

Critical Theory and Chinese Philosophy in Conversation

Globalization poses a challenge to social and political philosophy because it seems to require a reassessment of the frameworks and rules that govern global exchange processes. However, if these rules and regulations are to be both legitimate and effective, they cannot simply reflect the interests and values of Western powers but should be the result of an intercultural dialogue. In such a dialogue, China's position is particularly important given its emerging status as a major global player. Therefore, an adequate understanding of the political, historical, cultural, but primarily philosophical background of contemporary Chinese thought is essential. In this context, critical theory is characterized above all by its critical-hermeneutic and pragmatic approach to questions of globalization: Historical experience, for example, shows that solutions to social problems are rarely solved by prescriptions that result from reflection on ideal circumstances. Such solutions are rather the result of complex learning processes from previous problems, crises, and the like. The aim of this seminar is to compare selected conceptions of Chinese philosophy with current Western debates (i.e., especially within critical theory). First, the relevance of Chinese philosophy for contemporary philosophical debates will be explored. Second, considerations of critical social theory will be brought in to critically analyze concrete forms of suffering and injustice in an increasingly globalized world. Third, the potential and limitations of the works of Heiner Roetz and Fabian Heubel for critical theory will be examined in order to stimulate inter- and transcultural dialogical competences.

Reading list

- BILLETTER, J. F.: *Contre François Jullien*. Paris: Allia 2013.
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- KÖGLER, H.-H. - DUNAJ, Ľ.: *Beyond Ethnocentrism: Towards a Global Social Theory*. In: Ananta Kumar Giri (ed.), *Social Theory and Asian Dialogues: Cultivating Planetary Conversations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 69-106.
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- UNSCHULD P.: *Chinas Trauma – Chinas Stärke. Niedergang und Wiederaufstieg des Reichs der Mitte*. Berlin: Springer 2016.
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