

Divide in Time and Space: Social Stratification in Wei Ma's "Formerly Slow" and Hao Jingfang's "Folding Beijing"

Lyu Guangzhao

Frozen in a Bubble of Time

As I finally sat down and started to write my piece for this special issue on "SFF and Class," I had just completed my thirty-five hours long journey from London to Shanghai (including flight transfer) and settled myself in a quarantine hotel. Luckily, my quarantine hotel was not too bad, probably because the pictures of some "fancy" places other people shared online have effectively lowered my expectations. There was something special about my room: it faced a busy elevated road. It was close to it too, close enough for me to roughly recognise the angry, or sleepy, and reluctant faces of the drivers as they travelled to work during the rush hour. The noise was bearable thanks to the double-glazed window shielding this room, less so when someone sounded the horn too loudly, which they did quite often.

The cars, vans, buses, and trucks were driving on this road day and night, without a start, without an end, each with an internal micro-space isolated from others, each with different power dynamics inside them. As they moved, from one end of my window to the other, they became a "continuum" in themselves, a continuum deriving from the mobility, both temporally and spatially, of these moving cubes differentiated into and empowered by their internal spaces. This, I believe, is what Ezra Pound had sensed when he stood still in a metro station more than a century ago: "The apparition of these faces in the crowd; / Petals on a wet, black bough." Of course, the apparitions I saw during my quarantine were those of the cars passing by outside my window. They moved. They flowed. Their appearance shifted. They transfigured and merged into one another.

From experiencing this phantasmagorical continuum of road traffic, I have somehow developed an empathetic feeling for the drivers and passengers inside the passing cars. Like them, during my travel quarantine I was also confined in a relatively isolated environment or time-space—a temporarily insulated heterotopia where I, also as an *insider*, was attached to a particular label—"potential carrier of the coronavirus"—and therefore had to comply with a series of rules that would be unnecessary for the *outsiders*. However, the difference between me and the people in the cars, between my quarantine room and the traffic continuum outside the window, is also obvious. They were moving, while I stayed. This contrast of mobility and stillness created a rather bizarre sense of anachronism. It seemed I was left behind the flowing traffic on the elevated road. As the cars ran towards the next place at the next moment, my quarantine routine repeated itself day by day (even the compulsory food menu repeated on a three-day basis, and we were not allowed to order delivery). In this way, my sensations of time and space collapsed into one unity, a unity termed the "chronotope" by Mikhail Bakhtin. "Time," as he wrote in "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," "thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope" (Bakhtin 84). Compared to the outside world defined by its mobility, and to the materialisation of the time sequence marked by the road traffic that would never stop, I felt I was frozen in a bubble of time.

Stratified Bubbles in “Formerly Slow”

Also frozen in bubbles of time are the characters in Wei Ma’s short story “Formerly Slow.” Originally circulated on the WeChat official account of Future Affairs Administration in China in July 2019, “Formerly Slow” was translated into English by Andy Dudak and then published in *Future Science Fiction Digest* in December 2020. In this story, the author Wei Ma envisions a fictional city “Shenli” with a subversive yet controversial policy of urban administration, namely the Cyclic Freedom-of-Movement System, dedicated to alleviating a series of urban problems, such as overpopulation, unemployment, eco-degradation, etc. The inhabitants of Shenli are only allowed to travel and work one day a week, and for the rest of the week, they have to stay at home and give their space to other people in the city. Each occupation, therefore, is also divided into seven equal parts. People belonging to different days take the parts entitled to them, while insulated into separate time-spaces, like the cars on the elevated road which keep moving ahead in sequence without seeing each other. For the protagonist Xia Mang and his wife Xiao An, their friends, colleagues, and neighbours are all “Wednesday citizens” like themselves. Those who live on other days, however, literally only exist *outside* the observable world of these Wednesday citizens. There is a solid wall rooted in temporality, separating different social (or temporal) groups of people on different sides. As Xia Mang notices in the story:

The interesting thing was, no matter how dedicated to their work, in Shenli City, Tuesday journalists always had to hurry home before midnight, before Wednesday, while their Wednesday colleagues couldn’t turn up early for their shifts. Around 11:40 PM, Xia Mang would start to see journalists beating a hasty retreat, and starting at ten past midnight, the new batch would begin to turn up.

