

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS25/H01/18 _____ (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report
(for completed projects only)

<p><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within six months of the approved project completion date. 2. Completion report: within 12 months of the approved project completion date.
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Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. Project Title

Imagination of Cityscape: A Study on Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers

城市景貌之想像——後九七香港青年作家研究

2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. CHAU Man-lut / Associate Professor	School of General Education & Languages, Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi)
Co-Investigator(s)	Dr. CHIU Hiu Tung Louisa / Lecturer I	School of General Education & Languages, Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi)
Others	NA	NA

3. Project Duration

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval (must be quoted)
Project Start Date	1 January 2019	NA	NA
Project Completion Date	31 December 2020	30 June 2021	7 September 2020

Duration (<i>in month</i>)	24 months	30 months	7 September 2020
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31 December 2021	30 June 2022	7 September 2020

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. It aims to provide a detailed analysis of how post-1997 Hong Kong young writers imagine the city by looking into their fiction. As much existing related researches are concerned with individual writers, this research intends to fill the gap by examining their works comprehensively.

2. It intends to strengthen our understanding about Hong Kong young writers by analyzing their structure of feelings, from the perspective of space and place. It also gives voice to their unique experiences and current feelings towards the city by conducting interviews with the writers.

3. It aims to provide a thorough study on this group of writers for future use, either in the writing of Hong Kong literary history or in generating more critical studies on young writers. It also aims to examine the feasibility of using this framework in prose and poetry for future research.

4. It intends to transfer the new knowledge and findings into teaching Hong Kong Literature at the PI's and Co-I's institute. It also benefits the other institutes who offer similar courses.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: NA

Reasons for the change: NA

5.3 Realisation of the objectives

(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)

The research project was successfully completed. All four proposed objectives have been fully achieved, and the outcome of each objective is illustrated as follows.

For objectives (1) and (3), the research team achieved the following results. The team applied the theories and concepts, such as Raymond William’s “Structure of feelings”, Yi-Fu Tuan’s “sense of place”, Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey’s theories of “space”, to analyse the works of post-1997 Hong Kong young writers. With the data collected from the interviews with the writers, the PI wrote three research papers titled, (1) “Skyscrapers and Shopping Malls: Hyper Density City Writing by Ho Lok, Hon Lai-chu, Chan Chi-wa”, (2) “The Relationship of City and Nature in Fiction of Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers”, (3) “The Break Down of Link between Man and Place: Urban Renewal in the fiction of Lee Wai-yi, Ke Luo and Cheung Yuen Man”. These papers explored the structure of feelings from post-1997 Hong Kong young writers and examined the description of their home city through their fiction. These research papers explored how their fiction expressed their worries about the enormous impact on the restructuring of the city and natural spaces from the global capital. The characteristics of Hong Kong’s city space, and how the city space is unprecedentedly threatened by hyper density, the mass occupation of shopping malls, and the invasion of the natural space by the city space has been thoroughly examined in these papers. In addition, the observations and feelings of urban renewal reflected in the writers’ fictions had been discussed. These findings filled the research gap in Hong Kong literature.

For objective (2), after analysing the works from post-1997 Hong Kong young writers, the research team interviewed 11 post-1997 Hong Kong young writers. They were: Chan Chi-wah (陳志華), Chan Hay-ching (陳曦靜), Cheung Yuen-man (張婉雯), Hon Lai-chu (韓麗珠), Leung Wai-lok (梁偉洛), Li Wai-yee (李維怡), Mak Shu-kin (麥樹堅), Tse Hiu-hung (謝曉虹), Tong Yui (唐睿), Pun Kwok-ling (潘國靈), IP Human (葉曉文). The research team prepared a set of questions, focusing on the writers’ perceptions and values towards the city’s space and place and the relationship between human and natural space. The writers expressed their views, shared their unique experiences and current feelings towards their home city in their interviews. After conducting the interview, the research team prepare two sets of transcripts, the first was interview transcript A (with dialogue, attached with this report as Annex E), and the other interview transcript B (already published in Hong Kong literary magazine, *Tai Tau Choi Literature Monthly Magazine* 大頭菜文藝月刊). Besides Hon Lai-chu (after the interview, she refused to reply to the request of endorsing the transcripts), the other 10 writers’ transcripts have been published. Please refer to Annex F.

