



對於亞洲未來主義的想像：飛往何處的船

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Imagining an Asian Futurism: A Ship Flying Toward the Unknown

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## 前言

亞洲未來主義及亞洲科幻文本為本次亞洲藝術雙年展的主軸，本篇文章希望建構出幾條路徑，如同從地表出發的飛船，在多重的飛行中思考亞洲未來的想像。王大閔的《幻城》<sup>1</sup>於2013年出版，而創作的時程則須回望到半世紀前，經歷了臺灣幾個重要的歷史事件。在內文中，王大閔則將故事背景放置於西元3069年，不斷地回望著過往西方文藝復興、現代主義的盛況。在出版的塵封、故事內容對於當下的空缺之中，我們將定錨於此塵封、空缺中，從臺灣的文本出發，思考亞洲在想像未來時，如何不斷地推翻、建構、再推翻、再建構的複雜圖景。

在思考現代性之時，班雅明（Walter Benjamin）《歷史哲學論綱》<sup>2</sup>中，對保羅·克利畫作《新天使》的描述，天使凝視著畫外，面向過去，雙翼展開。他看見了災難，不斷地將殘骸一層層地堆起來。即便他想提醒，但天堂的暴風雨，直直地將他推向了未來。在大量破壞過往，建造新物的現代，斯維特蘭娜·博伊姆（Svetlana Boym）在《懷舊的未來》中對應著班雅明的新天使，思考著離現代（off-morden），如同新天使將過往及未來相連，越過當下的想像。<sup>3</sup>齊格蒙·鮑曼（Zygmunt Bauman, 1925-2017）也談到了這幅畫，天使轉向了未來，原以為應當看到伊甸園，但反而是新自由主義下被不斷操弄的廢墟。<sup>4</sup>

未至之城是停滯的城市，來到此處一切都將暫被擱置。無論是面向過去，看見大堆的遺棄之物，被狂風直直地吹向未來；或是掙扎地轉身後，未來的伊甸園亦成為了廢墟。

## 關在室外

在太空競賽之時，臺灣建築師王大閔創作的《幻城》一書中，記敘了一艘開往宇宙的飛船。漫遊太空是小說中人生學習的必經過程，王大閔的《幻城》將時間設定在西元3069年，王子迪諾在父親的指示下登上了太空飛船—梅杜莎號。在梅杜莎號上，他與幾個親密的友人，在太空中無目的地持續往前，沒人知道歸程何時，也不知道目的地為何。《幻城》內的世界，在帝國皇帝的民主控制下，人民的不滿藉由控制夢境的藥物都獲得了緩解，戰爭是個過往的名詞。而自由、歡愉、耽溺則控制了現在的人們。王子搭上的飛船也是一樣，是烏托邦的延伸，不碰觸地表，在無盡的行駛中，持續地回望過往征戰時期的文明榮光。那是一艘落入時間縫隙的飛船，穿梭在兩個無存於當下的世界中，持續地緩步往前。

「在太空生存，必須把太空關到室外。」不僅把太空關到室外，而是把宇宙都關到了室外，內部即為他們自我回應自我、自我回應飛船的生態圈，全與外界無關。王大閔書寫著這個隔絕世界的飛船，這一行人在飛船的日常生活中，遙想地球、遙想現代主義、文藝復興的文化產物。從空間（飛船—地球）

與時間（西元3069年—文藝復興、現代主義），這種空間時間的空缺跨度，彰顯王大閔在《幻城》中在看向過往之時，隔絕屏棄了眼外之物：他所處的時代。

關在室內，時間與空間的意義就消失了，幻城中的一切都是自省的過程，他所建構的是對於過往曾經歷過的榮光想像。

而在王聰威的《複島》<sup>5</sup>中，描述了在港邊燈塔下，日軍為戰略所需於地底搭建了一處與現實相符的村莊，而於內居住之人也必須肩負起模仿地上人的職業與人生。從燈塔進入到平行世界，則彰顯了另外一種隱蔽於現實之外的魔幻場景，如同桃花源一般，為躲避現世的戰爭，而進入了對應真實世界的模仿人生，在地底重新複製的平行宇宙，所有的人都是現世之人的影子。王聰威的《複島》不同於《幻城》，即便把世界都隔絕於外，然而過久的角色扮演，讓地底的時序如同量子糾纏般地，不斷被複製下去。在王大閔的《幻城》內，是一個幾無連結當下世界的科幻世界，而《複島》那座緊貼著的現實的虛擬島嶼，那是充斥歷史感的存在，是每個人生活土地的另一片複製的影子，是僅能靠著與真實相連，方能存活的世界。

