

The Imagination and Aesthetic Construction of “Alternative History” in Chinese Sci-fi in the 21st Century

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Abstract: Since the turn of the 21st century, the imagination of alternative history in Chinese science fiction has been grounded in technological imagination, continually re-examining the enlightenment ideals of democracy and science while exploring a distinctly Chinese sci-fi aesthetic. This is reflected in three aspects: first, the construction of a holistic, cyclic, and unified Eastern philosophy of technology, highlighting the poetic beauty of traditional Chinese craftsmanship; second, the infusion of characters with the Confucian concept of “Yi”, representing righteousness and humanitarian concern, promoting the Chinese ethical spirit of upholding righteousness and embracing innovation; third, the carnivalization of science fiction “New Tales”, filled with wit, humor, and ironic aesthetics, which display postmodern cultural features such as the retreat from historicity and the fragmentation of subjectivity. These explorations demonstrate writers’ aspirations to transcend the epistemological framework and cultural aesthetics of Western modernity, to explore and elevate traditional Chinese humanism and rational thought on science and technology, while also capturing the characteristics of postmodernism and expressing concerns for contemporary realities.

Keywords: alternative history; Chinese characteristics; crafts; humanism; postmodern

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封面介绍

《吉拉大峡谷》

作品简介：新疆卡拉麦里国家公园吉拉大峡谷位于古尔班通古特沙漠腹地，长约120公里，南北宽约3公里。峡谷岩体以砂砾岩构成，为侏罗纪至白垩纪时期的古海地质沉积，经风蚀水蚀，造就了如今沟壑密集的雅丹与丹霞复合地质生态。吉拉大峡谷南距新疆乌鲁木齐约220公里，北距阿勒泰地区福海县城约170公里。随着乌鲁木齐至阿勒泰沙漠公路开工建设和吉拉大峡谷生态景区的保护性开发，这里的独特风光也会带给游客不一样的体验。这里是野生动物的栖息地，还有很多荒漠植物，是研究荒漠植物的宝地。

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