

## Possibility of Utopia Today

Chung Hyun Kyung

What is utopia? Why are we searching for utopia? Where is it?

Utopia is that bondless “no-place” which first coined in the sixteen century by Thomas Moore. Utopia is an ideal place where all our needs met, where we can live in harmony. Why are we searching for utopia? We are searching for utopia because on present lives are far from our ideals. They are tainted with suffering, injustice and evil systems which constantly dehumanize us and destroying our mother earth. Where is utopia? Where can we find it? According to dictionary definition of utopia, it is “no-where” it is not here or not now with us. We can not find it that perfect on this earth

We are yearning for utopia because we believe that “another world is possible”, where we can be a better person, we can have a better society with peace, justice, and full of life. And we can have a better relationship with the earth seared body of God.

But today, I would like to share the tastes, glimpses and feelings of utopia with you. With came from my specific eco-social location. I am a Korean eco-feminist theologian, who is working as a immigrant worker in the people’s republic of New York, articulating and creating theology from my trans-pacific commitments engagements and experiences.

I can identify 5 majors’ spaces where I witnessed the presence of utopia in my life.

The first space is the world wide women’s movements feminisms and their expressing. The most precious gift of women’s movements and feminisms are their abolition of unhealthy dualisms and their radical call from embodiment.

Feminists challenge private/public dualism and say “personal is political” it means whatever utopian social plan we have should be realized in our everyday personal lives. Feminism also challenge body/spirit dualism and bring our body emotion, and sexuality back to our dismembered selves and societies. Feminists say “sexuality is spirituality”. Feminists call us to remember our deepest desires stirring and longings for wholeness and embody that whelms here and now in our everyday lives. Mujerista theologian Ada Maria Isais Diaz emphasizes the “locotidiano”, the location of theology making. We do not want one grand utopia in the project future but a small solid utopias in our everyday lives.

They are diversified, plural, small utopias which manifest their life-giving power in our “locotion”? yes, another world is possible in our historical concrete. The second place is the world wide ecological movements initiated by indigenous people, farmers, conscious scientists and eco-feminists. These people see utopia manifested not in some other place, “no-where” places but here on this very fragile God-infused, god breathed places. They loving call their earth mother, loved and body of god. They started organic faming movements making connections between poor fames and middle class city. In korea, these

green people started green university, green village, where they create their own currency and envision a economy which can resist capitalist neo-liberalism self reliant and its cultural political and economic imperialism.

These same people also started the green stores in the cities where people not only receive “organic” vegetables and fruits but also discuss and share information and visions of “organismic” utopian societies and its manifestations there are inter religious , interfaith, inter ideological movements : catholic, Buddhist, protestants, work together to save our mother earth’s body. They call us for remembered mysticism, Asceticism, sacratism, and prophetic traditions they call us to remembered romanticism. They call us not only to save the earth but also to fall in love with the earth.

A Korean miss Jung theologian Kim York Bok, a revolutionary. Kim chi ha started the movement study of life to look at life as a location for our fundamental intellectual discourse. She is trying to open the graduate school of life, where all concerned intellectuals begin to study discuses on life, most important interdisciplinary study of our time.

Yes, another world is possible on this very great earth. Witch teaches us the glimpse of utopia.

The third space is world wide communities of engaged Buddhism. More than any other world religion I know of, engaged Buddhism emphasis “only here” “only now” as the location of pure land. Nirvana . the meaning of utopia “no where” changed its “working space” and become “now here” in this religious practice. There was a fanny cartoon in San Francisco Chronicles. There is a big guy marching with a big placard, saying “Jesus was coming” behind him, a very small guy is walking with a small placard saying “Buddha is here” Vietnamese Buddhist teaches –peace activists teach what Hahn teaches us “if we can not find pure land here and now, we can not find it any other place.” Utopia is here and now if we attain how to liberate ourselves from suffering, if we learn how to come home to ourselves here and now. Yes. Another world is possible here and now in our breathing to come home to ourselves.

The fourth space where I can taste the glimpse of the utopia is the space of arts. Our deepest desires and utopias impulses are expressed in music, poetry, novel, theatre and dance. They enable us to radically re-imagine what it means to be human, to be with answer. They challenge our assumption about ourselves, world, and life with new symbols, images and sensibilities.

For example, korea feminist foundation “If-Topia” organizes annual feminist festival called “anti miss korea festival”. Here the challenge imposed notion of beauty on women and offer generous space for including all kinds of different beauties. Here, fat, blind women show their social dance with their partners. Differently able young people dance with able bodied young people in their wheel chains, transvestite God may have their fashion show redefining gender.

Also Korean young feminist they have an annual “menstruate festival” here young women celebrate their body and sexuality, wearing clothing and made by menstrual pads and tampons. They break cultural silence women’s sexually and claims their rights to chose regarding their body and sensuality.

Here they perpetuate experiences of utopia in the flesh of performance that might performatively hint at now a different world could feel. Here they experience anthropologist, Victor Turet described as “communists”. The space of lucid, mutual, understanding of existence, generous inter subjective illumination of we. The experiences after us spring boards to utopia.

In their glances, Gestness, felings heavy with existence, we say.

Yes, another world is possible in our magical powerful manet s of “communtar”

The fifth space of utopian moment is movements for justice, peace, and social transformation world wide.

Whereever people work for justice, human rights, self-determination, there is what Che Guevara said “stirring of we” the big love which dissolve small “I”. here “hombre Nuevo” mujer nueva” are born. Here we taste the glimpses of Messiah. Benice Refan Johnson of “sweet Honey in the rock” a African American women’s singing groups sings” we are the ones we have been waiting for” we have been waiting for us, you and I, to change the world, to fight for neo-liberalism, patriarchal capitalism, senseless war, colonialism, and imperialism and destruction of children, inferences people, and mother earth. We have been waiting for us to make alternatives which enable us to celebrate the equals, fulmen of life. But today’s utopias moment is different from . we do not follow big tigers, elephants, leaders and more. We work like small ants. Wherever we are we make small holes in power and principalities in the world. When many ants makes many holes in their oppressive system, the system collapse, we also connect, network like a spider woman. In our world wide web of life, we increase our power of transformation. We are ants and spiders activists. Like what Cuban singer, Silvio Rodriguez sings: “I sing for small things, but small possible things”, we work for small changes and small possible changes. Yes, another world is possible now and spiders can make small changes and transformations.