



Hauptseminar am Institut für Philosophie (WS 2022/23), FU Berlin
 Beginn: 18.10.2022
 Zeit: Dienstag, 10:00 – 12:00 Uhr
 Ort: Institut für Philosophie, Habelschwerdter Allee 30, Vortragsraum

Stefan Gosepath, Ci Jiwei

**16 085: An Anatomy of Democratization:
 With Particular Reference to China and
 Extensive Discussion of Elias and Habermas**

Das Hauptseminar wird in Zusammenarbeit mit em. Prof. Jiwei CI (University of Hong Kong, Gastprofessor, FU Berlin) gehalten.

Zeiten: dienstags 10-12 Uhr im Vortragsraum (Termine: 18.10.; 25.10.; 01.11.; 8.11.; 15.11.; 22.11.; 29.11.; 06.12.; 13.12. und 03.01.23; 10.01.23; 17.01.23; 24.01.23; 31.01.23; 07.02.23; 14.02.23)

Commentary:

The object of this course is democratization rather than democracy. Democratization is a complex and messy process yet some essential elements can be identified with a view to general, theoretical exploration and application to particular cases. We are going to discuss three such elements: spillover, equalization, and valorization. Spillover, as applied to democratization, is the idea that if and when a state has acquired the features of a more or less democratic society, this will generate a strong momentum toward the development of a political regime befitting the nature of the new society. Equalization is the idea that such a democratic society tends, in the first instance, to come about behind the backs of human agents, via the equalizing effects of growing division of labor and increasing functional differentiation. Valorization is the idea that de facto equalization will not suffice for full-fledged democratization unless it is consciously affirmed and promoted as an aid to struggles for democratization. (Such struggles can be considered a fourth moment of democratization, although we will not be able to address this except in passing.) We will take up each of these moments in turn and will attempt to organize them into a coherent, materialist account of democratization that attends equally to will and chance. We will draw extensively on Norbert Elias and Jürgen Habermas, taking care to identify their respective blind spots and to combine their respective insights. Although we are chiefly engaged in general, theoretical exploration, we will give special attention to China both for illustrative purposes and in its own right.

Topics

Part One: Democratization and counter-democratization

1. The idea of democratization: progress from civil society to political state. Three key elements of this idea: equalization, valorization, spillover. A further element: struggle (reform, revolution). Understanding democratization requires understanding of counter-democratization, and vice versa.

Reading: Ci, *Democracy in China*, chapter 3

2. The idea of counter-democratization: political state against civil society. Elements of this idea: repression of civil society, repression of (means of) valorization, repression of democratic spillover (political association and action). The distinctness of the very idea of repression in a modern, democratizing context

Reading: Roberts, *Censored*, chapters 1 (“Introduction”), 2; Mattingly, *The Art of Political Control in China*, chapter 1 (“Introduction”)

3. Democratization and counter-democratization in China. Democratization: “prehistory,” republican era, reform era. Counter-democratization in reform era: crackdown on civil society, (big) private capital, and (public) intellectuals, human rights lawyers, etc. The case of “dynamic zero-Covid” policy as assault on society. An earlier, immediately post-1949 instance of assault on society

Reading: Ci, *Moral China in the Age of Reform*, chapter 8

4. Democratization and counter-democratization in Hong Kong: colonial, esp. late colonial era; proto-democratic era (1997-2020); counter-democratic era (2020-)

Reading: Ci, *Democracy in China*, chapter 8

Part Two: Equalization

5. Equalization in reform-era China: the phenomena; the defining transformation—from the society of work units to the society of individuals; conceptualization of the multiple components or dimensions

Reading: Ci, *Moral China in the Age of Reform*, chapter 2, chapter 8, sections 3-4; Weber, *Economy and Society*, part 2, chapter 10

6. Elias on democratization: functional democratization; state formation and evolution in relation to functional democratization; individualization in relation to functional democratization

Reading: Elias, *The Civilizing Process, vol. 2, Power and Civility*, part 1, chapter 2, esp. sections 3, 7, 8, and part 2, esp. sections 1, 2, 5; Elias, *What is Sociology?*, chapters 2, 3

7. Problems raised by Elias's account of the move from functional to institutional democratization: equalization and valorization, system and lifeworld, dedifferentiation and valorization

Reading: Rueschemeyer, *Power and the Division of Labor*, chapter 7

Part Three: Valorization

8. Valorization and freedom of thought: Spinoza, Kant, and the need to reconceive the idea of enlightenment

Reading: Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, chapter 20; Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" ; Wood, *Liberty and Property*, chapter 8

Optional, supplementary reading: Israel, *A Revolution of the Mind*; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*

9. Stalled progress from functional to institutional democratization in China: de facto freedom, lack of freedom of thought, and thwarted valorization. Excursus on a barely distinguishable fourth moment: struggle (as informed by valorization)

Reading: Ci, *Democracy in China*, pp. 195-223

10. Habermas on democratization: democratization in terms of lifeworld rationalization; the distinction between the "logic" and "dynamics" of lifeworld rationalization. Problems with this distinction, and Elias as corrective. Elias and Habermas: a preliminary synthesis toward a new, materialist account of democratization

Reading: Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, chapter 4 ("Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism"), chapter 5 ("Legitimation Problems in the Modern State"); Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*

Optional, supplementary reading: Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, chapter 1, section 3; vol. 2, *Lifeworld and System*, chapter 5, section 3, chapter 6, chapter 8, section 1

Part Four: Spillover

11. The democratic spillover effect. Reactive/reactionary totalitarianism: a distinct, new species and its effects on society

Reading: Elster, *Political Psychology*, chapter 4; *Alchemies of the Mind*, chapter 1; *Sour Grapes*, chapter 3

12. Conclusion. Democratization and its precariousness: blindness, agency, totalitarian reaction. The uncertain future of democracy in China—and in the world at large

No reading required

Bibliography

Jiwei Ci, *Democracy in China: The Coming Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019)

-----, *Moral China in the Age of Reform* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014)

Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, vol. 2, Power and Civility*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), part 1, chapter 2, and part 2. A revised edition available in one volume from Blackwell, first issued in 2000

-----, *What is Sociology?* trans. Stephen Mennell and Grace Morrissey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), chapters 2, 3

Jon Elster, *Political Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), chapter 4

-----, *Alchemies of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chapters 1, 5

-----, *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), chapter 3

Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, vol. 1, Reason and the Rationalization of Society, vol. 2, Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984, 1987)

-----, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), chapter 4, “Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism,” and chapter 5, “Legitimation Problems in the Modern State”

Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

-----, *A Revolution of the Mind: Radical Enlightenment and the Intellectual Origins of Modern Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010)

Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: ‘What is Enlightenment?’,” in Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. H. S. Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970)

Karl Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978)

Daniel C. Mattingly, *The Art of Political Control in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Margaret E. Roberts, *Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside Great’s Great Firewall* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018)

Dietrich Rueschemeyer, *Power and the Division of Labor* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), chapter 7

Benedict de Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, in *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), chapter 20

Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), part 2, chapter 10

Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Liberty and Property: A Social History of Western Political Thought from Renaissance to Enlightenment* (London: Verso, 2012), chapter 8