

街頭。阿巴斯的文章頗受班雅明 (Walter Benjamin) 的影響，他確切地指出梁秉鈞的詩在意圖推翻各種文化上先入為主的假設，對文化本身亦有所懷疑。他指出詩中一種新鮮而誠懇的意識，吸收了一切影響而融匯創新。他對梁秉鈞的詩最感興趣的，是那一種吸收了一切能量與轉變的文化風貌，那一種恆常變化永不終結的文化。梁秉鈞的詩是一切不確定事物的具體呈現。在他詩的空間裏，一切小聰小慧將無立足之地。他重新界定了香港知識份子的處境。

當英國殖民統治快要結束之際，香港的前景自然是一切焦點所在。香港是多種中國觀點及西方思潮衝擊下的文化產物。若時間是刻劃重要事件流逝的一種意念上的記號，那麼香港便是一個「位於時間末端的城市」。香港是第一個以另一種理由存在於另一種意識環境中的城市。站在傳統文化角度看，會覺得香港是一個極其重要的新文化中心，極希望它能成功；但又對它的經濟行政架構無法全部認同。香港又是對一個古老過去既懷有感情又憂心忡忡的一個政治地區。概括來說，在種種複雜因素的牽絆下，香港是一個快將進入歷史的城市。它即將進入另一種時間，所有現成的解決方法，不是混亂無比，便是令人困惱不堪。

當整個世界坐在酒吧間揣想香港的命運，並對其中複雜的生命意義發出種種宣言的時候，我們合作的成品在這生命的空間提供了不同的啟示與建議，滋潤了原先的構想，說明了我們並不是活在一一切掙扎的邊緣、活在自己的邊緣，證明了香港人並不是自己土地上的移民。

註釋

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Introduction to the 1992 Edition

The Last Emporium: Verse and Cultural Space

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1

Living in interesting times, as the old Chinese adage tells us, is a dubious advantage. Interesting times are periods of violent transitions and uncertainty. People in Hong Kong, faced with the prospect of 1997, clearly live in interesting times. This essay is an invitation to think through some of the manifold relations between a text and the cultural space in which it is produced. The text is a volume of translations of some forty poems by the Hong Kong writer Leung Ping-kwan (better known under his pen name Ye Si) rendered into English verse by the American poet Gordon T. Oving. The cultural space is that structure of incompatibilities called Hong Kong, the "Last Emporium" of British colonialism, a heteroclitic space made up of different speeds and times; a space particularly resistant to linear or chronological modes of representation.

Evoking the cultural space of Hong Kong through a volume of verse may seem a little perverse, because there is hardly a large audience for poetry in this still-British colony. There is no equivalent to a figure like Beidao here—for better or for worse. So a preliminary question to ask is: how much of the Hong Kong situation can poetry, and specifically Leung's poetry, represent? There are a few points to consider when we try to answer this question:

- (a) Hong Kong as a specific cultural identity, worth studying in terms of itself, is (perhaps surprisingly) a relatively new idea. In the past, all stories about Hong Kong tended to turn into stories about somewhere else—China, Taiwan, the West; as if there were not enough local substance to merit attention. It was only after Margaret Thatcher's visit to China, and even more so after Tiananmen, that

people started talking more about Hong Kong as a unique cultural entity—in line with Walter Benjamin's dictum that only that which is about to disappear becomes an image. It is as if both locals and expatriates were suffering for a long time from what Sigmund Freud called "reverse hallucination." As hallucination means seeing what is not there, so reverse hallucination means not seeing what is there. What is experienced in this reverse hallucinatory space then is a kind of *dis-apparence*: it gives us a reality that is not so much hidden as purloined; and a sense of the uncanny that is not so much of the order of the *déjà vu* as it is of the order of what we might call the *déjà disparu*. What I am trying to describe here are some of the elusive co-ordinates of a colonial space in the process of changing: toward what, remains to be seen.

- (b) A second observation concerns Hong Kong's famous "energy and vitality." This energy, it is important to note, can be directly related to the fact that this is a city of transients—and staying for five weeks or fifty years makes little difference. The city is not so much a place as a space of transit. It has always been, and will perhaps always be, a port in the most literal sense: a doorway, a point in-between. A city that used to be located at the intersections of different spaces, it will increasingly be located (as if to prove Paul Virilio's thesis for him) at the intersections of different times or speeds. There are already signs of this happening. It is not by accident that the largest current project is the proposed construction of the new airport on Lantau, one of Hong Kong's outlying islands. When completed, the airport will be a kind of city within a city, but a city without citizens, a semiotic or informational city populated by travelers and service personnel. The other side then of the tourist image of Hong Kong as junks—in-the-fragrant-harbor is this port-mentality I am trying to sketch out: for whom everything is provisional, ad hoc; for whom everything floats—currencies, values, human relations—in a kind of unconscious parody of a perfect post-structuralist dream.

- (c) There is another observation about Hong Kong's energy and vitality that could be related to what I'd like to call decadence—a useful

concept once it is shorn of all moralistic and fin-de-siècle overtones.

The energy here is an energy that gets very largely channeled into one direction. One of the effects of a very efficient colonial administration is that it provides almost no outlet for political idealism (until perhaps quite recently); as a result, most of the energy is directed toward the economic sphere. Historical imagination, the citizens' belief that they might have a hand in shaping their own history—this gets replaced by speculation on the property or stock markets, or by an obsession with fashion or consumerism. If you cannot choose your political leaders, you can at least choose your own clothes. We find therefore not an atmosphere of doom and gloom, but the more paradoxical phenomenon of *doom and boom*: the more frustrated or blocked the aspirations to "democracy" are, the more the market booms. By the same logic, the only form of political idealism that has a chance is that which can go together with economic self-interest, when "freedom" for example could be made synonymous with the "free market." This, I believe, is how one can understand the unprecedented mass demonstrations over the Tiananmen Massacre by the hundreds of thousands of the middle-class who have never before marched in the streets. June 1989 in Hong Kong was a rare moment when economic self-interest could so easily misrecognize itself as political idealism. There was genuine emotion and outrage to be sure, which does not preclude the possibility that many of the marchers were moved by how much they were moved. In any event, the patriotic fervor in most cases was short-lived and without political outcome. In the aftermath to Tiananmen, amazingly complacent bumper-stickers appeared for a while in the automobiles of the bourgeoisie, which read: "Motoring in dignity, for freedom and democracy." If the situation I have been describing can be called decadent, it is not decadent in the sense of decline (because we see what looks like progress everywhere), but in the sense of a one-dimensional development in a closed field.

- (d) A final observation concerns the passing of sovereignty back into the hands of China. The end of British rule, it should be obvious,

will not mean the end of colonial rule, a simple return of Chinese territory to the Chinese. Whatever Hong Kong used to be like in the nineteenth century, it has since become a very different entity. It is not true, as some may wish to think, that if you scratch the surface of a Hong Kong person you will find a Chinese identity waiting to be reborn: history has seen to that. The Hong Kong person is now a bird of a different feather, a kind of Maltese Falcon. So when sovereignty reverts to China, we may expect to find another colonial situation, but with an important historical twist: where the colonized state, while politically subordinate, is in many crucial respects *not* in a dependent subaltern position, but is in fact more advanced—in terms of education, technology, access to international networks, and so forth—than the colonizing state. This may well be a situation unprecedented in the history of colonialism, and it might justify the use of the term post-coloniality in a special sense: a postcoloniality that precedes decolonization. Some foreshadowings are already evident in Hong Kong's present relation to Britain: it is the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank that has recently taken over the British Midlands Bank and not vice versa. As for China, administering the Hong Kong "special economic zone" after 1997 may be for the Chinese authorities a little like handling a gadget from the future. For example, one of the hiccups about the new airport, besides the huge cost, is anxiety on the Chinese side about whether they will be able to handle the extreme high-tech sophistication of the project. The historical ironies will only become more accentuated as China continues on its reformist course, as it looks likely to do, making the formula of "one country, two systems" so much easier to dismantle: what we will find will not be two systems (socialist, capitalist), but one system at different stages of development; a difference in times and speeds.

