

Ambition and Exhaustion among Chinese youths

Why and how has the desire for self improvement caused the feeling of exhaustion and powerlessness among millions of young Chinese? This lecture series tackles a set of existential challenges that Chinese youths face in the beginning of 21st century. The four lectures will respectively discuss: (1) how ambition has become from an ambiguous character trait to a virtue and to an unquestionable requirement, (2) how comparisonism has become widespread which is related to but different from the competition, (3) why people are so harsh with themselves and work unstoppably, and (4) how the pressure of proving one's value became all consuming. I invite all the participants to think together how their experiences are similar or different from those of their Chinese counterparts. At each lecture, Xiang will present a summary of the Chinese situation in the first hour. This is followed by open discussion. You are especially welcomed to comment and raise questions by bringing in your own life experience.

Titles of four lectures

1. A history of ambition
2. Competition and comparisonism
3. Compelled attachment
4. The curse of proving

Bibliography

Participants are welcome to read this Open Access book *Self as Method*

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-19-4953-1>