As if separated by time, like two different worlds, Xia Mang thought to himself. (Wei Ma n.p., original emphasis)

In other words, as expressed more poetically by the rock singer, who, terminally ill, has come to this city in hope of living longer: “Time kept me bound here. And the prison cell that held me was called Wednesday” (Wei Ma n.p.). Even so, from a practical perspective, the Cyclic Freedom-of-Movement System, as a method of biopolitics, works extremely well in Shenli City. Under this system, Shenli can be considered an urban utopia according to all indicators.

The numbers show last year’s per capita GDP at 137,654 U.S. dollars, for a growth rate of 113 percent, surpassing Shanghai for the third year in a row, and holding onto first place in the world for a city’s per capita GDP. At the same time, the report’s questionnaire investigations [of Shenli Economic Development Findings Report], considered highly reliable, indicated a satisfaction rate exceeding 85 percent with regard to a composite index of our city’s economic development, environmental quality, public security, crime rate, and so on. (Wei Ma n.p.)

Attracted by this incredible economic and political success, immigrants from the outside world flock to the utopian city, driving up the number of smugglers. These immigrants, legal or illegal, were not treated equally. They cannot be granted Shenli citizenship naturally. Here, the mechanism which accompanies the Cyclic Freedom-of-Movement System, and that “really makes all the difference” is the “dormancy qualification.” With this qualification, Shenli locals are able to hibernate in a specially designed device at the end of their “working day” (or “Freedom-of-Movement Day”) until one week later, thus ensuring their brain efficiency and concentration, and improving their performance at work.

In contrast to these privileged “chosen ones,” the immigrants are denied the dormancy qualification and prevented from using the hibernation service. Unlike the Shenli citizens, who are able to travel through time into the future in weekly stepping stones, the immigrants are forced to stay awake, and therefore age faster relative to citizens. They are unable to increase their productivity due to lack of rest and relaxation, and therefore only capable of taking on simple jobs with a lower skill threshold. Earning a dormancy qualification in Shenli, for these under-privileged immigrants, has become their lifelong goal, a goal that would require considerable hard work and excessive efforts given the limited number of the available places for each year. As reported in the news, “Last month, Shenli received 7,680 new dormancy applications. Fifty-three qualifications were signed and issued. This issuance rate is a new low, indicative of tightening standards for investigating dormancy applications in our city...” (Wei Ma n.p.)

In a way, these non-native immigrants in Shenli without the dormancy qualification are like the second-class citizens, or “denizens,” a term used by Guy Standing to describe workers without rights and put in supplicant and marginalised positions, forming groups of “resident aliens” (Standing 109). Although they have also

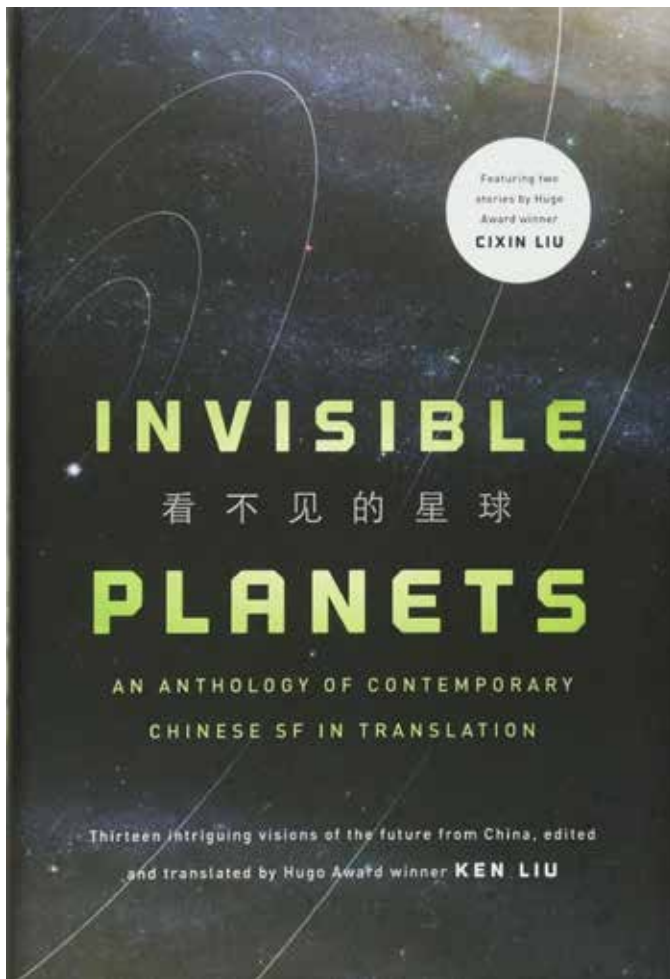
contributed to the Shenli economy, they are basically rendered as the source of cheap labour and forced into the dirtiest and toughest jobs while receiving minimal wages. Therefore, these immigrants without dormancy qualification find themselves as “in-betweeners,” trapped in a utilitarian but toxic duality of “economic acceptance and social rejection” (Ngok 252), which can also be used to describe the dilemma faced by China’s migrant workers flocking to economically developed regions in pursuit of good fortune. In real present-day China, such a sense of being denizens can be triggered by the Household Registration System (also known as *hukou*). Under this system, a citizen must be registered with a specific place (by default it would be your birthplace, or where your parents are registered), where their social welfare resources (including housing, education, medical care, childcare, etc.) are provided. It is possible to transfer your household registration, but in many cases it would be very difficult to do so, especially for cities like Beijing and Shanghai. There are a number of requirements that the internal immigrants can hardly meet, such as the degree of education, income, how much taxes you have paid to the local government, etc. This *hukou* system in China chimes with the dormancy policy in the fictional Shenli, preventing outsiders from accessing the local welfare resources.