From these observations about the heterogeneous cultural space of Hong Kong, I come back to the question: how representative are Leung's poems? And the answer I want to suggest is that Leung's poetry cannot and does not wish to make any claims to be representative, "to speak

for Hong Kong." These forty poems are not a microcosm of Hong Kong society; they do not give us the history of Hong Kong *in nuce*. The easy assumption of a homogeneous social space that would allow a part to represent the whole—such an assumption is never made. As Leung tells us in the piece entitled "An Old Colonial Building" (which also happens to be the Main Building of the University of Hong Kong), his words are not uttered from a strong position of centrality, "amidst the buildings of chrome and glass," but from the sidelines, on the margins, in relation to a minor detail of structure, "beside / a circular pond riddled with patterns of moving signs." However, relinquishment of the claim to be representative is not as limiting as it seems, nor is it simply a form of modesty. In historical context, it is more a mark of integrity and a tactic than a limitation, especially when we see it in relation to a situation where group after group is now coming forward to make the claim, more often than not in bad metaphors and with varying degrees of credibility, to represent the interests of Hong Kong. As Leung puts it in "Bittermelon," where this wrinkled and ordinary local vegetable becomes an emblem of what is involved in writing poetry in Hong Kong:

The loudest song's not necessarily passionate;
the bitterest pain stays in the heart.

...
In the rows of flowery, tiresome singing
you persist in your own key.

...
In these shaken times, who more than you holds
in the wind, our bittermelon, steadily facing
worlds of confused bees and butterflies and a garden gone wild.

This is not poetry as subjective self-expression, nor is it poetry that "reflects" an objective reality; it is not even in any obvious way a poetry of critical opposition. Rather, like the bittermelon, what the Hong Kong poet gives us through a kind of quiet persistence are the real but non-objective indices of disappearance. Thus in not speaking for Hong Kong in any programmatic way, Leung's work registers much more forcefully the fractures and sutures of a society in the process of mutation. In not speaking for Hong Kong, he is able to show how problematic the issues

of citizenship, community, and identity still are and how far we are from a consensus about these things.

2

There is in Leung's poetry a particular kind of violence that is well caught in some lines by Lucretius that the film-maker Michelangelo Antonioni likes to quote: "Nothing appears as it should in a world where nothing is certain. The only certain thing is the existence of a secret violence that makes everything uncertain." What strikes me as suggestive here is the idea of a "secret violence": a muted violence, violence with the sound track turned off, as it were. This is not the violence that we get in modernist literature (even though Leung is himself a student of modernism), which in Charles Baudelaire or T. S. Eliot or Lu Xun foregrounds the shock experience that results from a kind of psychic overload of the human sensorium. It is certainly not the heavily coded violence that we see so much of in Hong Kong cinema and television, with the expected thuds in the expected places. Nor is it like the recordings of violence that we find in the films of Brian de Palma or David Lynch. There is very little that is overtly violent in Leung's work, which in its choice of language, form, and subject matter usually projects a matte, non-sensational, ordinary quality. But this is because it is not the violence of appearance that Leung gives us, but of dis-appearance and indiscernibilities.

Take the opening poem of the volume "At the North Point Car Ferry," which seems an exception in that it makes use of sequences of surreal images that turn the familiar sights of Hong Kong into a post-apocalyptic landscape. The last part of the poem reads as follows:

Up close to the body of the sea
her rainbows were oilslicks.

The images of the skyscrapers
were staggering giants on the waves.

We came through cold daylight to get here,
following a trail of broken glass.

The last road signs pointed to rusty drums,
everything smelling of smoke and burned rubber,

though we couldn't see fire anywhere.
In the narrow shelter of the flyover,
cars and their people waited a turn to go over.

Leung's poem reminds us a little of Jean-Luc Godard's film *Week-end* (1967) where a bourgeois couple's casual weekend trip in a motorcar becomes a catastrophe, and where long queues of automobiles jammed on the highways serve as metaphor for capitalist society choking itself in overproduction and the pursuit of pleasure. But the comparison only underlines a difference that comes out in the last two lines: unlike in Godard's film, which ends up strewn with dead and mutilated bodies, here no catastrophe real or imaginary has taken place. The imaginings of disaster last a moment, after which things just go on as "cars and their people waited a turn to go over." But this is the point: that things can just go on, that no breakdown has actually taken place, that the system can perpetuate itself: *that* is the catastrophe, the "secret violence," which also means that all apocalypses are now, to use Tadeusz Konwicki's thoughtful phrase, minor apocalypses.

The violence of Leung's poetry then is keyed in the minor mode: minor in the sense that things do not add up, not even into a catastrophe. What for example could be more catastrophic than the Tiananmen Massacre which has all the ingredients of a major and tragic historical event, after which nothing could be the same anymore? Yet this does not entirely preclude the event from being appropriated and turned into a world historical soap opera. Leung has three poems about Tiananmen, a contemporary triptych which, when they are seen together, show well how the minor mode operates. These poems, it seems to me, can be read to be as much about Tiananmen as they are about the highly overdetermined Hong Kong response to the event. Through the use of a simple metaphor, that of furnishing a home, the poems allow us to follow the changing attitudes to Tiananmen. The first poem "In the Great Square" begins quietly with homely images of spring cleaning ("We'd begun again housecleaning, sorting importances"), which reveal how ramshackle the house has become, and ends by registering the sudden physical and psychic shock of the event:

At midnight, pandemonium! We only wanted to change a few things, to draw the curtain over that blimshed picture — wild sands scattered our signs, thunder blasted our tables and chairs.

In the second poem, “Broken Home,” the event is still fresh in the mind but it has already receded a little into historical distance. The tone now is more reflective and the emphasis is placed not on the moment of shock but on the after-shock, and the growing perception of betrayal:

You say it was always a temporary home, we can build another.
Sure we can, our own hearts are the furniture.

...
The earth shakes and spirits are shattered like glass, broken like flower pots.
I bend down to lift you from the trampled ground
but find you and your promises of rebuilding a home with me
can't stand up.

The second to the last poem, “Refurnishing,” is shaped like a kind of post-script to Tiananmen; or more precisely, it shows us how a post-scripting or rewriting of history has been carried out. The same metaphor of housecleaning is used, but it connotes something else now, as it is the authorities who do the “cleaning up”:

They cleaned the floors till they shone like trackless water;
they soaped away the smells of cutlery, until
nothing had happened; the last smoke went up the ventilators.

Instead of brute force, what the authorities now use is the power of images (what Roland Barthes used to call “mythologies”):

It could not have been a better year, really,
what with the best vegetables in the markets, undeniable images;
the nubby cucumbers, the plump new kidney beans won't allow
insidious interpretations....

And the result? A restoration of old stabilities to blot out popular memory:

The great old furniture, hauled into the parlor, is History,
solidly in place today....

This is not a poetry of protest or indignation: it is worse. By mixing a kind of quiet mimicry of official reasoning with indirect commentary, the poem traces the processes of appropriation and containment as they take place. And one of the questions it raises is the following—which is more violent: the brutal, highly visible, repression—or the insidiously subtle control through images?