再回到王大閔的創作，回望他所創作的《登陸月球紀念碑》上，紀念碑全高252.71呎，象徵著地球與月球間的最大距離，風格融合了現代主義及東方美學的思潮，同時具有著政治、宗教意義，也包含著人類跨步至宇宙的意念。在尚未登陸月球的1967年之時，王大閔已完成了登陸月球紀念碑的設計，而1969年太空人成功登陸後，在受到建築界的推崇下，此事成為了中美合作的一重要指標。在多方的致意合作之下，原可能於美國休士頓建起的登陸月球紀念碑則在1979年中美斷交後正式告吹。藉升空回望地球，看見地球的樣貌，人類有了對於世界狀態的重新想像。從地平、宇宙中心到我們僅為浩瀚中的分子。王大閔對於世界的改變，藉圓至方的思考，藉對穿越地表的想像，建構了我們當下時代精神的紀念碑。

連結著現實與幻想，連結著進步與懷舊，王大閔的創作是個複雜的綜合體，在時代的演進中，他經歷了數個臺灣政體改變的時刻，經歷了東西文化交流的時刻；在個人的創作歷程中，諸如國父紀念館的設計修正、登陸月球紀念碑的告吹等等阻礙。讓王大閔充滿了對於過往、當下、未來的種種質疑，而正是他跨步往前，卻又不斷回望過往的美好及破敗，讓他的創作間也同時地揭示了他思想的互峙。

亞洲未來主義或許即是這種前行、後退間所遺留的腳印痕跡，對應著大歷史與個人的種種衝擊所建構出對過往榮光的想像、對未來技術的恐懼、國族榮辱與進步文化的衝擊等等的複雜情狀。

## 天堂成為人類世界的一部分

1969年那場直播中，尼克森總統對著遠在月球遙望地球的太空人說：「天堂成為人類世界的一部分。」（The heavens have become a part of man's world.）透過了媒體，民主陣營的國家人民亦有六億

1 王大閔著，王秋華譯，《幻城》（臺北：典藏藝術家庭股份有限公司，2013）。

2 本雅明著，阿倫特編，張旭東、王斑譯，《啓迪：本雅明文選》，〈歷史哲學論綱〉（北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店，2008），頁265-276。

3 博伊姆著，楊德友譯，《懷舊的未來》（南京：譯林出版社，2010），頁21-36。

4 齊格蒙·鮑曼著，姚偉等譯，《懷舊的烏托邦》（北京：中國人民大學出版社，2018），頁3-4。

5 王聰威，《複島》（臺北：聯合文學，2008）。

人同樣地分享了這個從外部看見地球的視角。當時的太空競賽，從軍備轉為新科技的研發，領土、生存權拓張的競爭，彰顯了冷戰時期從地緣政治轉向外層空間的競爭。

回到今日，2021 年在全球遭受疫情肆虐之時，兩家大型企業維京集團（Virgin Group）與亞馬遜公司（Amazon），同時於七月開啓了新一波的太空競賽。團結號（VSS Unity）及藍色起源（Blue Origin）於 7 月發射了商用太空船，載著旅客前往太空。同樣地，馬斯克（Elon Musk）的太空探索公司（SpaceX）也承攬了美國太空總署（NASA）的太空業務。科技競爭，從政體轉為企業之間，對應著 1960 年代的太空競賽，開拓宇宙殖民的主角，也將從傳統政體到以新自由主義為體的新型態，而科技所服務的對象，也不再是自由民主或社會主義共產的意識形態，而是私人集團。