For a long time, this system of Cyclic Freedom-of-Movement and dormancy qualifications remain unchallenged, their efficacy and legitimacy well-recognised, until the birth of Weiwei, daughter of Xia Mang and Xiao An. Despite her Shenli citizenship and the dormancy qualification she is entitled to, Weiwei is born with a unique brain structure that resists the dormancy technology. With this potential failure of the dormancy system, the utopian Shenli becomes less utopian. A tiny crack secretly appears in this seemingly flawless structure. All the emotions that had disappeared in this urban utopia – suspicions, discriminations, angers, and concerns – come back again. Weiwei is a note of discord, an underminer of flawlessness, an inauspicious symbol of the fate of utopia. This reminds me of the suffering child in Ursula Le Guin’s famous story “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” (1973). The elements of misery and misfortune embodied both by Weiwei and the child in Omelas should be considered the foundation upon which the surrounding utopia is defined. They manage to introduce the premise of what Tom Moylan calls “critical utopia.” Based on his discussion of the “new utopian works” written in the 1960s and the 1970s, he believes:

The authors of the critical utopias assumed the risky task of reviving the emancipatory utopian imagination while simultaneously destroying the traditional utopia and yet preserving it in a transformed and liberated form that was critical both of utopian writing itself and of the prevailing social formation. (Moylan 42)

Because of Weiwei, both the citizens and the denizens of Shenli begin to question the essence of the Cyclic Freedom-of-Movement System. The dormancy technology presses the pause button on people’s lives so that they do not have to waste the rest of the week apart from their “working day,” confined to their homes and waiting. But even so, gradually they have also discovered that this “working day” of theirs requires a much more intense pace of life and work. They have to prove, without reservation, that the dormancy ‘upgrade’, if granted, will effectively make them capable of doing more complex and delicate jobs. In this process, “working” becomes an end in itself rather than a means of self-realisation. “Under these economic conditions,” wrote Marx, “this realisation of [work] appears as *loss of realisation* for the workers; objectification as *loss of the object and bondage to it*; appropriation as *estrangement*, as *alienation*” (Marx 272). In this way, the *outsider* workers in this story are alienated, or self-alienated, reified as the *object*, rather than the *subject*, of social production. They no longer have weekends and are therefore subordinated to a more general, more exploitive matrix of social discourse, losing their independence and subjectivity to a leviathan built by biopolitics.

While both citizens and denizens belong in theory to the working class – the class of labourers, the class working for employers – the effect of the biopolitical governance in Shenli is to place these two groups in opposition to each other. Between them, a delicately designed, forcibly executed, and politically endorsed boundary has been introduced to deconstruct their class identity. The conflict of capital and labour has been transferred to within the working class, sabotaging any possible collective actions against the employers. In this way, class stratification in Shenli is further enhanced. The citizen-denizen unity that might potentially lead to the “multitude” transcending capitalist manipulation (Hardt and Negri) collapses even before it has a chance to form. Shenli residents tend to see the dormancy qualification as a key to becoming privileged, which allows them to take well-paid and respected jobs. But in fact, those with *real* privilege have placed themselves on a different stage.