For objective (4), the research findings have been incorporated into our institute’s (THEi) curriculum. For example, Mak Shu-kin mentioned he needs to do a site visit before he writes any fiction about a real place in Hong Kong. He said he cannot write about a place that he is not familiar with. This finding explains why his fiction and prose is a detailed representation of the cityscape in Hong Kong. In the module, GEE5410 Creative Writing in Chinese (taught by the PI in AY2020-21, 21-22), the PI has chosen Mak Shu-kin’s works to use as teaching material. In the module, GEE5418 Hong Kong Literature: the Local, the Mainland & the World (taught by the Co-I in AY21-22), the Co-I has chosen Chan Chi-wah and Leung Wai-lok’s works to use as teaching material. The findings help the PI, Co-I and students gain a thorough understanding of the above writer’s writing style. One of the research outputs, “The Relationship of City and Nature in Fiction of Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers”, has been selected into the *Sunset of Victoria Harbor: Contemporary Studies of HK Literature* (published by the Dept. of Chinese Linguistics and Literature, Yuan Ze University 元智大學中國語文學系). The journal articles and the interview scripts can benefit THEi and other institutes that offer Hong Kong Literature or creative writing courses. Moreover, the research team hosted two half-day online workshops on “Post-1997 Hong Kong young writers” for undergraduate students of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the general public in 2020-21. The research team shared their findings with the THEi students and the general public.

5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i>	Addressed <i>(please tick)</i>	Percentage Achieved <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. (1) It aims to provide a detailed analysis of how post-1997 Hong Kong young writers imagine the city by looking into their fiction. As much existing related researches are concerned with individual writers, this research intends to fill the gap by examining their works comprehensively	✓	100%
2. (2) It intends to strengthen our understanding about Hong Kong young writers by analyzing their structure of feelings, from the perspective of space and place. It also gives voice to their unique experiences and current feelings towards the city by conducting interviews with the writers	✓	100%
3. (3) It aims to provide a thorough study on this group of writers for future use, either in the writing of Hong Kong literary history or in generating more critical studies on young writers. It also aims to examine the feasibility of using this framework in prose and poetry for future research	✓	100%
4. (4) It intends to transfer the new knowledge and findings into teaching Hong Kong Literature at the PI's and Co-I's institute. It also benefits the other institutes who offer similar courses	✓	100%

6. Research Outcome

6.1 Major findings and research outcome

(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)

In this project, the research team studied many fictions by post-1997 Hong Kong young writers and examined their feelings and expressions towards the Hong Kong city space. The project has achieved the expected outcomes that have been stated in the proposal. Combining the data gathered through interviews and textual analysis, the major findings have been written in three journal articles, as mentioned in Part C below. The PI also presented his findings in workshops, and local and international conferences as mentioned in Part C.

The characteristics of the city space in Hong Kong is one of the common themes in post-1997 Hong Kong young writers' fiction. Therefore, in the journal article, "*Skyscrapers and Shopping Malls: Hyper Density City Writing by Three Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers Ho Lok, Hon Lai-chu, Chan Chi-wa*", the PI discussed the hyper density cities narrated in *O City* by Chan Chi-wa, *Phantomcity* by Leung Wai-lok (Ho Lok) and *Area H* by Hon Lai-chu in detail. Due to the advanced capitalism and limited space in Hong Kong, most of the city space is occupied by skyscrapers and shopping malls. Based on the writers' urban experiences, they created different kinds of hyper density cities with a "wall effect" in the fiction, which show their melancholy feelings towards the city of post-1997 Hong Kong. The city space of Hong Kong is not a vibrant space as mentioned in the mainstream media, but a space full of depression and discomfort. However, the writers believe in using the power of imagination to reshape the city space of Hong Kong, and their strategies have been discussed in the article.

The cityscape in Hong Kong keeps on changing due to urban renewal. Many old urban areas have been reshaped by capital accumulation, and finally transformed into exclusive residential or commercial districts. The compensation for the indigenous people is not enough for them to buy a new flat in the same district. They were forced to migrate, and their community network breakdown inevitably. The above issues have been addressed in the fiction of the post-1997 Hong Kong young writers. In the journal article, "*The emotional rupture between people and place, urban renewal in the fiction of Cheung Yuen-man, Ho Lok and Li Wai-yee*", the PI applied the concept from the psychology of place and discussed how the above writers present the consequences of urban renewal, especially "placelessness" (無地方性), disorientation and loss of district culture in their fictions. The literature presents their "topophilia" (地方之愛) and their deep concerns with the destruction of the culture and everyday life in the old urban area.

