response to each other.

What is at issue here is the difference between ancient Chinese corporeal theories and New Materialist ideas about the body. According to Stacy Alaimo, to imagine human corporeality as trans-corporeality “underlies the extent to which the substance of the human is ultimately inseparable from ‘the environment’” (*Bodily Natures* 2). Human bodies can communicate and interact with nonhuman bodies because the bodily boundaries are always volatile and porous. Undeniably, New Materialist ideas about the body and nonhuman materials are mostly based on scientific facts, particularly those developments in quantum physics, chemistry, and modern biology.⁵ The corporeal connectedness for New Materialism, therefore, is more of a material than a spiritual one.

Ancient Chinese corporeal ideas, nevertheless, highlight both material and spiritual connectedness and embrace the notion that humanity forms one body of the whole universe. Human beings, therefore, are “organically connected with rocks, trees, and animals” (Tu 43). In his ground-breaking work *The Confucian Ideas towards the Body*, the Chinese scholar Yang Rubin argues that Confucian corporeal ideas before the Qin dynasty fall into three categories, one of which is *ziran qihua* (自然气化).⁶ This *ziran qihua* (naturalized or universalized body) views human bodies and the environment as originating from *qi* (气),⁷ and the two can communicate and transform into each other in essence (Yang 9). This idea of the relationship between the human body and the environment greatly influenced later generations. Neo-Confucianism in the Song and the Ming dynasties maintains that human bodies are organically and inextricably connected to all natural beings. Moreover, Confucians see no separation between body and mind because body is always related to moral qualities such as good manners, inner beauty, and uprightness.⁸ The Confucian idea of cultivating the body (修身) also means cultivating moral characters. In Confucianism, as Yang observes, there is no body without mind, and there is no mind without body (1).

Daoist ideas of the body are more inclusive. The Daoist body is the very basis and the starting point of the whole universe, and it includes the natural environment, all living creatures, human society, and the spiritual world (Chen 56). *The Naikan Sutra of the Lord Laozi* (太上老君内观经) shows how nature and the human body can transform into each other:

Examining carefully the body, you shall see it comes from the emptiness ... eyes are the sun and the moon, hairs are the stars, eyebrows are the canopies of trees, head is the mountain... [谛观此身，从虚无中来.....眼为日月，发为星辰，眉为华盖，头为昆仑...] (“The Naikan Sutra” 396)

As the quotation suggests, different parts of human bodies can find their equivalents in the natural world. From the perspective of Daoism, human bodies are spiritually embedded in the natural body and vice versa. These mutual corporeal transformations find their full expression in the Daoist idea which states that “Heaven and Earth are the big human body, and the human body is the small Heaven and Earth” (天地大吾身，吾身小天地) (Du 727). The human body and natural environment are spiritually interlinked.

The interconnectedness between bodies and nature in ancient Chinese philosophies is essential to understanding the bodies depicted in Hua’s poetry. Wang Shudong has maintained that ancient Chinese classics and ecological thought contain important intellectual sources of ecological consciousness in contemporary Chinese literature (186). The poet himself confesses that among all his intellectual indebtedness, the idea of “the Unity of Heaven and the Human” (天人合一) derived from Confucianism and Daoism, and the classical Chinese nature poets represented by Wang Wei (王维),⁹ are the most profound and influential (Hua *The Poetic Sate* 9). In the eyes of Hua, contemporary Chinese ecopoets ought to carry down the Chinese legacy of viewing human and nature as a whole (Hua *The Poetic Sate* 5).

Indeed, traditional Chinese corporeal ideas find their eloquent expression in Hua’s poetic works. A typical case is the poem “Silver Container,” which compares the human body to a silver bowl containing natural elements:

In the valley, let the body lower to be
A silver bowl, the moonlight falls
Frost also falls, the mangrove forest
Of many voices, silent floating dust (Selected Micropoetry 17)

It is the Daoist tradition to liken human bodies to palaces, mansions, and containers (Chen 65). Daoism views the body as a positive place that houses both the flesh and the spirit. The form (body) and the spirit are thus interdependent and inseparable. In the poem, humbly lowering itself as a container to hold nature, the human body is merged into the environment. The human body, spirit, and natural elements hence become unified.

Many of Hua’s poems illustrate that human bodies are ever-opening and permeable organisms continually interacting with the natural world. “Wound

Poems” no. 7 depicts a deaf person who depends on seeing in order to identify with the pain of mountains:

Jingfu Mountain in December
 Shouts with its injury hand-covered, a deaf man
 Hears not, but he can definitely see
 All colors in the woods are burning. (Selected Micropoetry 35)

Rather than prioritizing mind over body as the key role in experiencing nature, the poet attaches great importance to the sensual capacities and immediate bodily responses to nature. Instead of being “a machine made up of bones, nerves, muscles, veins, blood and skin” (Descartes 85), the human body here is an organic whole in which different senses and organs complement and coordinate with each other. This elevation of embodied experiences of nature acknowledges the cognitive capacity of the body. The coordination between different senses in human bodies recognizes that humans and nature are constantly in the process of corporeal intermingling.

