

**Title:** Gorbachev's Book *Perestroika i novoe myshlenie dlia nashei strany i dlia vsego mira* as a Dystopian Utopia  
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This interdisciplinary paper interprets Gorbachev's bestseller *Perestroika i novoe myshlenie dlia nashei strany i dlia vsego mira* (1988), a book outlining the major points of perestroika, as a utopian project burdened by dystopian contradictions and consequences. Gorbachev's work is analyzed against the backdrop of Western utopian tradition stretching from Plato's *Republic* and Plutarch's "Lycurgus" to some of Montaigne's essays, More's *Utopia*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Some ideas of Confucius, Hegel, Marx, Dostoevsky, Sartre, and Ricoeur are also used.

The paper details six utopian features of Gorbachev's book and perestroika, which logically morph into their dystopian opposites (in this abstract, only the utopian characteristics are sketched, and their logical dystopian corollaries will be developed in the paper). First, for Gorbachev, as in the Socratic-Platonic tradition, humans both in the USSR and around the globe are thought of as rational beings. Next, glasnost is a new version of a cardinal feature in Confucius and Plato who perceive language as a tool that formulates explicitly and fully universal truths in non-contradictory terms. Third, perestroika and glasnost follow the Socratic tradition where philosophy starts with realization and self-criticism of one's own ignorance. Fourth, perestroika, in the wake of Plato's dualistic metaphysics, promises to unleash the full potential of some unknown communism (Plato's real things or Forms), which will supplant the well-known humdrum Soviet communism (Plato's material appearances). Fifth, perestroika constructs a temporality of three intertwined idealistic levels: the historical, the non-dialectical, and the narrative. Finally, perestroika exemplifies the paradox of closed openness or open closeness characteristic for Western utopias: utopian worlds are closed and do not import imperfections from the outside, but at the same time are open, and export perfection to other, non-utopian civilizations.