Capital accumulation not only reshapes the city space but also the natural space. Most post-1997 Hong Kong young writers lived in Hong Kong for decades. They have witnessed the continuous expansion of urban spaces through reclamation, removal of mountains, and urban renewal. The natural space is under great pressure due to the continued expansion of urban spaces. In the journal article, "*Nature Relatedness in Fiction of Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers*", the PI analysed the works of Chan Chi-wa, Cheung Yuen-man, Lee Wai-yi, Leung Wai-lok, Hon Lai-chu and Tse Hiu-hung, explored their understanding of the relationship between urban and natural spaces. It was found that the conflict between urban and natural spaces are a common theme in their fiction, and urban residents lose their connection with nature because of their way of living. The PI argued that post-1997 Hong Kong young writers care about the future of the city, present their "topophilia" for both the city space and the natural space, and remind their readers to pay attention to the survival of species other than humans in the city.

In conclusion, this project gave a meaningful discussion on the creative styles and themes of fiction written by post-1997 Hong Kong young writers and paves an important foundation for further study, enriching the research of Hong Kong literature.

6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action (*Maximum half a page*)

This project has conducted a comprehensive study on post-1997 Hong Kong young writers' fiction, discussed their "sense of place", imagination and feelings towards the city. If there are chances for further development of the research, we can extend the scope to other genres, such as prose and poetry. Some "post-1997 Hong Kong young writers", such as Hon Lai-chu (韓麗珠), Leung Wai-lok (梁偉洛), and Mak Shu-kin (麥樹堅), are not only fiction writers but also prose and poetry writers. They have published several volumes of proeses and poetries and received positive feedback from the literary circles. The result generated in this project can be used as a base to compare the differences and similarities of their expression between different genres. Through the comparison, the project can further contribute to our understanding of Hong Kong's literature in post-1997 Hong Kong.

The research team found that some post-1997 Hong Kong writers have a great interest in exploring the relationship between humans and nature. As Hong Kong is long regarded as a metropolitan, much of the existing research focuses on Hong Kong writers' city writing. Based on the findings from this project, it is worth investigating the characteristics of the post-1997 Hong Kong writers' natural writing, such as IP Human's fiction and prose.

Moreover, some post-1997 Hong Kong young writers, such as Jacky Yuen (阮文略), and Wesley Lam (文於天), are mainly poetry writers and wrote a large number of poetries related to the Hong Kong city space and city life. It is possible to use the findings of this project to examine their works. The research team believes the theories used in this project, such as the "structure of feelings" and "sense of place" can be applied to analysing their works.

In short, there is potential for the research team to further develop the research through applying for further research funding.

7. Layman's Summary

(*Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words*)

Hong Kong's cityscape and the city itself has gradually changed and transformed since the 1997 handover. A group of writers, namely the "post-1997 Hong Kong young writers", who started to publish their first books after 1997, have grown up in the city since birth. Their works reflect how they feel and think towards the city. This project provides a detailed analysis of how post-1997 Hong Kong young writers imagine the city by looking into their fiction. As most related research are concerned with individual writers, this research fills in the gap by examining their works comprehensively. By applying the theories of space and place, the structure of feelings, this project has examined post-1997 Hong Kong young writers' hyper-density city writing on skyscrapers and shopping malls. Furthermore, this project also examines urban renewal and the relationship of city and nature in their fiction. In short, this project has arrived at a better understanding of how post-1997 Hong Kong young writers imagine the city, the structure of their feelings and whether it is different from writers of the older generation, and how their fiction represents the urban space.

Part C: Research Output**8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
2020	NA	NA	NA	Dr. Chau Man Lut	〈「後九七香港青年作家」小說中的城市與自然〉 (The Relationship of City and Nature in Fiction of “Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers”).《臺北大學中文學報》Journal of Chinese Language and Literature of National Taipei University 28(2020): 519-551.	No	Yes Annex A	Yes	Yes
2021	NA	NA	NA	Dr. Chau Man Lut	〈高樓與商場——可洛、陳志華、韓麗珠的超密度城市空間書寫〉 (Skyscrapers and Shopping Malls: Hyper Density City Writing by Ho Lok, Hon Lai-chu, Chan Chi-wa).《人文中國學報》Sino-Humanitas 32(2021): 161-186.	No	Yes Annex B	Yes	Yes