To stress the corporeal inseparability between people and nature, Hua insistently compares natural elements, including mountains, waters, flora, and fauna to parts of the human body in his poetry—“the skin of forests” (“Entering the Mountain”), “an umbilical cord” of the mucuna (“Birdwood’s Mucuna in the Palm”), for instance—to transcend the corporeal boundaries between humans and plants. The poem “The Road in the Forest” highlights the destructive force of a wildfire through likening a forest to a ravaged human body:

The road in the forest, it is eyesight
 Left over by someone, passing through the remains of a wildfire
 Naked tree root, coal dark mountain body
 Pervaded with great hidden sore and hollowness. (The Ecological Poetry 26)

The poem concretizes the devastating influences of the wildfire by using words that are closely connected to the human body (“eyesight,” “naked,” “sore”), as if the pain of the forest is perceivable and tangible. By relating the damage to the forest with the physical pain of humans, the poem evokes both corporeal and empathic identification with nature.

Traditional Chinese philosophical ideas, Daoism in particular, have always corporealized nature, regarding nature as an organic whole that resembles a human body in both form and function. *Taiping Jing* (太平经) maintains that “Spring is the blood of the Earth, stone is its bone, and good soil is its flesh” [“泉者，地之血；石者，地之骨也；良土，地之肉也”] (Wang 120). In this traditional Chinese corporeal concept, natural elements find their counterparts in human bodies because they share

the same appearances, structures, and functions. Circulation of body fluids in a human being are like the flow of rivers; bones and joints are like mountains; hairs are like plants. Nature never stands against humans since it is another form of the human body. This idea of viewing natural elements as flesh and blood blurs the boundary between subject and object and greatly challenges the anthropocentric idea which prioritizes human over nature. In his ecological poetry, Hua invokes this ancient corporeal idea to draw readers' attention to both the material and functional similarities between human and nonhuman bodies. By doing so, the poet implies that damages to nature will in turn harm human bodies.

Hua in his poetic works also embraces the idea that non-sentient bodies are corporeally interrelated through physical suffering. Different from the concept of transcorporeality in which the vulnerabilities of different bodies manifest “a sense of precarious, corporeal openness to the material world” (Alaimo “Insurgent Vulnerability” 23), Hua endows non-sentient natural elements with the ability to feel pain. For example, the sky and the setting sun share pain with wounded birds (“Wound Poems” no. 1), and the injury of a hill bespeaks “the sore of all mountains and rivers” (“Wound Poems” no. 5). In order to better understand this shared corporeal pain, it is necessary to shed more light on the Chinese idea of *qi*, which plays a vital role in ancient Chinese body theories.

Ancient Chinese corporeal philosophies consider *qi* as thus:

the very basic element that constitutes every form of being on the earth. The pre-Qin classic *Guanzi* 管子 defines *qi* thus: Everything in the world is generated by the accumulation of vital energy. Downwardly, it produces all the five kinds of crops. And upwardly, it produces all celestial bodies. Deities and ghosts are developed from it when it flows between Heaven and Earth. And when it comes into the heart of a human being, the host will be a sage. [凡物之精，此则为生。下生五谷，上为列星。流于天地之间，谓之鬼神；藏于胸中，谓之圣人。管子·内业] (Liu 987)

“Vital energy” (精) is the pure form of *qi*. As “the spontaneously self-generating life process,” *qi* is non-static, pervasive, and forever moving between Heaven and Earth, constituting the bodies of every being, human and nonhuman. Accordingly, the body becomes the exchange site of *qi*, a process of becoming. Different from the ideas of New Materialism which subordinate the human body to its physicality, the Chinese concept of *qi* highlights the same origin of different bodies and considers that every being on the earth as essentially connected. This corporeal connectedness under the framework of *qi* is not the communication between heterogenous bodies; rather, it is the interaction between different forms of *qi* in which various of bodies are of essentially equal status. It is this holistic view of considering all bodies on the earth of the same origin and all bodies as forming

a big continual body that enables the shared physical pain between the various bodies portrayed in Hua's poetry. Non-sentient elements are able to understand each other's pain because they are all engaged in the ever-changing process of qi.