Such a question has clearly a local address as well, because it is this latter, more subtle, violence that Leung projects in his poetic texts on Hong Kong. For example, in a poem entitled “Images of Hong Kong,” he enumerates some of the contradictions that play such a large part in the daily life of the city, like the man “who studied anarchism in France and came home / to work for ‘Playboy,’ then ‘Capital[.]’” or the “Beijing journalist who became / an expert on pets and pornography under capitalism.” These contradictions go largely unnoticed because of the many resources of containment that are readily available here, like the tremics of the mass media for example:

One has only to push buttons to change pictures
to get in on so many trends one can't even think,
too much trivia and so many places and stories
one can't switch identities fast enough....

The danger then is of history too, at least our sense of it, being flattened out into

... a montage of images,
of paper, collectibles, plastic, fibres,
laser discs, buttons....

— which is like a form of schizophrenia.

What I am calling Leung's minor mode can be related to his choice of subject matter, with its fondness for banal and seemingly unpromising subjects. One of the four sections of the volume is devoted entirely to “Things,” where Leung writes about paintings and papayas, potted plants and pears, Chinese bittermelons and pomegranates. If the large themes of life and destiny have been taken over by local soap operas, and discussions of pressing political issues have been pre-empted by

professional politicians, there are still the small subjects and objects left and these will have to serve. The minor mode can be even more clearly related to Leung's language, with its insistence on the ordinary, its avoidance of bravura and rhetoric, its underplaying of the sensational. There is very little *verbal irony* in Leung's style, no line that describes how the world ends not with a bang but with a whimper; generally speaking, such verbal irony simply tries to overcome at the verbal level what cannot be overcome at the level of social life. On the other hand, there is a great deal of *historical irony* which places things without resorting to verbal accentuation. It is as if Leung were intent in his "Things" poems to let objects themselves speak without the distortions of language, as in the poem "Papaya":

I have your words, that you put down on paper,
but nothing at hand to return, so I write down

papaya. I cut one open: so many
dark points, so many undefined things.

However, this is not to be sure an attempt to bypass language altogether, which would be a disingenuous enterprise. Rather it is a use of language which implies the taking of what we can only call a political stand: this ordinary language does not come on strong, insofar as a strong language implies belief that one is speaking for the right and the true; it is a "weak" language in its refusal to categorize, to reduce others to a mere object of one's own conception, i.e. to a cliché. For example, addressing some local flame trees while riding in a double-decker bus, Leung writes:

I suppose it's impossible to see you as you'd like,
the way another flowering tree would see you.
I stick my head out for a really good look
so I can be sure of how your flowers differ from others.
You shake your head as if to say: "cliché after cliché!"

It is possible to see in the subdued intimations and projections of so much covert violence in Leung's poetry an allegory of a new kind of colonial space, a space I have called decadent. The decadent in this sense is what reduces choice, forecloses options, blocks exit. A poem like

"Lucky Draw" catches well this decadent ethos of the "fast emporium," with all its tacit assumptions; what Leung describes here is not only the local passion for acquisition, but also and more frighteningly the inability to imagine any other alternative:

People carry off their winnings
and hurry to hide them.
I am still here, walking slowly.

Goodbye, sir.

Goodbye,

madam.

I shout from behind,

goodbye,

pumpkin and corn,

take care not to trip

carrying so many things walking.

But they think I am trying to catch up

and walk all the faster.

The question I want to raise now is how in a decadent situation, another voice could be introduced—a *de-cadence* shall we say, a dissonance. What I am raising is the possibility of the emergence of a postcolonial sensibility, and a question about what such a sensibility might be.

3

Given the very complex historical conditions of Hong Kong, some of which have been alluded to in the above, the postcolonial does not imply the decisive leaving behind of the colonial heritage like a style of clothing that can simply be put on or discarded. When Leung in his poem "In Fabric Alley" refers to the clothing material we can buy in this famous Hong Kong street —

... the thin, translucent silk,
the cotton that drags its touch in the fingers, the coarse
wool that alters a growing body, the provocations
in the toes of shoes, the seductions in collars.

— he is also alluding to the way in which a whole political system has bequeathed to us the socio-economic fabric of our lives. It is not a

question of throwing away the fabric which has so much of our lives interwoven in it, but of asking

How to go about tailoring something new,
to make it so it wears the body well?

Interestingly enough, one of the best commentaries on this poem is provided by a recent story about a Hong Kong tailor. The tailor in question is the appointed uniform-maker to government house. On the imminent arrival of the new governor, Chris Patten, he very enterprisingly ordered expensive supplies of gold braid and rare birds' feathers in anticipation of a request to make the traditional gubernatorial uniform. But then the new governor decides to break with sartorial tradition and chooses a simple business suit instead. The tailor is out of pocket and in his frustration has even hinted at suing the government. The joke though is on him. What he cannot see is that while it may be the same colonial body that is still ruling Hong Kong, it now wears a new style of clothes; and dealing with such *discontinuities within apparent continuities* requires as ante "tailoring something new."

The emergence of a postcolonial sensibility, as we read it in Leung's poetry, is a slow, tentative, uneven emergence, a difficult, messy birth. Sudden jumps of insight and breakthroughs follow long moments of blockage but may also be submerged back into them. There is hope in the thought that when the "blocked places" that the corridors of an old colonial building lead to are knocked open, we will find "stairs down to ordinary streets." But at other times it looks as if frustration and pain are all that are there, and hence the understandable temptation to nostalgia and simplification, to find solace in the timeless and the eternal. Thus a "travel" poem like "Mirror Lake" with its main contrast between the puzzled human souls who live in time:

laughing and not knowing why,
grieved and not knowing why,

and the lake's mirror face, with its timeless and calm acceptance of the world, is a trope that comes close to sentimentality, to a simplification of the historical issues. As if this mirror face were not (if one may be

allowed an obvious Lacanist) a case of the mirror phase, an idealized image of perfection that might serve as point of orientation; there is no such lake in Hong Kong or anywhere else in the world. A very different observation however can be made about some of Leung's other "travel" poems (grouped in the last section under the title "Journeys"), where he shows us that travel does not mean going somewhere else (there is nowhere else); it implies simply the possibility of a change in direction. Travel is not relocation as a kind of escape from local problems; rather, it sharpens our sense of the local and of dislocation. For example, in "Cloud Travel," Leung writes:

Clouds are amazing, but you can't live there.
Our plane's wings harvest
the houses far below,
a mountain chain,
a coast.

Our old haunts in the city are left way behind
as we enter cloud banks.
Pretty enough, as I say, but no place to live.

Or take "The Moon in La Jolla," where Leung tries to "translate into a moon of La Jolla Hong Kong's moon," only to find that in this enterprise translation, like travel, cannot settle for or in the familiar, and neither the "imagery of Tang poetry" nor the language of Frank O'Hara can quite get the job done.

We'll sit together over poems;
we'll watch the moon come up over the sea;
we'll be in different places together,
brewing tea and reading Tang poems, spend
our nights in foreign lands the closer together,
the old Tang imagery changed and changing us together.

Postcolonial space then is very much a mixed space, mixed not only in terms of its historical structures but also in terms of the postcolonial's own subjective responses to it. It is marked by the simultaneous presence of different historical layers and sensibilities anachronistically jostling one another, and not easy to separate.