不斷地拓展疆域之時，未來的每一步都連結著操控世界的資金流向。回到亞洲的視野中時，董啟章的小說《後人間喜劇》<sup>6</sup> 中，一位前往新加坡駐校的學者對當地星耀樟宜（Jewel Changi Airport）的觀察或許能作為回應新自由主義嫁接於他處的科技與新技術。

2019 年於新加坡始之營運的星耀樟宜，顯現了新加坡對應自然與城市的一種特殊的視角及方法。在外型如同甜甜圈的新未來主義空間建築中，星耀樟宜打造了一個室內自然生態，其中著名的景點也標誌了大型企業的名字，如「匯豐銀行雨漩窩」、「資生堂森林谷」。在董啟章的《後人間喜劇》中，此處迴旋的甜甜圈造型，成為了一座能源運轉，能藉此將新加坡視為一座飛船，從原地剝離至太空運行的能源設備，技術的創造、自然的想像揉雜人造世界拓張宇宙下的經濟創造自然想像。在自我生產的循環機制中，藉大量的資金來建構出地球的新貌，或是拋下地球，重建自然的可能。

超越地表、模擬自然，都朝著拓張人類世界的想像。試想著雙邊的政體意識形態的戰爭，轉為新自由主義的獨手掌控，在這個難以移動到他國之時，全世界都看著串流平台中太空旅客失重的數分鐘，透過他們的窗景看見地球的曲度時；在森林大火、水災等極端氣候的新聞訊息之時，室內的森林正綠意盎然。那是脫離現世的視野，被包含在這臆想天堂內的究竟為何？似乎又離我們遠了一些，天使朝前朝後，都看不見烏托邦。

回應著這些現實中卻如同科幻場景的想像，我們或許能依此切分出幾個重要的時間序來重新觀看亞洲的過往。1960 年代的太空競賽將政體競爭放置於地表之外；1970 年將亞洲納入世界的大阪萬國博覽會中所揭示的科技進步；1999 年對於虛擬空間中的編碼危機，重思虛擬世界如何實際影響實際生活；2000 年後，我們對應世界進步之時，開始注意到不斷破壞下無法重整的未來環境；數個末日預言如何影響著我們觀看未來的想像；2019 年新冠肺炎疫情如同重整世界般地，影響了人類的生存困境及資源危機。我們向前看著烏托邦的想像，但所迎接的卻是不斷回整的世界版圖。

6 董啟章，《後人間喜劇》（臺北：新經典文化，2020）。

## 未定之義

想像著複雜情境下，我們對應想像的未來即是在烏托邦、敵托邦間反覆地跨步。如同韓國影集《魷魚遊戲》中的高空玻璃橋，左右選擇往前跨步，所面臨的是前進一步，或是結束。不得不前進的時間序列中，那些希望引我們回望的、引我們重思的，則成為了曾經製作過玻璃，知道強化玻璃有著特殊反射的角色。

「亞洲藝術雙年展－Phantasmopolis 未至之城」，是一無定的座標，聚集同時逃逸的虛構城邦。而參與其中的種種，作為星叢般地，相合、相斥、相連、相悖，在時序、地域中，反覆地詰問亞洲未來。從新自由主義拓張下的爭奪天空、爭奪自然，到自我內省封閉式的魔幻科技場景，亞洲未來主義其所對應的框架，是從外到內的反覆悖斥的過程。它並非為一統的想像，而是建構出多個對應未來的方式，對應資本的拓權、逃逸生殖的想像、對應離散、科技進步、文明進展、地域統整等。

當思考亞洲未來主義時，其框架是對應一繁雜的社會情境，在不同政體、種族、人口等，無法從一而定，朝向未來，同時卻不斷地回望中所衍生的多樣意義。其未定之義，也標示著地域性的斡旋、面對西方之眼的期待與恐懼，投射回自身後的回應。然而，在複雜難解想像中，未定反而能建構出多點的思考模式，並非是結論式地歸納，而是思想的拓張。亞洲的未來並非將其視為一個整體，亞洲不是，未來亦不是，而是分散多元的，在時間序上朝向未來，卻自我解構的過程。

