T03P09 / Authoritarian Deliberation Revisited: What Does It Mean for Our Understanding of Democratic Governance?

Topic : T03 / Policy and Politics sponsored by Policy & Politics Journal

Chair : Hendrik Wagenaar (University of Sheffield)

Second Chair : Baogang He (Deakin University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

In this panel a selection of papers may be considered for the Policy & Politics *journal.*

In 2011 Mark Warren and Baogang He introduced the concept of 'authoritarian deliberation'. Their paper and the ideas it contained were path-breaking in several respects. They demonstrated that democratic deliberation not only happened as a civil society subversive act within a politically authoritarian setting such as China, but that it was in fact promoted by the party as a strategy of (local) governance. The paper also showed that democratic process is not an all-or-nothing, universalistic affair, but that a working democracy must be seen as an uneasy and unstable assemblage of democratic (public participation, democratic deliberation) and repressive (disempowerment of marginal groups, erosion of human rights) elements against the background of different economic, political and cultural developments, some of which (such as political despotism or corporate hegemony) are in direct conflict with the ideal of democracy. Third, the paper situated this democratic assemblage firmly within processes of governance. That is, the concerted action of state and non-state actors gives rise to the complex and constantly evolving mixes of democracy and authoritarianism that we witness in most countries. Finally, the paper forced observers to take a diachronic view of democracy. Democracies continuously develop. In terms of Dryzek's criteria of franchise, scope and authenticity, they improve or they regress. In this panel we will explore these theoretical implications. We invite empirical studies of democratic governance in despotic or hegemonic settings, as well as more theoretical papers about democratic assemblage in a variety of political and economic settings.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We invite both empirical and theoretical papers about forms and democratic governance (democratic deliberation, public participation, 'tolerated' political protest) in 'undemocratic' settings. Such settings can be authoritarian political systems or liberal democracies in which democratic governance is used as an instrumental or expedient tool by political elites. In our panel we want to explore the hybrid nature of democratic governance in a world that is dominated by neoliberal rationality and despotism, as forms of political-economic organisation that are no longer bound by national boundaries.

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Session 1 Authoritarian Deliberation Revisited 1: What Does it mean for Our Understanding of Democratic Governance

Thursday, June 29th 08:15 to 10:15 (Block B 3 - 1)

Discussants

Hendrik Wagenaar (University of Sheffield)

Democratic Deliberation in Chinese Urban Village Regeneration: Integrate the Village Committee and Villagers into the Urban Society

PU NIU (institution for China rural studies)

China has been experiencing profound and massive social and urban transitions following the capitalist expansion of the last 30 years. One aspect of those transitions is a concerted program of urban regeneration in many cities. However, the standard practice of the land-centered "demolish and rebuild" urban village regeneration has proven to be controversial. It soon caused more social problems, such as social exclusion, injustice, and uneven development between rural and urban society. This has attracted attention from both academia and government officials. To treat these problems and balance the uneven development between urban and rural society, the Chinese government has implemented a so-called "human-oriented" urbanization policy since 2014. . This new policy emphasizes the integration of villagers into the city rather than physical site developments. Under that context, democratic deliberation became a key instrument for Chinese local government to address the problems around urban village regeneration.

This research focuses on two primary goals of urban village regeneration: to redevelop the urban village into an urban community and to integrate the various groups of urban villagers into the urban society. The main objectives of this research are to explore the role of democratic deliberation as a tool of governance both during and after the urban village regeneration process. It looks at both the Chinese government's changing governing discourses (from land-centered urbanization to human-oriented urbanization) and daily practices in the regeneration process and regenerated communities governance, as well as the citizens' reactions to these governance technologies. In this paper, I will provide an in-depth investigation of how different actors negotiate with each other through the deliberation institution, and the results of the process of the urban village regeneration program in the context of the New Type Urbanization Plan.

Two in-depth case studies of Zhengzhou urban village regeneration programs will be carried out, and the data will be collected according to qualitative methods including document analysis, interview and participant observation. Interpretive policy analysis will be used to describe and analyze how different actors negotiate with each other through the traditional rural deliberation institution, within the context of the New Type Urbanization Plan. In addition, this study develops a new conceptual framework for understanding the Chinese government's shift towards deliberation in China's social and urban transition, which combines elements from both Chinese Confucianism and western theories around democratic deliberation and social justice. This research will fill gap of research in urban village regeneration and democratic deliberation in China. It will contribute to the knowledge around Chinese urban governance and democratic deliberation within non-western and non-liberal contexts.

Beyond the forum: The deliberative potential of non-deliberative activities

Carolyn Hendriks (Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU)

John Boswell (University of Southampton)

Deliberation is shaped and influenced by a range of non-deliberative activities in the pubic sphere and market. To

date deliberative scholars and practitioners have tended to 'quarantine' such activities from public deliberation, preferring to foster deliberative norms in contained structured forums. This paper steps beyond the forum to consider the role and impact of non-deliberative activities on public deliberation understood in broad terms. Taking a systems view of public deliberation we explore three sets of non-deliberative activities that are prevalent in shaping contemporary policy debates:

1) disruptive actions such as protests and social media campaigns

2) non-verbal communication such as the use of visuals, silence, and presence; and

2) market signals such as stock prices and trends in global commodities.

Using real-world examples, we discuss how non-deliberative activities can play an important sense-making role in deliberative systems, particularly before and after claims are made. The paper also identifies the conditions under which non-deliberative activities might enable or hinder the democratisation of political debate. We argue that non-deliberative activities can help realize the core aspirations of deliberative democracy if and when they open up new domains of inquiry and reflection on the issue at stake.