The question then becomes one of how to negotiate this mixed space, avoiding both complicity with a decadent ethos and the empty solace of alienation. It would be tempting to read this space as arbitrary, and so give up all attempts to arbitrate between signs and situations. Everything then floats and drifts, ending in an eventual drift into indifference. (Is it not such a *misreading* of poststructuralism that gives it so much of its political charm?) What we find though in Leung's best poems is something more challenging, something that opens up the field not by stressing the "arbitrariness of signs," but through a process of what I would like to call the *arbitrage of signs*. In a financial context, arbitrage refers to the profit that could be made by capitalizing on the price difference between stocks or currencies that exists in different markets. It involves buying in one market and selling immediately in another. As such, arbitrage is a pretty single-minded activity. What I want to suggest though is that something like a transformed mode of arbitrage is at work in Leung's writing. To be sure, it is not a question of using differences to turn a quick profit, but of turning the cultural and historical differentials that exist in a mixed space to positive use, instead of allowing them to remain as mere sources of disorientation and confusion.

To illustrate, let me turn first to one of the most striking tropes in Leung's poetry, which gives us pairs of objects in a non-reciprocal relationship to each other, as in "A Pair of Pears," "Streitlamp and Tin Leaf," and "A Bronze Pair." All three poems can be read as affective responses to a specific cultural situation. "A Bronze Pair" for example describes a pair of lovers as two bronze statues, and continues as follows:

How often I've leaned to reach you,
caught out in clumsy yearnings,
wishing you to be a world that bears everything,
that frames perfectly my rough edges.

But sometimes you close yourself off completely
in a sealed space I can't enter, when,
through alterations of light I most need your unchanging
face, that, in ultimate longing, I imagine I see,

There is more to this image of lovers in the process of being transformed from organic to metallic forms than the romantic *topos* of unrealisable passion (c.f. "Ode on a Grecian Urn" [by John Keats, 1820] or *Tristan and Isolde* [Tristan und Isolde by Richard Wagner, 1865]). Through an affective relation, Leung shows us something about social relations: how positions, like that of "lovers," no longer correspond to what they used to be, and can be represented only as a structure of transformation or mutation, from the organic to the metallic; and the unfamiliarity of the new (metallic) form indicates that there is a cognitive jump to be made across the gaps of representation. Moreover, this jump cannot be made swiftly or smoothly or without interference; hence the experience of others or of the world or of history is marked by a delay, a numb affective non-reciprocal moment, a *hysteresis*. Nevertheless, history as hysteresis is still history, and the numbness of affect is at least not an absence of affect, but a kind of pause, a regrouping of energy.

Arbitrage then, in the sense I am giving the term, might be defined as the ability to find movements and discrepancies in a situation that seems to be fatal and foreclosed; the ability, to put it another way, to see the humor even of a deadly situation. It is not to be sure humor of the self-conscious intellectual kind associated with irony, or even gallows humor. What Leung admires in other poets is the talent to laugh, to make light of a serious situation; which is to say, the ability to change the level of discourse. (As Benjamin once said, convulsion of the diaphragm usually provides more opportunity for thought than convulsion of the soul.) Thus in a poem like "At the Temple of the Three Su's," he visits the temple in China dedicated to the great poet Su Dongpo, and imagines a conversation with him over food and drink. The temple has become something of a tourist attraction, threatened with being turned into kitsch and used as an object of political propaganda. Leung, playing the Frankfurt School cultural critic, asks some very earnest questions about culture and politics, and imagines Su Dongpo's reply:

... I may ask you
about your statue out front. Does it meet too neatly current
fashions in politics? And what about the common calligraphies and

paintings

billboarding your life? I see—you don't care even to respond.

I'm another out-of-towner with nitpicking questions; you smile as if to say,

"Whod have thought in the past's most dismal Double Ninth Festival
wed' come to see, you and I, such pleasant days to drink."

This humor neither is indifference nor is it political abstentionism. It is rather a refusal to answer tendentiousness with a tendentiousness of one's own. It is the same quality that Leung admires in Bertolt Brecht (hardly an example of non-commitment) whom he describes as someone who is very careful not to turn life into a doctrine, not even a heretical doctrine:

You were Puritan to no heresy, living with such ordinariness.

Hundreds of human demons you received in relative calm.¹

Leung's own best work has the same kind of sly humor that he values so much in other writers. One of the best examples is a set of poems that are disarmingly called "Lotus Leaves" (some of which are included in the first section called "Images of Hong Kong"). The title might lead one to expect a series of elegant exercises in verbal genre painting. Leung quite deliberately chooses a minor form to give us his most thoughtful reflections on marginality, postcoloniality, and the linguistic and cultural problems facing the Hong Kong writer. Usually the purpose of writing in a recognizable genre is to let the reader know what to expect, to delimit a certain field. In his "Lotus" poems however Leung uses genre to explore and displace the limits of a field, the lotus leaf in each poem functioning like a different thought emblem. Thus in "The Leaf on the Edge" he reflects on the problematic nature of working in a milieu which is not at the cultural center of things:

... On the edge,

I'm nowhere in particular, a smoke-signal in a sandstorm,
a border legend, a plotless detail in the weeds of history.

The emphasis however always falls on the possibilities and challenges of working on the margins. Postcoloniality begins when subjects cease to feel that they need to apologize for their lives just because they differ from more centrally placed others:

Please don't make an imperial scene, or shout
anthems to the down-pours; don't pretend, with the breezes,
to grant us our dirties. Have you ever noted a marginal leaf,
observed the veins converging like noisy streets,

that challenge your blueprints' rectangles? ...

...

Beneath the winds' quarrels, a hidden song needs other listening.

What Leung calls "other listening" is what I have tried to suggest by the term de-cadence. Poems like these, in their quietly achieved imaginings, manage to negotiate the built-in violence of Hong Kong life. Something like a distinct sensibility begins to emerge from dis-appearance. From this point onwards it is perhaps more than a pious hope to believe that genuinely innovative work could be done. Even here.

The next step, hopefully, is to gain some kind of recognition for this emergence. Including a measure of self-recognition.

Notes

1. See Leung's poem "Brecht-haus, Berlin."

最後的「貿易王國」——詩與文化空間¹

阿克巴·阿巴斯(Ackbar Abbas)

翻譯：劉敏儀

〈一〉

處於充滿「趣味性」的時空之中，有某種曖昧的優勢。「趣味性」時空指蘊含劇變與無常的時間空間。面對「九七」的香港人，無疑是生活在充滿趣味性的時刻中。這篇文章的動機，是想拋磚引玉，引發大家探討文學作品與其身處之文化空間的種種複雜關係。香港作家梁秉鈞(筆名也斯)所寫的四十首詩，由美國詩人歌頓·奧城(Gordon T. Osing)翻譯，集合成為這本名為《形象香港》的詩選。香港的文化空間，是一個充滿了協調的組織空間，是英國殖民主義最後一個「貿易王國」，一個「不合常規」，以不同速度、在不同的發展階段同時存在的情況下，違背按序直線發展的邏輯而不斷地轉變的文化空間。

以一本詩集來探討及了解香港這個文化空間，這個做法表面看來似乎有點荒謬。香港這個仍屬英國殖民地的地方，正是缺少着一群對詩感到興趣的讀者。那麼，梁秉鈞的詩到底可以代表香港多少方面的情況呢？要回答這個問題，讓我們先考慮以下一些論點：

(一) 把香港本身看為一個獨特的、值得研究的文化身份，這意念是一個較新的嘗試(讀者可能會對這說法感到詫異)。在過去，所有關於香港的故事總會變成有關別的地方的故事——中國、台灣或西方的故事，就好像在香港本身是找不着足夠或值得被重視的資料或事件。直至戴卓爾夫人(Margaret Thatcher)訪問中國及1989年「天安門事件」之後，香港才