2021	NA	NA	NA	Dr. Chau Man Lut	〈情感何所依——李維怡、可洛、張婉雯小說中的市區重建與無地方性〉 (Where Feelings Lie: The Urban Renewal and the Placelessness in Novels by Lee Wai-yi, Ho Lok and Cheung Yuen-man). 《中國現代文學》 Modern Chinese Literature 40(2021):117-136.	No	Yes Annex C	Yes	Yes
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9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered

(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
30 June -1 July 2020 Taichung, Taiwan (Due to pandemic, the conference postponed from 23-25 April 2020 to 30 June -1 July 2020)	「後九七香港青年作家」小說的香港城市空間想像 Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers' imagination on City Space	語言、文學暨文化國際學術研討會 International Conference of Language, Literature and Culture	Yes 2019	No	Yes	Yes

25-26 June 2021 Hong Kong SAR	「後九七香港青年作家」小說中的市區更新 Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers' fiction on Urban Renewal	The Society for Hong Kong Studies Annual Conference 2021	No	Yes Annex E	Yes	Yes
27 Nov 2021, Taipei, Taiwan	重塑或斷裂——「後九七香港青年作家」筆下的市區更新 Reshape or Rupture: Post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writers' fiction on Urban Renewal	2021亞太華文文學國際學術論壇 Asia-Pacific Chinese Literature Research International Academic Forum 2021	No	Yes Annex E	Yes	Yes

* The PI has submitted an abstract to the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference 2020 (this is stated in the progress report in 2019. However, due to the pandemic, the conference was postponed from June to early September 2020 and switched the venue from Hong Kong to Kobe (Japan). The PI withdrew the application because of the pandemic and busy teaching schedule in early September.

10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning

(Please elaborate)

In the module, GEE5410 Creative Writing in Chinese (taught by the PI in AY2020-21 Sem1 & Sem2), the PI has chosen Chan Chi-wah (陳志華), Leung Wai-lok (梁偉洛) and Mak Shu-kin's (麥樹堅) works to use as teaching material. The research findings help the PI and students gain a thorough understanding of their writing styles. This project has generated three journal articles and ten writer's interview transcripts, these research outcomes can benefit THEi and the other institutes that offer Hong Kong Literature or creative writing courses.

On the other hand, the research team hosted two half-day online workshops on "Post-1997 Hong Kong young writers" for undergraduate students of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the general public in 2020-21. The first online workshop held on 17 November 2020, invited two guest speakers (Dr CHAN Tsz Him (陳子謙博士) and Leung Wai-lok (梁偉洛)), together with the PI to present the workshop. It attracted the attendance of over 40 teachers, THEi students, as well as other institutes' students. During the workshop, Leung Wai-lok shared his valuable writing experience on his latest fiction "Phantomcity" (《幻城》). The PI and Dr CHAN Tsz Him shared their insight on post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writer's fiction, especially on the topic of city space writing. The second workshop, held on 30 March 2020, invited two guest speakers (Dr Cheung Yuen Man (張婉雯博士, IP Human (葉曉雯)), together with the PI to presented in the workshop. The second workshop attracted the attendance of over 36 THEi staff and students and guests from other

institutions. During the workshop, Cheung Yuen Man and Miss IP Human shared their valuable writing experience and experiences on nature writing and the relationship between city space and natural space. The PI shared his insight on post-1997 Hong Kong Young Writer's fiction, especially on the topic of urban renewal. The poster of the above workshops are attached as Annex D.

To conclude, the research findings from the projects, together with the new knowledge shared in the workshops, contribute to the PI's institute and the public.

11. Student(s) Trained

(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation
NA	NA	NA	NA

12. Other Impact

(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)

The project also helps to cultivate a research atmosphere at the institute. One full-time research assistant was trained during the project. She has completed a master's degree at CUHK during the project period.

13. Statistics on Research Outputs

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (please specify)	
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project	3	3	0	0	Type	No.
					Published interview scripts of the post 97 HK writers Please refer to Annex F (accessible from this link): https://drive	10

					.google.com /file/d/1ra-9 3Ck-nJoBM uEb0PIRC OtKjvDMx D3h/view?u sp=sharing	
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14. Public Access Of Completion Report

(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons
NA	NA