

**1 'Chinese Dreams and Nightmares:
The Genealogy of Utopia and Anti-Utopia in China's Mediasphere'**

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2 I.

The China Dream

3 From the American Dream to the Chinese Dream

4 The China Dream

- New slogan as vision of China as 21st Century Superpower
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- Imperial-style reign mottos:
- Xi Jinping
-
- Government's dream?
- Other dreams?

5 Xi Jinping: The China Dream

- 29 Nov 2012
- Xi Jinping:
 - speech at Exhibition in National Museum, Tiananmen Square
- 'Great revival of the Chinese nation'
 - National humiliation 19C
 - Opium Wars

6 How does China dream?

- Approach:
 - What are the dreams & nightmares?
 - Perceptions of the World?
 - Hopes, fears and aspirations?

- Utopias & anti-utopias?
- Sources:
 - Literature & visual arts
 - Print medium / Digital
 - AI Delegated Digital Art
- Aim:
 - To discover vernacular culture
 - <=> officially sanctioned culture

7 II.

The Concept of Utopia

8 Utopia (1516)

- Neologism
- Thomas More (1478-1535)
- Pun on Greek
 - 'good place'
 - (eu topos)
 - 'nowhere place'
 - (ou topos)
- = ideal place that exists nowhere.

9 Chinese Utopia?

- Wutuobang 乌托邦
- Lixiangguo 理想国
- Utopia has long indigenous tradition in China
- → pre-imperial times
 - Spring and Autumn era, 770-476 BC
 - Warring States era, 475-221 BC
- Fig: Illustration for the first 1516 edition of More's Utopia.

10 III.

Ancient Chinese Utopias

11 Ancient Confucian Utopia

- Great Sharing (da tong 大同)
- Li ji 禮記 (Book of Rites), 21.3a/b

12 Ancient Daoist Utopias

- Daoist 'Supreme Harmony' (tai ping 太平)
- Lüshi chunqiu 呂氏春秋 (Spring and Autumn of Lü Buwei), 1.44-45.
- Zhuangzi 莊子, 13.471.

13 Ancient Daoist Utopia, 4th Century BC

- Huaxu 華胥 land (Mother of legendary Emperor Fuxi and goddess Nüwa)
- Yellow Emperor (trad. 2696–2598 BC)
- Liezi 列子, 2.41-3.

14 Ancient Daoist Utopia, 4th Century BC

- 'Land of Northend'
- (Zhongbei 終北)
- Paradise of mild climate & no epidemics
- Clear and sweet springs
- Liezi 列子, 5.163.

15 IV.

Empire Dreams

16 China = tianxia 天下 'All under Heaven' = World

17 One Son of Heaven to rule All-under-Heaven (tianxia 天下)

18 'One China, One Dream'

- All-under Heaven unified
- The Confucianists' nightmare
- 213 BC Literary Inquisition 焚書抗儒
 - Burning books
 - Burying 460 (Confucian) scholars alive
- cf. Sima Qian (145-86 BC)

19 'One World, One Dream'

- Beijing Olympics 2008:
- Xi Jinping in charge
- Zhang Yimou 张艺谋 (b. 1951)
- Cai Guoqiang 蔡国强 (b. 1957)
-

20 V.

Ancient Nightmares

21 Anti-Utopia

- Under legendary ruler Emperor Yao: Water flows upstream
- → Deluge floods central states
- 'Snakes and dragons appear, disturb humans.' Mengzi, 3A.4; Lau, 1987, 102.

22 The Deluge

- Shujing 書經 / Shangshu 尚書 (The Book of History)
- 'The deluge warned us.' (Mengzi 孟子, 3B.9)
- Deluge of Biblical dimensions, moral aspect
- = warning to society

23 From Dystopia to the Restoration of the Original (Confucian) Utopia

- Yu the Saviour, Tamer of the Flood
- Da Yu zhi shui 大禹治水
- 'Emperor Yu tamed the Flood and brought perfect peace to the whole land.' Mengzi

24 VI.

Peach Blossom Spring Paradise

25 China's Utopia: Locus Classicus

- Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365-427)
- 'Record of the Peach Blossom Spring'
- ('Tao hua yuan ji' 桃花源记):
- no corrupt officials!