逐漸被視為一個獨特的文化個體。這情況正好符合了班雅明 (Walter Benjamin) 所講：要變成為影像的，是一些將要消失的東西。香港本土居民與僑居者似乎長時期處於弗洛伊德 (Sigmund Freud) 所形容的「反幻覺」(reverse hallucination) 狀態中。幻覺是看見不存在的東西，而反幻覺便是看不見存在的東西。在這種反幻覺的狀態中經驗到的是一種「(不)呈現」(dis-appearance) 的情況。這情況所包含的並不是一些被埋沒的現實，而是一種不屬於「曾經見過」(déjà vu)，卻屬於「曾經消失」(déjà disparu) 的詭異感覺 (the uncanny)。以上所寫的，是對香港這個正在轉變的文化空間的初步探討，嘗試寫出它難以捉摸的座標，而它轉變的方向，卻尚待觀察。

(二) 第二個對香港的觀察是針對香港的「動力與活力」。這個對香港極普遍的看法與香港本身是一個「過渡城市」很有關係。在香港停留三個星期或五年基本沒有多大分別。與其說香港是一個地方，倒不如說它是一個跨越的空間。不論過去還是未來，香港將會保持是一個港口，一個出入口，一個交叉點。香港是一個不同空間的交匯點，它將會迅速地變成不同時代及時速的交匯點(這處好像是證實了維尼奧 [Paul Virliol] 的論點)。香港目前就已經有這樣轉變的跡象：現時最大型及最重要的一項建築工程，竟位於大嶼山的新機場，這不是偶然的巧合。這工程完成後，新機場將要成為城市內的城市。這「城市」本身沒有居民，它只是一個充滿着旅客及服務人員的資訊城市。維多利亞港的帆船，是香港旅遊區的標誌。隨着這個意念，這種港口心態，我推想到一種「暫時性」的現象。在這裏一切都是浮動的，包括貨幣、價值及人際關係等——一種對完美的後結構夢想不自覺的反諷。

(三) 另外一點對香港的「動力與活力」的觀察是它與一種「衰微」現象的關係。讓我解釋一下「衰微」(decadence)：這用詞。如果把所有「衰微」內蘊有關道德標準及世紀末的含意

刪除，它是一個可以幫助了解香港現象的用語。香港的「動力」是一種大部分集中某一方面而發展的力量。香港在高效率的殖民政策管理底下，政治理想得不到任何發展的機會。就是基於這個原因，大部分的「動力」只有朝着經濟範圍才得到抒發。香港人對於歷史的幻想，一種還自以為能掌握歷史的命運的想法，亦被取代而轉移到對股票及樓價的投機心態，或對時裝及消費的極度迷戀及追尋。「你不能選擇理想的領袖，最低限度你可以選擇自己稱心的服飾」。因此，在這種特殊的情況下，因壓制產生的不是一種宿命與陰霾的氣氛，而是一種宿命與繁榮的現象。「民主自由」愈是受到挫折及壓抑，香港的市場經濟便愈是隆盛。只有與經濟原則有關的政治理想才能得到抒發，而「自由」的意義，亦只能等於「自由市場」的意思。「六四」事件引發起大規模遊行集會，成千上萬的中產階級加入遊行隊伍，是香港前所未有的事例。我相信這些行動與上述所討論的問題很有關係。這是一次將經濟上的個人利益極輕易地誤視為政治理想的稀有例子。我當然不能否認市民對「六四」暴行的強烈情感反應，但這些並不能排除上述提出有關錯覺的可能性——有不少遊行者是因為這次自己對情感的大量投注而受到感動。無論如何，這次愛國熱潮只維持了短暫的時間而缺乏實質的政治成果。在天安門事件的餘波中，香港一些中產階層的汽車保險桿上，有以下令人驚異的悠然自得的招貼字句：「為着民主與自由，維護駕駛尊嚴」(Motoring in dignity, for freedom and democracy)。如果要將上述所談的現象形容成「衰微」的話，它的含意並不是「墮落」或「衰退」(因為到處見到的都似乎是進步及發展)，而是指出在一個封閉的範圍內只朝着某一方向的發展。

(四) 第四點觀察是與香港的主權回歸中國有關的。表面上，英國的統治將會告一段落：中國領土歸回中國，但這並不代表殖民統治的結束。現在的香港與19世紀的香港已是截然不同的

地方。有人會認為，每個香港人表面之下，都有一個中國人的身份。這個想法是錯誤的。「香港人」現在已是另外一個截然不同而獨立的身份。所以當香港主權歸回中國之後，將會呈現的是一個很特別的「殖民統治」情況。「被殖民區」雖在政治上附從主權國，卻不是貧弱的、依賴性的「落後」地域，而是一個在教育、科技、國際通訊網絡等各方面比殖民國家更先進的地方，這個情況在殖民史上是首次出現的，可視之為一種有特殊意義的後殖民狀況：一種於殖民主義解體前出現的後殖民狀況。在目前香港與英國的關係中已有這樣的預兆：英國米特蘭銀行竟被香港上海匯豐銀行接管，強弱關係逆轉。對中國來說，管理香港這個「經濟特區」就是等於駕馭一副未來的設備。其中一個有關新機場的顧慮，就是懷疑中方是否有能力應付這樣一個高科技及複雜的工程。中國若繼續走革新的路線，將會出現的並不是「一國兩制」，而是一個制度，在不同的發展階段中並存着。他們之間的分別，是在於不同的發展階段與速度。

從上述對香港這蕪雜的文化空間的觀察，再帶到我先前提出的問題：梁秉鈞的詩有怎樣的代表性？我認為他的詩不能夠亦不希望自稱有代表性，或是「為香港說話」。這四十首詩不是香港社會的縮影，亦不是甚麼香港歷史的精華。詩人更沒有以一個單一的社會空間的假設，而自居於以部分代表整體的位置來說話。在〈老殖民地建築〉一詩中(這「老殖民地建築」恰好是指香港大學的「本部大樓」)，詩句並不是來自一個強勢的中心位置：「不是高樓圍繞的中心」。詩人是從邊緣，在一些次要的結構中有所觀察：「只是一池／瀾瀾的水聚散着游動的符號」。事實上，不自稱有代表性的態度本身不是一種限制，更不僅是一種謙虛的做法。從歷史上的觀點去考慮，這態度不是一種限制而是一種策略上的需要。在這個「九七」將近的頃刻，正有不少來自不同位置的聲音，分別自稱是為着香港的權益而說話，可惜他們大多數亦只屬一些有影響力的但甚為拙劣的暗喻。在〈給苦瓜的頌詩〉

中，梁秉鈞用了這種外表滿是皺紋的平凡的本地蔬菜來象徵在香港寫詩的情況：

不一定高歌才是慷慨
把苦澀藏在心中

……

在田畦甜膩的合唱裏
堅持另一種口味

……

在這些不安定的日子裏還有誰呢？
不隨風擺動，不討好的瓜沉默面對
這個蜂蝶亂飛，花草雜生的世界

這詩不屬於一種主觀的自我表達，不是反映所謂客觀現實的嘗試，亦不是一些具有批判性的詩句。就像苦瓜一樣，這位香港詩人以一種靜態的堅持，給予我們一種真正的、非客觀性的、「(不)呈現」的指標。他的詩沒有嘗試以任何規劃性的形式或途徑去為香港說話。但它們卻能更有力勾勒出香港這個正在突變中的城市各種參差而不易察覺的現象。他不為香港說話，但卻能顯示香港各種如公民權、社群生活及身份等問題的複雜性及各方面對這些問題極為參差的想法。