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## Imagining an Asian Futurism: A Ship Flying Toward the Unknown

HO Yu Kuan

### Foreword

Asian futurism and Asian science fiction texts serve as the main axis of the current Asian Art Biennale. This essay hopes to construct several pathways, like a spaceship launching from the earth's surface that contemplates Asia in an imagined future over the course of multiple flights. Published in 2013, the creative timeline of Wang Da Hong's book, *Phantasmagoria*<sup>1</sup>, harkens back over half a century prior through several major historical events in Taiwan. In the text, Wang Da Hong sets the narrative in the year 3069 A.D., and constantly looks back on the splendor of Western Renaissance and Modernism. In light of the delayed publication and the gaps in the narrative regarding the contemporary, we have anchored ourselves on this delay and gap to begin from the Taiwanese text to contemplate how Asia continuously deposes, constructs, re-deposes, and reconstructs a complex landscape in imagining the future.

Ruminating on modernity in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*,<sup>2</sup> Walter Benjamin describes Paul Klee's "Angelus Novus" as gazing out of the painting. His face is turned toward the past; his wings are spread. He sees catastrophe and piling wreckage. Even if he would like to stay and awaken the dead, a storm blows in from Paradise, propelling him irresistibly into the future. In a modernity where the past is being destroyed and new objects constructed, Svetlana Boym responds to Benjamin's Angelus Novus in *The Future of Nostalgia* by contemplating the off-modern as a link between the past and future like the Angelus Novus, bypassing the present imagination.<sup>3</sup> Zygmunt Bauman also mentions this painting, the angel turns toward the future, believing he would see the Garden of Eden, but instead sees the ruins resulting from the constant manipulations of Neoliberalism.<sup>4</sup>

The phantasmopolis is a city in stasis. Everything here has temporarily been put on hold, where a look toward the past, reveals piles of wreckage hurled by a storm toward the future; and an agonizing about-face reveals a future Eden, also in ruin.

### Keep Out

In the book *Phantasmagoria*, created by Taiwanese architect Wang Da Hong in the midst of the Space Race, he tells the tale of a spaceship traveling through the universe. In the world of the novel, space travel is a requisite life experience. Set in the year 3069 A.D., the protagonist Prince Dino boards the spaceship Medusa on his father's instructions. Dino and his friends hurtle through space together on the Medusa toward unknown destinations, without a predetermined return date. The world described in *Phantasmagoria* is under the control of an imperialist power. Any feelings of discontent among the citizenry is alleviated through dream-altering medications, and war is an antiquated noun. Freedom, joy, and indulgence control the populace. The spaceship carrying the prince is similarly an extension of a utopia: an infinite expedition that does not touch ground, while

1 Wang Da Hong, *Phantasmagoria* (Taipei: Art & Collection Group, 2013).

2 Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 249.

3 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 16.

4 Zygmunt Bauman, *Retrotopia* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017), 3-4.

continuously looking back on the wartime glory of a past civilization. It is a flying ship that has fallen into the gap of time, shuttling between two worlds that do not exist in the present, gradually inching forward.

"To survive in space, space must be kept outside." Not only must space be kept out, but the whole universe too. The interior is their ecosystem of the self, responding to the self and responding to the spaceship, removed from the world. By writing about this spaceship isolated from the world, and about this entourage who spend their days on the flying ship imagining the earth, and imagining the cultural products of modernism and the renaissance. Bridging the gaps of space (spaceship/Earth) and time (3069 A.D./the renaissance) in *Phantasmagoria*, reveals that in turning his sights toward the past, Wang Da Hong shuts out what is external to his line of vision: his present moment.

The significance of time and space vanishes when closed-off indoors. Everything in *Phantasmagoria* is a process of introspection. What he constructs is an imagined experience of past glory.