Both Heaney's and Hua's ecological poetry open new horizons on the role that the body plays in climate change discourse. Current scholarship on climate change has undervalued the issue of corporeality, assuming that the climatic catastrophe is a grand issue and has little to do with bodies. The truth is that we cannot address the ongoing climate change crises without understanding the intermeshed materiality between human bodies and those of nonhuman beings. To negate the physicality of bodies and of nature, to borrow the words of Carol Bigwood, is to perpetuate alienation from nature and to reinforce a dominant anthropocentric view, which will in turn exacerbate climate crises (59). As New Materialists Astrida Neimanis and Rachel Walker explain, it is important to add the concept of transcorporeality into the current climate change discourse, and we need to "reimagine 'climate change' and the fleshy, damp immediacy of our own embodied existences as intimately imbricated" (559). These critics maintain that bodily engagement in climate crises is indispensable. To acknowledge the nexus between the climate change and the body is to make the invisible visible. Heaney does this by showing how different forms of bodies are materially interconnected and how these bodies are vulnerable to climate change. This vulnerability is a form of transcorporeality in which landscapes, human, and nonhuman bodies interact in a material way. The poet also draws readers' attention to visceral responses to ecological disaster, which give rise to an ethical obligation of care. Hua draws heavily on pre-modern Chinese ecological wisdom to illustrate that different bodies are essentially of the same origin. Human and nonhuman bodies are both spiritually interrelated and interchangeable. Writing about ecological problems in an implicit but sharply critical way, Hua sharpens readers' bodily senses in order to show that we can actually see, hear, and feel climate change and other associated issues.

A comparative reading of Heaney's and Hua's ecological poetry thus clearly shows how the two poets represent various bodies in different poetic ways and how important it is to write about corporeality both in the West and the East. In a time when abstractions and theorizing may not be adequate to grapple with climate change (a most urgent material crisis), Heaney's and Hua's ecological poetry both create new ways to make ecological disaster sensually perceivable and convey messages that are good to hear in the current climate change era: to acknowledge that we are embedded in nature is to re-situate humans in a material and organic world. What humans have done to the environment will eventually return to humanity, more often than not, in a fleshy and embodied way.

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Notes

1. All the Chinese names in this article follow the Chinese order, that is, surname first, followed by first name.
2. Paul Muldoon's poem "Zoological Positivism Blues" and Jackie Kay's "Extinction" are two cases in point (Muldoon; Kay).
3. As a pioneer poet who is deeply concerned about environmental problems in modern China, Hua has written extensively on deforestation, species extinction, and many forms of pollution due to the rapid development of Chinese society. His book *Contemporary Ecological Poetry* [当代生态诗歌], which collects and comments on a large body of contemporary Chinese ecological poems, is the first ecological poetry collection published in China. Climate change is one of the recurrent topics in Hua's poetic works. "The Lake Branded Blue Algae—A Self-Statement of Blue Algae" [蓝藻牌湖水——蓝藻自述] portrays the outbreak of blue algae due to global warming. "Holding the Female Farmer Aunt Fang's Empty Rice" [捏着农妇芳嫂干瘪的稻穗] shows the influence climate change exerts on individual farmers and agriculture. See also *The Ecoblog of Hua Hai*. Unless otherwise indicated, all the English translations of Chinese texts in this article are mine.
4. The story recorded in the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi* [庄子] is as follows: Zhuang Zhou once dreamt of being a butterfly. When he awoke, the Daoist asked, "I did not know whether it had formerly been Zhou dreaming that he was a butterfly, or it was now a butterfly dreaming that it was Zhou" (Zhuang). Zhuang Zhou's puzzle has problematized the subject-object dualism by disrupting the border between the material world and the dream world, and that between animals and humans.
5. For instance, in her *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007), one of the foundational works for New Materialism, Karen Barad demonstrates the agency of matter and the interrelatedness between matter and mind by referencing evidence from quantum physics.
6. The other two categories are as follows: *jianxing* (践行), which maintains the unity between life and ethics; *liyi* (礼义), which advocates for the socialized body and considers the essence of humanity, the body, and society as inseparable (Yang 9).
7. As an important concept in Chinese philosophy, *qi* (气) has been used in almost every philosophical school since the pre-Qin period. According to the ecocritic Chang Chia-ju, *qi* is an "all-inclusive whole, the spontaneous self-generating process" (14).
8. Examples of the isomorphism between the body and moral qualities are abundant in Confucian classics. *Analects* [论语·学而] records, "I daily examine myself (body) on three points" (吾日三省吾身) (Confucius). *Mengzi* 孟子·尽心上 argues, "There is no greater delight than to be conscious of sincerity on self-examination (body)" (反身而诚, 乐莫大焉) (Mencius). Body and mind are thus integrated.
9. Wang Wei (王维, 701 CE-761 CE) is a famous poet, painter, and statesperson in the Tang dynasty. He is renowned for his nature poems and his landscape paintings. It is widely believed that Wang's artistic works embody Buddhist ideas of detachment and simplicity.

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