〈二〉

導演安東尼奧尼 (Michelangelo Antonioni) 喜歡引用盧加索斯 (Lucretius) 的文字：「在一個一切都不能肯定的世界裏，一切事物都不能以自己的姿態出現。唯一可以肯定的東西就是那種令一切都無法肯定的秘密暴力。」我感到有趣的，就是那種所謂「秘密暴力」，一種沉默的暴力，「音響效果被刪掉了」的暴力。梁秉鈞的詩亦是蘊藏着這種秘密的力量。這種力量不是波特萊爾 (Charles Baudelaire)、艾略特 (T. S. Eliot) 或魯迅等現代主義者在文學上所顯示的，源於個人感性、精神及心理等負荷過重而引起的那種震撼感覺。亦不是香港商業電影電視中泛濫的那種暴力場面，更不是大衛·連治 (David Lynch) 或白賴仁·迪龐馬 (Brian

de Palma) 式的暴力。事實上，在梁的詩中，很少會感覺到有任何明顯的「暴力」；反而，從文字的選擇、格式及主題事物的處理中，有一種「無光澤」的、非煽情的、平凡的質素。他的詩所蘊藏着的暴力，不是屬於「呈現」性的暴力，而是「(不)呈現」性及不可辨別的「暴力」。³

就把這詩集的第一首詩〈北角汽車渡海碼頭〉作為例子吧。詩的開始用了一些超現實影象，把香港熟悉的事物變成一片世界末日的景象。但詩的後兩段卻是這樣寫的：

親近海的肌膚
油污上有彩虹
高樓投影在上面
巖城晃盪不定

沿碎玻璃的痕跡
走一段冷陽的路來到這裏
路牌指向銹色的空油罐
只有煙和焦膠的氣味
看不見熊熊的火
逼窄的天橋的庇蔭下
來自各方的車子在這裏待渡

我們可以用這首詩與尚盧·高達 (Jean-Luc Godard) 的電影《周末》(Week-end, 1967) 作一比較。電影描述一對中產階級男女的周末假期竟變成了大災禍，無數的汽車充塞於高速公路，正好比喻資本主義社會由於過剩的生產與對享樂的追求，而導致窒息的現象。但〈北角汽車渡海碼頭〉的最後兩句卻與這電影的結局有很大的分別。高達的電影最後是佈滿殘缺不全的屍體，而在詩中卻見不到任何真實或想象的大災禍情景。災難的想象只停留片刻，之後就一切事物回復正常：「來自各方的車子在這裏待渡」。但這種所謂「正常」的狀況，正是上述「秘密暴力」之所在，表面上一切沒有轉變，沒有崩潰，制度如常運作；這本身就是災禍，就是那種秘密的暴力。一切末日的災難現在亦只不過是正如塔都茲·考威克 (Tadeusz Konwicki) 所說的「次要的災難」而已。

梁秉鈞把詩中蘊藏的暴力降至次要的位置。1989年「天安門大屠殺」不是歷史上的一件重要的大災禍及悲劇性的事件嗎？但卻往往被描繪成為一齣世界性的歷史「肥皂劇」。梁的三首有關「天安門」的詩，就好像三幅相聯的圖畫，將它們放在一起，便可為我們展示出詩中「低調」(minor mode) 的處理手法。這三首詩對我來說可說是有關天安門事件本身，但亦反映了香港對這事件各種過度強烈的反應。這三首詩用了簡單的更換家具的暗喻，讓我們可以逐漸了解及體會對「天安門」態度的轉變。第一首〈廣場〉，開始是一片平靜的收拾故居的情景：「從頭整理居所重拾種種意義」，但卻從中顯示出這個家已是殘破不堪，而詩的結尾則刻劃出一種突然的對「天安門」外在與內心的驚愕：

被黑夜警醒讓我們有新的秩序
想拉開一幅布遮住塗污的肖像
風砂刮起紙屑雷暴劈裂了桌椅

在第二首詩〈家破〉中，對「天安門」的記憶雖然還很強烈，但同時亦見到一段小小的歷史距離。語調已存在着反思的意味，重點不是放在驚愕的時刻而在之後的感覺，對被背棄的警覺漸漸提高：

你說離開這暫時的家可以重建新的家
可以的只要帶着我們心中的桌椅
……
地面動搖人像玻璃和花盆那樣破碎
在硬爛的泥土上我連忙扶你起來
卻發覺，你這答應與我重建一個家的
再也站不起来了

第三首詩〈家具〉的寫法好像是「天安門」後話，但再細心觀察，它向我們顯示人們如何已經着手編寫後話或重寫歷史。同是用了清理家居的暗喻，但所暗示的卻是另外一些東西：所謂清理家居的主事者，已變成為官方的代表：

抹過的地板清涼如水，不留痕跡
清潔劑除去腥臊，甚麼也沒有
發生過，濃煙被抽氣機抽出去

官方所用的不是粗暴的鎮壓，而是意象如羅蘭·巴特 (Roland Barthes) 所說的「神話」的權力：

不能有更興旺的年頭了，真的
時令蔬菜又再上市，明確的意象——
帶刺的黃瓜和鮮嫩的豆角——不容
猶豫的解讀……

結果是怎麼恢復古舊不要的秩序來掩蓋大眾猶新的記憶：

總有歷史龐大的家具隆隆推出前堂
鎮住了今天……

這首詩並不是簡單表面的一種憤慨或抗議的表達。它混合了對「官方」論斷悄悄模仿嘲弄，以及間接的按語，以探索事件被利用及重新克制的過程。它提出了一個反思的問題：一種是顯明的、殘暴的鎮壓，一種是詭譎的、狡猾的以意象去實行控制，那一種做法更為強暴？

這問題亦可以在一個本地的層次去回應。在描寫香港的詩句中，梁秉鈞就是給我們點出了這種靜態的、詭譎的暴力的存在。(形象香港) 這首詩，重複地列舉出一些在香港城市日常生活往往不能避免的矛盾與衝突，如：「他在法國研究安那其主義，回來／在花花公子，然後在資本雜誌工作」，「他是報告文學的好手，他擅寫／資本主義社會裏的狗和色情雜誌」。由於這種靜態的、詭譎的暴力的存在，這些矛盾與衝突就很容易地在重新被克制的過程中變得淡然了，好像一般傳播媒介所編造的一片「世界和睦共處」的「現象」：

伸出手按鈕，無盡的畫面
太多時尚的挑逗，令你無法專心。
太多瑣碎的事務，不同的場合
不斷轉變身份……

這不只是克制的結果，也是歷史的危機，因它將會被簡化成一種類似「精神分裂」的狀態：

……一連串形象
塑造的材料可以是紙箔、塑膠、纖維
鐳射影碟的按鈕……

梁秉鈞喜歡選擇一些極普遍及平凡的東西作為他詩的題材，這個做法與較早前所提及他的「低調式」的寫詩態度很有關係。這詩集中的第三部分都是一些「物詠」的詩，其中寫及年畫和木瓜、梨子和盆花、苦瓜與安石榴。如果所有例如「九七前景」等有關「人生」的「大主題」已經被寫成一些本地的「肥皂劇」，而一切有關政治局勢等的問題亦被職業政治家們所壟斷，那麼剩下來的，還可以較自由地「說話」的，就只是一些細小、平凡的日常生活中極普遍的題材及物品。「低調」的特色，更顯著見於語言運用上。他沒有使用一些氣勢磅礴的、華麗的文詞，亦避免只煽情的刺激，反而堅持用一些普通的、日常的語句。另一方面，梁氏亦極少採用文字上的反諷，很少像艾略特那樣宣稱世界結束於一聲飲泣，而非砰然巨響。文字上的反諷，很多時候只是在文字上克服在社會現實生活的層面上無法克服的東西。梁所採用的，是一些有歷史意義的反諷，而不只是在言詞上的強調。在「物詠」詩中，梁氏是要讓事物本身有發言的機會，減低因語言運用而產生的歪曲，一反常見的「詠物」態度。如〈木瓜〉一詩中：