They do not pursue this qualification which turns out in reality to be a constraint on those who achieve it. They enjoy a higher privilege – “Total Freedom of Movement.”

Technically speaking, Weiwei is much luckier than the child in Omelas. Her anti-dormancy symptoms do not cause her any suffering, while making her even “freer” than other ordinary people in Shenli. However, her mere appearance still indicates the “critical” side of this urban utopia. In Le Guin’s story, the ones who walk away from Omelas find the ethical conflict hiding beneath the utopian façade of this city unbearable. They cannot abide harmony and happiness conditioned upon a child’s misery. Those who chose to leave must undertake a lonely journey: “Each alone, they go west or north, towards the mountains. They go on. They leave Omelas, they walk ahead into the darkness, and they do not come back” (Le Guin 259). In contrast to this, at the end of “Formerly Slow,” it is Weiwei and her father who leave the city. The note of discord eliminated, Shenli returns to its initial *utopian* state, *harmonious, flawless, full of joy, hope, and enthusiasm*. Weiwei’s mother Xiao An, who has always resented her daughter’s “uniqueness,” can now *escape* from childcare and return to *compete* as a “qualified” worker. On the contrary, Weiwei and

her father are sent on a nostalgic journey to the *past*, in terms of both temporality and spatiality. They look for a slower pace of life, which existed in the good old days and in other places, where people are still subjects, where they can still enjoy weekends, where the possibility of formulating the “multitude” has not been invalidated by the “dormancy qualification,” a policy which leads to social stratification in this *critical* utopia. “Formerly Slow” is just the prologue to what will be a series of Shenli tales serialised by the Future Affairs Administration on its WeChat account. I believe the author Wei Ma will use her following stories to portray a larger picture that more profoundly interrogates the social malaise she has observed in contemporary China.

Folded Spaces and Human Waste in “Folding Beijing”

Of course, class division, inequality, and stratification are not only represented through temporality. They are also very much evident, more straightforwardly, in space and geography, both in fiction and in reality. In July 2016, one month before “Folding Beijing” won the Hugo Award for Best Novelette in that year, *Beijing Youth Daily* published a news feature on the author Hao Jingfang, and introduced her writing styles and the sources of her inspirations:

When there were major events in Beijing, restrictions were put in place, and instead of bustling streets, they became tidy and beautiful. “There are certain people,” she thought to herself, “*who can be hidden away, hidden in unseen spaces*. With this dark idea, it is certainly possible to hide certain crowds underground forever.” (Yang B1, my emphasis)

Her science fiction writings appear to be mostly inspired by her close observation of her surroundings. “My main motivation for writing,” said Hao Jingfang, “comes from what I have seen and witnessed. These images and emotions are so full in my heart that I need a container to preserve them.” (Yang B1) Deeply rooted in such observations and capturing the weirdness of China’s post-socialist transitions, “Folding Beijing” has gained international recognition as a thought experiment. Utopia and dystopia collide and collapse into each other, not temporally, as in “Formerly Slow,” but spatially. The bright and dark sides of Sargentian “social dreaming” (see Sargent 3-4), the fond dreams and nightmares that can lead to opposite ways of narrating utopianism, merge into a state of ambiguity through the process of “folding.” This process divides Beijing into three strictly stratified

spaces where, in the words of the news feature, “certain people” can be hidden away, only visible to those who live in the same space. As she wrote in the story,

One side of the earth was First Space, population five million. Its allotted time lasted from six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock the next morning. Then the space went to sleep, and the earth flipped.

The other side was shared by Second Space and Third Space. Twenty-five million people lived in Second Space, and their allotted time lasted from six o'clock on that second day to ten o'clock at night. Fifty million people lived in Third Space, allotted the time from ten o'clock at night to six o'clock in the morning, at which point First Space returned. (Hao “Folding” 230)

Through these foldings, Hao Jingfang constructs a utopian/dystopian narrative space, where she is able to investigate different *possibilities*. “I [...] gave a scenario of a possible future that tried to tackle problems brought by automation, technological progress, unemployment, inequality and economic stagnation.” (Hao “Speech” n.p.). As she said at the Hugo Award ceremony one month after the news feature in *Beijing Youths Daily*, the ambition of her “genre-less” writings is to endow science fiction with realistic concerns – the everyday concerns that she has witnessed by looking around herself in contemporary China.

