

Utopia and Utopianism in Modern China: Fictions, Ideas, Spaces

Course Descriptions

Utopia, broadly defined as an imaginary spatial construct that possesses nearly perfect quality, was first introduced into China at the end of the nineteenth century. It found various manifestations in fictions, political ideas, social institutions, cultural movements, and above all, revolutionary campaigns throughout China's twentieth century. This course will inquire into the polemics and poetics of utopian imaginations in various literary and intellectual discourse from the late Qing to the millennium turn. We will explore critical questions such as: what is the relationship between utopian construct and political reality? How various genres (fiction, thought, social sciences, and spatial designs) have framed the debate on utopia in the Chinese context? How "revolution and "enlightenment" – the two intertwining themes of modern China – have profoundly shaped the affective, aesthetic, and political dimensions of utopia imaginary in Chinese modernity? Lastly, how does the rise of dystopian vision of history following the fall of the Cultural Revolution bring challenges to the theory and practice of utopian thinking?

Part I The birth of modern Chinese utopianism

Week 1 Late Qing provocations

Kang Youwei, *The Book of Great Unity* 大同書, excerpts

Liang Qichao, *The Future of New China* 新中國未來記

K.C. Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'Ang Yu-Wei, Reformer and Utopian* (Washington, 1975), select chapters

David Wang, *Fin-de-Siecle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction* (Stanford, 1997), chapter 5

Recommended:

Wang Hui, *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* 現代中國思想的興起, chapter 7

Hao Chang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China* (Harvard, 1971), Intro and chapter 1.

張翔, 《大同立教的雙重困局與不同應對——康有為政教觀初論》

Week 2 Anarchist utopia

劉師培: 《無政府主義之平等觀》《論種族革命與無政府革命之得失》(《天義報》)

The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory (Columbia, 2013),

Lydia Liu, Rebecca Karl, and Dorothy Ko ed., select chapters

Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley, 1991), Intro and chapter 3.

Week 3 An utopian or dystopian enlightenment?

Ye Shengtao, *Ni Huanzhi* 倪煥之, excerpts

Lu Xun, "Preface to *Call to Arms*"

Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" "Is the Human Race Continually Improving?"

T. A. Hsia, "Aspects of the Power of Darkness in Lu Hsun"

Yu-sheng Lin, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness* (Wisconsin, 1978), Intro and chapter 1.

Recommended:

Lao She, *The City of Cat* 貓城記

Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 1990), Intro and chapter 1.

Week 4 A messianic revolution

Qu Qiubai, *History of the Heart in the Red Capital* 赤都心史

Mao Zedong, “Reports on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan” 湖南農民運動考察報告

Paul Picowicz, *Marxist Literary Thought in China: The Influence of Ch'u Ch'iu-pai* (California, 1981), select chapters

Maurice Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism and Utopianism* (Wisconsin, 1982), select chapters

Week 5 The conservative utopia

Dai Jitao, *The Chinese Revolution and the Nationalist Party* 國民革命與中國國民黨, excerpts

Chiang Kai-shek, *The Fate of China* 中國之命運, excerpts

Zhu Guangqian, *On Self-Cultivation* 論修養, excerpts

Maggie Clinton, *Revolutionary Nativism: Fascism and Culture in China* (Duke, 2017), Intro and chapter 2

Brain Tsui, *China's Conservative Revolution* (Columbia, 2018), chapter 5

Recommended:

Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1984), Intro

Week 6 The third way and the rural utopia

Liang Shuming, *A Theory of Rural Reconstruction* 鄉村建設理論, excerpts

Yan Yangchu, *Civic Education and the Rural Reconstruction Movement* 平民教育與鄉村建設運動, excerpts

Kate Merkel-Hess, *The Rural Modern: Reconstructing the Self and State in Republican China* (Chicago, 2016), Introduction and chapter 1.

Recommended:

Guy S. Alitto, *The Last Confucian: Liang Shu-ming and the Chinese Dilemma of Modernity* (Berkeley, 1986)

Part II Revolutionary Utopia

Week 7 Youth and the birth of New China

Wang Meng, *Long Live the Youth* 青春萬歲

Hu Feng, “Time Has Begun” 時間開始了

Mingwei Song, *Young China: National Rejuvenation and Bildungsroman* (Harvard, 2016), select chapters

Week 8 Socialist cosmopolitanism

Nicolai Volland, *Socialist Cosmopolitanism: The Chinese Literary Universe* (Columbia, 2017), select chapters

Recommended:

Katerina Clark, *Moscow, the Fourth Rome* (Harvard, 2011), Introduction

Wang Meng, *Mourning for the Soviet Union* 蘇聯祭

Week 9 Maoist utopia and its discontents

Yang Xiguang, “Where is China going?” 中國向何處去

Yu Luo, “On Lineage” 出身論

Yiching Wu, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins* (Harvard, 2014), chapter 1 and chapter 5

Recommended:

Guobin Yang, *The Red Guard Generation and Political Activism in China* (Columbia, 2017), Introduction and chapter 3.

Part III Contemporary Utopia

Week 9 Utopian space

Carma Hinton, dir. *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, 1996

Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (Chicago, 2005), Introduction and chapter 3

Haiyan Lee, “The Charisma of Power and the Military Sublime in Tiananmen Square”

Recommended:

Chang-tai Hung, *Mao's New World* (Cornell, 2011), chapter 1 and 2

Chen Kaige, dir. *Big Parade*, 1987

Week 10 Counterfactual world

Chan Koongchung, *The Second Year of Jianfeng: A Utopian History of New China* 建豐二年：新中國烏有史

Catherine Gallagher, *Telling It Like Wasn't: The Counterfactual Imagination in History and Fiction* (Chicago, 2018), Introduction

Catherine Yeh, *The Chinese Political Novel: Migration of a World Genre* (Harvard, 2015), select chapters

Week 11 Science fiction

Cixin Liu, *The Three-Body Problem*, excerpts

Mingwei Song, “After 1989: The New Wave of Chinese Science Fiction;” “Variations on Utopia in Contemporary Chinese Science Fiction”

Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future* (Verso, 2005), Intro and chapter 1.

Week 12 “All under heaven”

Zhao Tingyang, *The Tianxia System: An Introduction to the Philosophy of a World Institution* 天下體系：世界制度哲學導論

Jiang Qing, *A Confucian Constitutional Order* (Princeton, 2012)

Liu Xiaofeng, *Essays on the Making of Republic in China* 百年共和之義

Recommended:

Joseph Chan, *Confucian Perfectionism: A Political Philosophy for Modern Time* (Princeton, 2013), Introduction and chapter 1.