26 VII.

Anti-Utopia: The Confucianist's Nightmares

27 A Confucianist's Dystopia

- Xi Zhou sheng 西周生 (fl. 1630s/40s) (Scholar of the Western Zhou) / Late Ming man & world
- Xingshi yinyuan zhuan 醒世姻缘传 (Marriage Destinies that will Bring Society to its Senses)
 - -> Berg, Carnival in China, 2002
- To restore Confucian utopia of past
- Dystopia:= Sin is fun to watch

28 VIII.

Anti-Confucian Nightmares

29 Confucianism as Cannibal Culture

- Iconoclasm
- Radical cultural reform to make China modern
- Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936)
- Kuang ren ri ji 狂人日记 (The Diary of a Madman)

30 IX.

Communist Dreams

31 Mao's Utopia 1949-1976

- = Familiar ancient utopia of Great Sharing (datong 大同)?
- Late Qing reformer Kang Youwei's 康有 (1858-1927)
 - The Book of Great Sharing (Datongshu 大同属, 1901, publ. 1935)
 - Utopian fiction
 - Renewed interest today

32 X.

Deng Xiaoping's Dreams of Reform

33 Deng Xiaoping—Architect of Reforms (1978-97)

- Moderate well-being (xiaokang 小康)

- = second best (ancient) utopia
 - Falls short of ancient dream of Great Sharing
- CCP's Dream for China
- More realistic than Confucian or Maoist utopia

34 1989: Deng's Nightmare

35 A Play about 1989 – Written in Exile

- Gao Xingjian 高行健 (b. 1940)
- Taowang 逃亡 (The Fugitives, 1993)
- Love story set in Tiananmen 1989
- Written in France
- Published in Taiwan
- Banned in China

36 XI.

Dystopia in the Twenty-first Century

37 Chen Qiufan, 'State of Trance', 2018

- Victor Wong + A.I. Gemini, 'Far Side Of The Moon / 月球背面 0006', 2019

38 11.1

Chen Qiufan 陈楸帆
(b. 1981)

39 Chen Qiufan 陈楸帆 (*1981)

- Alias Stanley Chan
 - Author, Science Fiction Writer, Translator, Creative Producer, Curator
 - Born in Shantou, Guangdong, lives in Shanghai, Beijing, HK
 - Studies Literature & Fine Arts at Beijing University; Market Communications, HKU & Qinghua.
 - Worked for Baidu, Google. Founder of Thema Mundi Studios (IP developer)

40 'Chushen zhuangtai' 出神状态 ('State of Trance', 2018)

41 'State of Trance' (2018)

- Plot: Returning a book to Shanghai Library

- Second person protagonist-cum-reader / first person narrator merge
- Eating books of Confucian Economics— echo of Lu Xun's 'Madman's Diary' (1918)
- Dialogue narrator / non-human character
- Rodin statue, Shanghai Library

42 Like AI Art

- by Victor Wong 黃宏達 (b. 1966, Hong Kong) + A.I. Gemini

43

- Stream of consciousness: Virginia Woolf, Mrs Dalloway (1925)
- Cao Guoqiang, 'The Bund without Us' (2014), gunpowder drawing

44 Pu Songling 蒲松齡 (1640-1715), 'Huapi' 画皮 ('The Painted Skin')

- Narrator drops book in Shanghai Library dropbox like layer of skin
- All 3: Monster / machine — World — You reader / I narrator collapse into one, just as consciousness collapses at end of anthropocene.

45

- Aldous Huxley Brave New World (1931): Drugs for consumption
- SF trope: Turing Test: machine = human
- As in short story "Goodbye, Melancholy" (2015) by Wang Yao 王瑶, alias Xia Jia 夏笳 (b. 1984)

46 11.2

Cao Fei 曹斐
(b. 1978)

47 Multi-media artist Cao FEI 曹斐

48 "Whose Utopia?" (2006)

- Video, 2006
- Siemens OSRAM light factory, Guangzhou
- workers: how to survive?
- Avatars live out dreams
- Consumer culture

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50 'My Future is not a Dream'

- Video clip - Whose Utopia? + interview: <https://youtu.be/zB9NFRWREec?t=7m28s>
- >> from 7:28 until 8:42

51 'Haze and Fog'

- Zombie horror-movie
- Part of Cao Fei's Post-human Trilogy
 - 'Mirror', 2007
 - 'La Town', 2014

52 Cao Fei: 'Haze and Fog', 2013

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