I find David Harvey’s assertion of how China looks very much to the point: “Somebody, somewhere and somehow, is getting very rich” (Harvey 142). From the late-1980s to the mid-1990s, Deng Xiaoping frequently proclaimed that it was necessary to “let some people get rich first in certain regions” in order to lay the foundation of prosperity for all. He moved away from the politically constricting notion of complete egalitarianism and advocated the superiority of socialism “in terms of avoiding polarization, achieving common prosperity and eliminating poverty” (see Naughton 501). However, in the decades following Deng Xiaoping, economic reality moved in the opposite direction. We do not need any well-researched report to tell us about the widening gap between those who “got rich first” and those who the rich have forgotten. The signs of this are everywhere: the developmental unevenness between inland and coastal cities, between rural and urban areas, between different social classes, and probably also between the different passing cars outside my window. Entrepreneurs and labour contractors promise a shining future to youngsters,

fresh from the campuses, and to the migrant workers attracted by the seemingly prosperous silhouette of the developed cities like Beijing. They decorate their promises with various fancy words such as dream, hard work, contribution, prospect, etc., all of which mask a reality which is exploitative and exhaustive in nature. The ordinary labourers in “Folding Beijing” can be categorised with the “precariat,” a term Guy Standing uses to refer to a “class-in-the-making” defined by “short-termism,” who might develop “a mass incapacity to think long term, induced by the low probability of personal progress or building a career” (Standing 8, 21). Beijing’s future does not belong to the precariat:

[They] had built this folding city. District by district, they had transformed the old city. Like termites swarming over a wooden house, they had chewed up the wreckage of the past, overturned the earth, and constructed a brand-new world [...] Finally, when the completed building stood up before them like a living person, they had scattered in terror as though they had given birth to a monster. (Hao 231)

In such a helpless and hopeless tone, “Folding Beijing” portrays the confusion and hardship of all migrant workers and young drifters in this gigantic city. Everyone laughs, cries, prays, gains, and loses here in the folding city, and they all hope to find the sense of belonging and identity in a place becoming increasingly surreal. Beijing welcomes them all, but not in the way they have wished for. Driven by capital, these outsiders are merely considered the source of surplus value to be extracted, working for an illusory goal from which they are forever excluded.

In the story, those who were no longer valuable to the city are sent or expelled to the Third Space. What happens there has nothing to do with the other two spaces. These people are “the masters of the night,” (Hao 232) undertaking the least regarded jobs during the eight evening hours they had every two days. They believe that waste recycling is the backbone of Third Space. They are proud of it, willing to “eke out a living by performing the repetitive drudgery as fast as possible, to toil hour after hour for rewards as thin as the wings of cicadas” (Hao 232). But in fact, they have nothing, none at all. As the protagonist Lao Dao finds out later in the story, their waste recycling industry could easily be run by machines. They do not have any trade with the outside world, cannot afford to apply for loans, cannot contribute a penny to Beijing’s GDP, and therefore have been “kicked out” from the social market as a whole.

Most of the time, they are sealed in soporific cocoon-beds, isolated from the spaces where people are really participating in the dynamic social matrix.

In other worlds, the Third Space is hidden, forgotten, and forsaken, accommodating not social subjects but, in Zygmunt Bauman's term, "human waste." In *Wasted Lives* (2004), Bauman argues that human waste, or wasted humans, are "the 'excessive' and 'redundant', that is the population of those who either could not or were not wished to be recognized or allowed to stay." (Bauman 5) As he continues:

The production of human waste [...] is an inevitable outcome of modernization, and an inseparable accompaniment of modernity. It is an inescapable side-effect of *order-building* (each order casts some parts of the extant population as 'out of place', 'unfit' or 'undesirable') and of *economic progress* (that cannot proceed without degrading and devaluing the previously effective modes of 'making a living' and therefore cannot but deprive their practitioners of their livelihood). (Bauman 5, original emphasis)

However, there is one character in "Folding Beijing", who seems to be different from the other "wasted humans" in the Third Space: this is Lao Dao, the space-traveller. To earn the tuition fees for his adopted daughter Tang Tang, Lao Dao has accepted a commission to sneak into the Second and then the First Space in order to deliver a message. This is not an easy undertaking, but the money is good, and he needs it desperately. Here in his father-daughter relationship, Lao Dao's long-lost subjectivity has been regenerated. Through his hopes for Tang Tang, we can identify Lao Dao's own interest in music, fine art, as well as other elements that transcend the class to which he belongs. At the end of the story, despite many twists and turns (literally), Lao Dao manages to get more than enough money to pay for Tang Tang's tuition. But even so, can we read this story as representing a genuine possibility of class mobility? Can we see any possibility for the subalterns in the Third Space to speak for themselves as they are gradually reduced to mere numbers in the statistical reports presented at the ceremony celebrating "The Folding City at Fifty" (Hao 249)?

