

## **New Discourses in Contemporary China: Conceptualizations of the Social**

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Discourse is taken as language use in social context. It is language use in speech and writing and at the same time the social practice. In this sense, new discourses are new ways of doing, representing, constructing in the form of language use. Starting from this point, I will discuss how new discourses are associated with conceptualizations of the social in China. Put specifically, I will talk about how new discourses occur from the inside Chinese social change and transformation, from the outside colonization in China and from past in the Chinese history.

The talk will be organized in two main parts: 1) synchronic conceptualisation and 2) diachronic conceptualisation. In the former, I will examine conceptualization in a certain period of history, such as the conceptualization of social entities arising from the contemporary Chinese social-political transformation (peasant workers, laid-off women workers, SARS, etc.), of western concepts importing into China in this globalising age (liberal economy, human right, entrepreneurs, etc.), and of western concepts colonizing into China in the last centuries (culture, civilization, etc.). In the latter, I will examine conceptualization of the social across history, this is, how old concepts (socialism, civilization) obtain their new meanings through history.

The ways in which conceptualisation works are discussed. It is seen that the conceptualization of the social in China is a kind of process of dialogical, ecumenical and to some extent negotiating production of knowledge. Whether from the inside, outside or the past, new discourses and new conceptions do not occur as they naturally should. Instead, they occur as a result of recontextualising process -- a process of colonization and appropriation -- in which social agents (and translators) play a part.