

## **Global China and the Future of Capitalism - Utopia and Modernity**

### **Abstract**

How did utopia conceive the modern, and in what ways did that distinguish the modern utopia from that of the ancients? What was it about modernity – science, socialism, capitalism, democracy – that most preoccupied utopian writers, and provided the material for their utopian societies? Why did this provoke a dystopian critique, vilifying the very aspects of modernity celebrated in the utopia? To what extent is utopian writing and thinking a peculiarly Western tradition, and how far is it found outside the West? This talk will consider a number of works and thinkers to show how utopia became the vehicle for an intensive and wide-ranging debate about modernity and its future. It will also raise the question, how useful is utopia at the present time, as a way of framing choices and alternatives?