I doubt this. What Lao Dao wished was to let Tang Tang grow up as a "real lady" able to "sit elegantly and quietly, cover her knees with her skirt, and smile so that her pretty teeth showed," because this, he believes, is "how you got others to love you." (Hao 262) Interestingly, however, this is also the impression he got from Yi Yan

in the First Space, the beautiful assistant to the bank's president, who has been cheating on her husband and lying to her pursuer; a personae Lao Dao does not like at all. In fact, he is clever enough to understand how far away he is from the First Space. "He gazed at the park at night, realizing this was perhaps the last time he would see a sight such as this. He wasn't sad or nostalgic. This was a beautiful, peaceful place, but it had nothing to do with him" (Hao 257). Lao Dao knows everything. He knows that if one day Tang Tang were to be accepted by the First Space with proper education, she would definitely become estranged, alienated, unfamiliar, and be transformed into someone he would never like. But he accepts that cost anyway, without hesitation, because he understands that this is the only way in which Tang Tang can do something *meaningful* in this folding city, allowing her to escape from her unfortunate identity as "human waste".

Divide in Time and Space

In the "Call for Papers" of this special issue, the editors borrow a sentence from Martha E. Gimenez's article "Marxism, and Class, Gender, and Race: Rethinking the Trilogy": "class is not simply another ideology legitimating oppression; it denotes exploitative relations between people mediated by their relations to the means of production" (Gimenez 24). From this perspective, these "Third Spacers" in "Folding Beijing," theoretically speaking, might not be considered a *class* since they are completely excluded from the general matrix of social production. In the process of urban development and modernisation, these people have made their contributions to building this folding city, but then been abandoned and disposed of within this hidden space. Lao Dao is told later in this story about the contrast between the rising cost of human labour and the cheaper option of machinery. At the same time, increasing productivity leads to an increasing rate of unemployment. To solve this, "[the] best way," as a government officer tells Lao Dao, "is to reduce the time a certain portion of the population spends living, and then find ways to keep them busy. Do you get it? Right, *shove* them into the night" (Hao 255, my emphasis). In this way, the "Third Spacers" are no longer exploitable. They have been used up, having nothing left to be exploited. But nonetheless, their transformation from precarious labourers, or the precariat, to "human waste" does not equate to the end of the market and class exploitation. These mechanisms remain dynamic, just transferred to other relations of production that involve



Image source: tor-online.de/feature/buch/2017/06/ideenliteratur-aus-china-pekling-falten/

machines and the “Second Spacers” – those who still trust and are fighting for the illusions promised by people living at the top of the social pyramid.

Earlier in 2021, there was a much-debated social controversy concerning delivery riders in China. Tired of the biopolitical/algorithmic control of the platform economy and unlimited exploitation by the oligopoly in this industry, they launched an informal strike asking for a higher wage, less commission fees, better protection and insurance, and a longer delivery time for each order (see Wang n.p.). But the companies, not surprisingly, shirked their responsibility. They added a function on their mobile apps allowing the customers to choose whether they were happy to wait for five more minutes or not, igniting a severe conflict between the riders and the customers. The former group argued that the customers were inconsiderate and indifferent to their personal safety, while the rebuttal from the latter was equally convincing: we paid the money, we are hungry and exhausted from our work, and we need our food. According to China Report Network, in the first half of 2019, a prominent food delivery platform in China had 86.3% of its orders placed by customers aged between 20 and 34 years old (see Zhao et al 233). These young people are mostly influenced and coerced by a “996” (9 a.m. to 9 p.m., six days a week) culture that has become dominant in urban life, whether they like it or not. Under such a social system, food delivery is in a way no longer an option, but an indispensable part of their daily life. It seems their anger against the riders’ strike is understandable.