In *A Home Island*<sup>5</sup> Wang Tsung Wei's tells of a village strategically constructed underneath a harbor lighthouse, which corresponds to a village in reality. The inhabitants in the subterranean village are required to mimic the occupations and lives of those above ground. Using the lighthouse as a portal to the parallel world, reveals another magical scenario hidden from reality. Like Shangri La, a simulacrum of human life that corresponds to the real world provides an escape from the realities of war. A parallel universe is reproduced underground where everyone is a shadow of those living in the present world. Unlike *Phantasmagoria*, Wang Tsung Wei's *A Home Island* shuts the whole world out, but the long-term role playing has repercussions in creating endless entanglements between the time frames of the subterranean world and the real world in perpetual reproduction. While Wang Da Hong's *Phantasmagoria* is a science-fictional world with little correspondence to the present world; the isolated island intimately bound to reality in *A Home Island* is a shadowy replica of the living earth. It is an existence replete with historicity, and a world where survival requires a connection to reality.

Let us return to Wang Da Hong's work, and revisit his design for "Selene, Monument to Man's Conquest of the Moon, USA." At a towering 252.71 feet in height, the monument represents the maximum distance between the Earth and the moon, and is a stylistic integration of modernism and Eastern aesthetic concepts. It simultaneously embodies political and religious significance, and encompasses the concept of humankind's first steps into the Universe. Wang Da Hong completed the design for the monument 1967, in anticipation of the moon landing. Upon the success of the space mission, this project was extolled by the architectural community and became a key marker in Sino-US cooperation. Slated for construction in Houston with the courtesy and cooperation of multiple sectors, the project was officially aborted when diplomatic ties with the United States were severed in 1979. To look back at the Earth on lift-off, and seeing the planet from a distance, human beings could reimagine the state of our world. From the horizon, to the center of the universe, to our existence as mere molecules in the great vastness. Wang Da Hong constructed a monument to the spirit of an era from his contemplations about a changing world from the heavens to the earth and from an imagination that traverses the Earth's surface.

By connecting reality to fantasy, and progress to nostalgia, Wang Da Hong's work is a complex synthesis. In the evolution of time, he encountered numerous changes in Taiwan's political system and in cultural exchanges between the East and West; and endured several obstacles to his personal creative process, such as amendments

5 Wang Tsung Wei, *A Home Island* (Taipei: UNITAS Publishing Co., 2008).

to his designs for the Sun Yat Sen Memorial and the cancellation of his moon landing monument. These prompted Wang Da Hong to question the past, present, and future; but are moments of beauty and ruin that he took constant inventory of as he made strides forward, and which revealed an internal ideological confrontation in his work.

An Asian Futurism is perhaps the remnant traces of the footfall in this progress and retreat. It is an imagination of past glory constructed in response to the impact on the individual and on history; and in response to the complex emotional states of a fear of future technologies, to the impact of national honor and humiliation, and to cultural progression, etc.

### The Heavens as a Part of the Human World

At the live broadcast of the moon landing in 1969, President Richard Nixon remarked to the team of astronauts: "The heavens have become a part of man's world." Some 600 million people across the democratic world were able to witness the perspective of the earth as seen from outer space through broadcast media. The space age saw a shift away from a focus on military preparedness to a drive to develop new technologies for territorial expansion and for the right to survival; highlighting the turn from geopolitical competition to space dominance during the Cold War.

Back to the present, as the global pandemic raged on in July of 2021, two of the world's most powerful corporations, Virgin Group and Amazon, trumpeted the beginnings of a new space race when the VSS Unity and Blue Origin both launched commercial spacecrafts, ferrying passengers into outer space. In the same vein, Elon Musk's SpaceX was also awarded a business contract with NASA. The competition of space science and technology has shifted from governments to enterprises. Corresponding to the space race of the 1960s, the key pioneers of space colonization have also change from traditional governments to neoliberalism. The subjects served by science and technology are no longer the ideologies of liberal democracies or socialist communism, but private conglomerates.

In the continued expansion of territory, each future step is connected to the flow of capital that controls the world. Returning to the Asian panorama, Singapore's Jewel Changi Airport may offer a response to neoliberalism by grafting new technologies and capabilities onto a new sphere.