你把說話寫在紙上送給我
我沒有甚麼可送，寫下：

「木瓜！」切開來，那麼多
點點黑色的不確定的東西

這樣對語言的態度，並不代表是忽略了對語言本身的問題的考慮。事實上，這種處理語言的態度是抱着某種我們能稱之為政治立場。它不是一種以「正確」及「真理」自居的「強勢」的語言，而相反是一種「勢弱」語言。所謂「勢弱」，是代表一種語言運用的態度，拒絕把事物作簡單分類，亦拒絕以自己的觀念，例如陳詞濫調來把對方簡化。比方坐在一輛雙層巴士上，對本地的鳳凰木說話，他便這樣寫道：

〈三〉

也許我總無法如你期望般的
看你，像一樹紅花那樣看你
我也曾探首越過窗框看你生長
說這些花開得跟別人不一樣
你扒揪地搖晃，彷彿就不外是濫調
重複着濫調……

從梁秉鈞的詩中所蘊藏及暗示的種種顛覆性的力量正好喻意着一個特別的「殖民空間」。在文章較早部分，我曾用了「衰微」去形容香港的某些現象，這裏我再想用「衰微」來形容這個「殖民空間」。⁴所謂「衰微」，是意味着一個沒有選擇、無法取捨及出路堵塞的完全封閉局面。（抽獎）這首詩正好把這種「衰微」的風氣顯示出來。在香港這個「最後的貿易王國」⁵，有着一切默許的假定，除了香港人對購物的迷戀，詩中所表達的是更為令人害怕的處境——失去了可以想象其他出路的能力：

人們捧着抽到的東西
趕着跑去把獎品收藏
我仍在這裏
慢慢地走
再會了先生
再會了
女士
我在後面叫
再會了
南瓜和玉蜀黍
捧着這麼多東西走路
小心不要摔倒
但他們以為我要趕上去
卻都跑得更快了

怎樣可以在這樣一個處境，帶入另外一種聲音？而這聲音的特點，就在於它「反調」與「不和諧」的作用。⁶我想在這裏提出的，這聲音的介入，亦是一種後殖民及感性的出現的可能，而我們亦想探討這樣的一種感性是甚麼。

由於香港種種複雜的歷史因素，所謂「後殖民」當然不會好像新款的時裝取替古老服飾一樣，簡單明確地脫離殖民制度的傳統。當梁在〈花布街〉一詩寫及香港這著名街道上各式各樣的布料：

……紗的彈薄與透明，棉布
牽拉摸索的指頭，粗糙的
絨布緊束着發育的身體
挑釁的鞋尖、誘惑的衣領——

他也同時在寫及整個政治制度所給予我們生活上的各種社會經濟的風尚與紋理。正是由於這些分割不開、糾纏不清的關係，後殖民不可能像我們生活一部分的花布，可以簡單拋棄，而是要作出以下的問題：

……——眼前就只有
這些東西——能做成一件
新的衣裳，穿成合身？

有趣的是，某香港裁縫曾發生的一件軼事，或可作為此詩的一個最佳注腳。專為香港政府官員造制服的裁縫，知道彭定康(Chris Patten)將要上任，不惜預先訂購了一些貴重的金條帶及稀有的羽毛，準備縫製一件極隆重、傳統式的港督就職禮服。但新任港督最後卻決定一反往常禮服的傳統，選擇穿着一套極普通的西服。裁縫在失望之餘，曾經考慮控告香港政府；但那是他自己看走了眼啊，他的失敗正是他沒充分了解香港這個特殊情況。雖然表面上仍是舊日的那個殖民政制的統治，但實際上香港已換上與前不同的服飾。要處理這種「連續中的不連續」，首先需要的是縫制「一件新的衣裳」。

正如梁秉鈞詩所暗示，這種後殖民的感性的呈露，是一個緩慢、不確定、不平均的過程，而這種後殖民感性的呈現狀況，亦是困難及錯綜複雜的。偶爾的頓悟與突破，往往伴隨障礙、疑難的時刻。當然，經過舊殖民地建築內的走廊，遇上「堵塞的牆

壁」，一經劈開也希望可以找到「梯級也許通向更多尋常的屋宇」，⁷但很多時候目睹的就只有挫敗與痛苦。在後者的情況下，可以理解的，我們亦會為懷想與單純所誘，期望尋找一種無時間規限與永恆的安慰。如游詩的〈池〉，詩中充滿疑惑、困擾的人：

不知為甚麼笑
或是不知為甚麼憂傷的人

與鏡容池那種對世界一切平靜而無時間規限的接受，兩者互相對照，只是一種近乎純感性的轉義，亦同時將歷史的複雜性簡化。這轉義似乎忘記池的鏡面，其實亦只屬「鏡映階段」(Mirror Phase)的一個例子(容許我粗略套用拉岡 [Jacques Lacan] 的論說)。「鏡映階段」是對所謂完美形象理想化的一個過程，是人對自我形象有所取向定位的一個里程位置。這樣理想的鏡池無論在香港或任何地方也是沒有可能找到的。但在另一部分的游詩，梁秉鈞卻提出一種很不同的態度。旅遊的意思，不一定是地理環境的遷移，可以是意味一種方向轉變的可能性。游詩中帶出的旅程，不一定是位置的遷移，更不是對某些自身問題的逃避，相反它令我們對於本身及位置錯亂的敏感度提高。在〈雲游〉一詩：

即使白雲美麗你也不能住在裏面
機翅吞沒了

屋宇

山脈

和海洋

熟悉的城市遠了

進入白雲

美麗你也不能住在裏面

又或者在〈樂海崖的月亮〉中，要把「香港的月亮」翻譯成「樂海崖的月亮」便會發覺，翻譯就好像旅遊一樣，難以熟悉的層面取代為滿足，所以不管是「唐詩的意象」或美國詩人法蘭克·奧哈拉 (Frank O'Hara) 的言語都無法代替詩人要說的：

我們圍坐一起飲詩
我們一同迎着海邊初生的明月
我們各自在不同的地方
煮一壺茶讀一首唐詩
異國的晚上同在一起
新識文字我們的舊相識

後殖民空間，是一個非常混雜的空間。它包含的不單是混雜不同的歷史架構，還有不同的主觀反應。不同的歷史層面與對事物的感應能力，時空錯綜地擠在一起，不易分割。

接著下來的問題，就是如何在這混雜的空間內商量，而不會被「衰微」風氣所左右，或流於一些空泛自慰疏離態度。這樣一個混雜的空間，很容易被看作一些任意的狀況，而亦會放棄我尋任何符號與實際環境之間的可能關係。一切都在任意地浮游，只朝著一種中性的、冷漠的狀態漂流(這不是好像對後結構主義一種錯讀而產生的政治性魅力嗎?)。但在梁秉鈞的詩中找到的，要比這種態度更有挑戰性。他提供的不是一種對符號任意的觀察事物方法，而是一種我想稱之為將符號「套利」(arbitrage)化的過程。在財經術語中，「套利」的意義是指在一個市場購進滙票、股票，而在另一市場賣出，以賺取價格的差額。梁秉鈞詩所提供的是一種被轉化的「套利」過程。所謂「套利」，在這裏當然不是在不同價格的情況之下快速獲得利潤。我想指出的，是在這個混雜的後殖民空間，將所有文化與歷史性的差異，套用變轉而供作一些積極的用途，而不是只停滯於迷失的混亂的狀態中。