But I am sure you can see what is wrong here. Just like the Shenli citizens and denizens in “Formerly Slow” differentiated by the dormancy qualification, the customers and riders belong to the same class—the working class of labourers, of waged employees, of those who strive to live a better life through dedication and hard work. Their emotions and hostility are misdirected towards each other, as the companies cunningly extract themselves from the mess which they created in the first place. This is what I read from Wei Ma’s “Formerly Slow,” a sharp story revealing the internal division of the working class in this new era and calling for unity between citizens and denizens, between local residents and migrant workers, and between delivery customers and riders. “Class” is always a meaningful topic of science fiction and fantasies, and in “Formerly Slow” and “Folding Beijing,” it is estranged, represented, and interpreted through the forms of temporality and spatiality, generating a special chronotope, where various social concerns and dilemmas can be closely interrogated. In time and space we are divided; but in realising the hypocrisy embodied in the dormancy qualification and the folding city, we will unite, not as human waste, but as human beings.

Works Cited

Bakhtin, Mikhail Mikhaïlovich. “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel.” *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, edited by Michael Holquist, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1981: 84-258.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcast*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.

Gimenez, Martha E. "Marxism, and Class, Gender, and Race: Rethinking the Trilogy," *Race, Gender & Class* 8.2, (2001): pp. 23-33.

Hao Jingfang. "Folding Beijing," *Invisible Planets: An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese SF in Translation*, translated and edited by Ken Liu. New York: Tor, 2016: 221-62.

Hao Jingfang. 2016. "Acceptance Speech for Hugo Awards (Best Novelette)." The 74th World Science Fiction Convention (MidAmeriCon II), Kansas City, Missouri: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKNuFDRnmEI, accessed on 20 July 2021.

Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. New York: Penguin Books, 2004.

Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.

Le Guin, Ursula. "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" (1973), *The Wind's Twelve Quarters*. Toronto, New York and London: Bantam Books, 1975: 251-59.

Marx, Karl. "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in *Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels Collected Works, Volume 3* (London: Lawrence & Wishart), 1975.

Moylan, Tom. *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination*. New York: Methuen, 1986.

Naughton, Barry. "Deng Xiaoping: The Economist," *The China Quarterly* # 135, 1993: 491-514.

Ngok, Kinglun. "Migrant Labor, Urban Exclusion and Social Harmony in China." *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 20.3 (2012): 247-260.

Sargent, Lyman Tower. 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited'. *Utopian Studies* 5:1 (1994): 1-37.

Standing, Guy. *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011.

Wang Zixu. "In China, delivery workers struggle against a rigged system," *SupChina*, 20 April 2021: supchina.com/2021/04/20/in-china-delivery-workers-struggle-against-a-rigged-system, accessed on 21 July 2021.

Wei Ma. 2020. "Formerly Slow". *Future Science Fiction Digest* # 9: future-sf.com/fiction/formerly-slow/, accessed on 18 July 2021.

Yang Yang. "Hao Jingfang: She is Only Second to Liu Cixin," *Beijing Youth Daily*, 25 July 2016, B1: epaper.yynet.com/images/2016-07/25/B01/bjqnb20160725B01.pdf, accessed on 20 July 2021.

Zhao Xueying, et al. "The Online-to-Offline (O2O) Food Delivery Industry and Its Recent Development in China," *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 75.2 (2021): 232-237.

LYU GUANGZHAO (HE/HIM) IS CURRENTLY A PHD CANDIDATE IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (UCL). HIS RESEARCH PROJECT IS A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BRITISH SF BOOM AND THE CHINESE NEW WAVE, FOCUSING ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE TWO SF MOVEMENTS AND THE BROADER SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE POST-THATCHER BRITAIN AND THE POST-SOCIALIST CHINA. HE IS THE CO-FOUNDER OF LONDON CHINESE SF GROUP (LCSFG), CO-DIRECTOR OF LONDON SF RESEARCH COMMUNITY (LSFRC), AND WAS RECENTLY AWARDED THE "SUPPORT A NEW SCHOLAR" GRANT (2021-2022) BY SCIENCE FICTION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (SFRA). HIS ARTICLES HAS BEEN/ WILL BE PUBLISHED IN SFRA REVIEW, EXTRAPOLATION, VECTOR, UTOPIAN STUDIES, AND SCIENCE FICTION STUDIES