Jewel Changi Airport, which began operations in Singapore in 2019, showcases Singapore's unique perspective and approach in response to nature and the city. In the neo-futuristic space of its donut spaced building, Jewel Changi has created an indoor natural ecosystem where the names of major enterprises are attached to the main attractions, for instance, the "HSBC Rain Vortex" and "Shiseido Forest Valley." In the novel *Post-Human Comedy* by Hong Kong author Dong Kai Cheung, the swirling donut-shaped building as a possible perpetual energy station, imagining Singapore as a spacecraft, an energy facility detached from base and operating on a space journey. The creation of technology and the natural imagination amalgamates with the manmade world to expand on the creation of a natural imagination created under a universal economy. In the mechanism of cyclical self-production, a new view of the earth is constructed funded by vast amounts of capital, or else the earth is discarded and possibly reconstructing nature.

Imagining the human world is expanded by transcending the earth's surface and by simulating nature. A battle of opposing political ideologies attempts to transform into the sole control of neoliberalism. At a time when transnational movement is fraught, the eyes of the world are glued to the media stream in the minutes

as the space passengers achieve zero gravity; everyone see the curve of planet Earth through the spaceship's window. Despite the barrage of news of forest fires, flooding, and other extreme weather conditions, the indoor forests remain verdant and lush. What is the purpose of the vista of departing this planet while enveloped within a conjured paradise? It seems to be ever further out of our reach. The angel looks forward and back, but still doesn't see utopia.

In response to these real-world imaginings that resemble science fiction scenarios, we may parse out a few important chronological sequences through which Asia's past can be re-inspected. The Space Race of the 1960s located political competition beyond the earth's surface; technological advances revealed in the Osaka International Expo of the 1970s marked Asia's entry into the world; the 1999 coding crisis in the virtual space that prompted a re-contemplation of ways in which the virtual world affects real lives; post-2000, we began to notice constant irrevocable destruction of the future environment that corresponds to global progress. In what ways do a number of doomsday prophecies affect our view of imagined our future? The coronavirus pandemic of 2019 seems to have re-configured the world, affecting human survival challenges and a shortage of resources. Our imagination of Utopias may be forward-looking, but what we are greeted with is a constant reconfigured map of the world.

### Yet to be Defined

In imagining a complex scenario, our corresponding imagined future oscillates repeatedly between utopias and dystopias. Like the elevated glass bridge depicted in the Korea television series, "Squid Games," the choice we face is to take a step forward, or to terminate. In the irreversible forward march of time, those who hope we would look back and who lead us to re-contemplate have become the characters who have made glass in the past and realize that tempered glass has unique reflective characteristics.

"Phantasmapolis - 2021 Asian Art Biennial" is an imagined city-state without permanent coordinates that simultaneously convenes while breaking away. Like a fleet of spaceships, the various participants are in mutual harmony, repulsion, connection, and conflict that continuously interrogates the future of Asia both chronologically and regionally. From vying for the skies and nature, to introspective and sealed magical technological scenarios, Asian Futurism and its corresponding framework is a process of repeated rebellion from the outside in. It is not a unified imagination, but a construction of multiple methodologies in response to the future; of expansions in response to capital; of imaginations for escaping reproduction; and of responses to colonization, separation, technology, civilization, regionalism.

The framework in contemplating an Asian futurism responds to a multifarious social scenario where different political systems, races, and populations are in flux as they pivot toward the future, while deriving diverse meanings in the constant looking back. Its lack of definition also signals a regional mediation between the anticipation and fear in confronting the eyes of the west, and the response in the aftermath of self-projection. However, in the complex and inexplicable imagination, a lack of definition can actually create a multipoint mode of contemplation. Not an inductive conclusion, but an expansion of thought. Perhaps, the future of Asia will not regard Asia as a unified whole. That is neither Asia now nor Asia future; instead, the future of Asia is decentralized and pluralistic, chronologically oriented toward the future yet self-deconstructing.