要明白上述論點，我再舉梁氏詩中特別愛用的一組意象。在〈雙梨〉、〈煉葉〉與〈青銅雙像〉中，詩人明顯的轉義帶出了一對物品之間並非互惠關係。這三首都是對某個特殊文化處境的一些感情上的反應。〈青銅雙像〉描寫一對如青銅像的戀人：

我屢次不自覺地傾側向你，粗笨且充滿渴求
希望你是不承載的大地，溫柔地托起彼此的偏鋒
你有時間合了，彷彿沉入命定的空間無法跨越
透過浮光耀記青銅的本質，漫長等待中想見

詩中戀人的形象已超越如不能實現激情等浪漫式的描寫(從濟慈 [John Keats] 〈希臘古瓶頌〉[“Ode on a Grecian Urn,” 1820] 到華格納 [Richard Wagner] 歌劇《崔斯坦和依索德》[*Tristan und Isolde*, 1865])。〈青銅雙像〉所顯示的是由有機性的轉化成金屬性的形態中間的過程。透過一些感情的關係，詩人卻展示出一些社會關係之間人的位置，正如戀人的位置，已不可以用慣常的「情侶」關係視之，而只可以用一種「轉化」或「突變」結構作為表達形式，一個由有機性轉化為金屬性的情況。這類新的(金屬性的)形式所帶出的生疏感正好顯示出在表達之間隙是需要一種知識性的跨越。而這個跨越亦不是迅速、流暢或沒有阻礙。因此，不論對另類、對世界或是對歷史的體驗都有一些延遲或麻木的感覺，一個不能相互的時刻：一種滯後現象。但是，歷史作為滯後現象仍是歷史，感覺的麻木最低限度不是感覺的消失，而實際所發生的是一種停頓，能量得以再組。

「套利」依本文賦予的意義，就是能夠在絕望與沒有任何可能性的情況下找到活動與差異，在絕望的處境下，見到幽默之處。這不是指自覺的知性的那種機智的嘲諷，梁氏所欣賞的詩人，都懂得笑，能把極嚴肅的處境輕鬆處理。這亦是說：把論述的層面改變的能力(正如班雅明曾說，橫隔膜的吸收比靈魂的吸收帶來更多思考的機會)。在〈三蘇祠提問〉中，詩人在拜訪三蘇祠，想象與詩人蘇東坡對話，在美酒佳餚之間暢談。三蘇祠已變成一處旅遊勝地，隨時極容易變成一種俗套的旅遊商品或某些政治宣傳的樣板。梁扮演法蘭克福學派的文化評論者，認真詢問有關政治及文化等問題，而又同時幻想古詩人蘇東坡給他的回答。

喝多了我也想問，你對門前那尊雕像
有甚麼看法？太配合當前的政治
要求了吧？介紹生平的字畫
也許太俗套了？你始終沒有回答
對我這外人挑剔的問題只是微笑
彷彿說：去年重陽的災劫裏
還不知有如今把盞的日子呢！

這種幽默並不代表冷漠或對政治問題的逃避，而是拒絕以個人某些傾向去處理一些傾向性的問題。梁氏欣賞布萊希特 (Bertolt Brecht) 的風格，亦是因為他這個特質。他形容布萊希特的做法，盡量避免把生活當作教條：

你對異端沒有潔癖，每天與它一起生活
對百千妖孽總統抱着靜觀的心情。

梁氏欣賞他人作品所包含的幽默，亦是他自己本身作品所蘊藏的幽默。最好的例子可以從他能令人無心提防，題為「蓮葉」的一輯詩中找到(「蓮葉」中幾首詩，可見於本詩集第一部分「形象香港」)。「蓮葉」這題目，可以令人聯想起優雅的字畫。但梁氏所採用的，卻是另一種「低調式」的處理，把香港作家面對的邊緣性、後殖民、語言與文化等問題，經過細心思考表達出來。一般寫作習慣是採用某種體裁後便界定了寫作的範圍及一定程度上保證了讀者的期望與要求。但在「蓮葉」詩中，梁氏就用了這種詠物的體裁去探索及移置這體裁所已既定的寫作範圍，每一首詩的蓮葉亦代表不同的思想標記。在〈蓮葉〉中，詩人反省在一些不屬「文化中心」的環境中的寫作困難與經驗：

……我是圓周上面
曖昧的一點，是風砂擾亂了的狼煙
邊臺的傳說，野史裏模糊的情節

這詩裏強調的是在邊緣位置的情況下寫作的可能與挑戰。後殖民思考就是開始於個體不再因為與中央的位置不同而感歉疚：

請不要帶着君臨的神色俯身向着我們
高唱激昂的雨曲，或是附和風傳的靡音
邊緣的花葉有自己的姿態，你可留意？
你會不會細讀？獨特的葉脈如街道縱橫

反駁你心中既定的藍圖……

隨風合唱中隱晦了的抒情需要另外的聆聽

所謂「另外的聆聽」亦是我較早時提出的「反調」與「不和諧」的作用。這樣的詩句，正好在靜態的想象中，能夠與香港生活本身潛在着歪曲的暴力進行交涉。在(不)呈現的狀態中開始顯露出一種獨特的感性。從這裏開始，真正富嶄新性的作品的出現已不再只是一些虔誠的期望，即使這是香港。

註釋

1. 《形象香港》是於1992年出版的一本詩集，裏面包含梁秉鈞所作的四十首詩及譯本。本文翻譯自阿克巴·阿巴斯 (Ackbar Abbas) 為詩集所寫的字文 "The Last Emporium: Verse and Cultural Space"。(譯者註釋，下同。)
2. 「衰微」在原文是 *decadence*，一般譯作「衰退」、「退步」、「墮落」、「頹廢」等，但由於作者用 *decadence* 代表「大部分集中某一方而發展的力量」的特殊現象，譯者用「衰微」來引發對 *decadence* 理解的多種可能性。阿巴斯在文章較後部分再用了 *decadence* 一字，與這裏先用 *decadence* 來理解香港這特殊的殖民空間，是有字面及對抗策略上的關係。見註6。
3. 作者再用「(不)呈現」，即 *dis-appearance* 來表達一種特別的對抗策略。這策略的特點就是不會採用表面或形式上的分別，反而在沒有分別的情況中，靜態地、不知不覺地產生批判的作用。
4. 作者再用「衰微」，即 *decadence* 形容香港這殖民地空間。
5. 這裏再次用「最後的貿易王國」即 "The Last Emporium" 形容香港既是英國所剩無幾的殖民王國，亦是在殖民統治之下產生的「貿易港」。
6. 這裏譯者用「反調」與「不和諧」等字句，原文是 *de-cadence*。Decadence 與 *de-cadence* 的關係是對抗的，分別只在字中加了一個連接號。這種用字方法亦提醒讀者所謂「(不)呈現」*dis-appearance* 的對抗策略。
7. 「堵塞的牆壁」及「梯級也許通向更多尋常的屋宇」同是取自〈老殖民地建築〉。
8. 參看梁氏詩〈在布萊希特故居〉。

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Translated by Gordon T. Osing and Leung Ping-kwan

詩四十首 梁秉鈞

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