Make things public? Revisiting the production of public space across the political boundaries in Wenzhou, China

Xi Chen (Newcastle University)

Drawing on author's experience as the initiator and designer of two public events in Jiangxin island in Wenhou, a coastal city in China, this paper will revisit the critical spatial practices, and expose the roles of different agencies, being the architect, the government and the people, played in the process. It is to examine boundaries of the agencies across the policy, to review the possibilities of making things public through citizen's participation, and to rethink the power relation within the production of public space in the local context.

In Chinese society, the public space/sphere usually lie on the controversial relationship between the state power and the citizen, say the insider and the outside. By re-examining the notions of Habermas's public sphere, Philip Huang has discovered the *third realm*[1] which functions as the public sphere in traditional Chinese society. Historically, the third-realm helped to resolve the public business such as building infrastructure for the community. Today, the practice of authoritarian deliberation in political realm somehow has reflected the legacy of *third realm*. It was argued that in China, the public issues are often facilitated by the power of *third realm* that integrates the agencies of the state and the people. Further to that, the process of making things public also witness the hybrid natures of democracy in Chinese political context. It is also the case in this paper.

In order to facilitate the public event, the author had accessed to the third-realm as a *spatial agency*[2] with the help of a local NPC delegate. The spatial agency held an in-between role that moves across the boundary of political systems, and intermediate between the authority and the public. The exploration in this paper aimed to rethink the research questions: what is the limitation of making things public, and what are the key political and cultural qualities of public space in China?

[1] Huang has outlined a conception of the 'third realm', which is a space intermediating between the state and the folk society in which both participated, as he put "free us of the value-laden teleology of Habermas' bourgeois public sphere.'

Huang, P.C.C., 1993. "Public Sphere"/"Civil Society" in China?: The Third Realm between State and Society. Mern China 19, pp.216–240.
[2] In the realm of architecture, the spatial agency refers to a body of power who is able to build up networks and solve problems through (critical) spatial practice.

Awan, N., Schneider, T., Till, J., 2011. Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon England ; New York, NY.

Deliberation and Conflict Resolution in Chinese Urban Middle-Class Neighbourhoods

Beibei Tang (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)

Social unrests have become one major challenge to the rule of China's party-state. To effectively resolve disputes and conflicts at local level before they escalate to larger scale social unrests, is a key criterion for local government performance evaluation in China today. With a particular focus on neighbourhood governance, this paper examines the mechanisms of deliberation and conflict resolution in Chinese urban middle-class residential communities. Along with the rise of private home ownership and urban middle-class residential estates, disputes and conflicts have risen between the residents, resident self-elected organisation (homeowner associations), real

estate developer and property management companies, and the local government. The local state, through their agent Residents' Committees, actively intervenes and mediates the conflicts in those neighbourhoods. Based on empirical findings in middle-class neighbourhoods in Suzhou and Shenyang, this paper analyses 1) how and to what extent deliberation is introduced to and employed as an instrumental tool by local government to achieve their goal of maintaining social stability. 2) in what ways and to what extent deliberation has served as part of governance strategies. and 3) whether and how the state and non-state actors interact with each other during this process to produce more democratic governance under the party-state's authoritarian rule. The findings suggest that 1) deliberation has become an instrumental tool for conflict resolution introduced by local government to middle-class neighbourhoods. Residents' Committees, on behalf of the state, become key coordinator and mediator during the deliberation process. 2) Recruitment of resident volunteers has become a crucial strategy through whom Residents' Committees mobilise resident participation, to facilitate not only deliberation meetings, but more importantly, the pre- and after-meeting informal talks which contribute significantly to the deliberative outcomes. 3) Those deliberative practices on the one hand improve deliberative capacity of neighbourhood governance by showing more tolerance of different opinions, more inclusiveness of participant groups, and more effectiveness of achieving agreements. On the other hand, those practices to a certain extent reinforce the party-state's leadership through mass mobilisation led by the local state.

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Thursday, June 29th 10:30 to 12:30 (Block B 3 - 1)

Discussants

Baogang He (Deakin University)

Authoritarian Deliberation Revisited: The Case of Beijing's Hutong Service

Tingting Li (Civil Aviation University of China)
Ya Li (School of Public Administration, Beihang University)

Authoritarian Deliberation Revisited: The Case of Beijing'sHutong Service

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With the concept of "authoritarian deliberation", He and Warren (2011) not only brought a novel framework into the theory of democracy and comparative politics but also provided a new understanding of Chinese political development in the past two decades. Since then, there have been some prominent trends in China's politics. Most notably, after the 18th party congress in late 2012, more concentration of power has become increasingly evident. Under such circumstances, does the framework of authoritarian deliberation still work well for China? What's the new dynamics of the interaction between authoritarian decision making and deliberative communication? This paper attempts to address these research questions with a fresh case about Beijing's effort of introducing hutong service.

Hutongs are a kind of narrow streets or alleyways in the old town of Beijing, representing a unique residential culture of this city and carrying rich historical elements. In 2016, Dongcheng District started to introduce government-purchased service, which is provided by property management companies,into hutong areas. As claimed, the policy tries to provide services like alleyway cleaning, parking, and security enhancing. However, the primary purpose behind such thing is to expel migrants and control population, which has become an overwhelming goal of the Beijing Municipal Government. The formulating and implementing of this policy was an authoritarian act, without any open-door public involvement. But at the grass-roots levels, some sub-district offices and community neighborhood held deliberative events to promote dialogue among individual residents, service providers, and the local government cells. Those deliberative efforts are designed to connect the needs of inhabitants to the supply side, so as to reduce the risk of the policy adventure and smooth the policy implementation. With this case, we can see that the framework of authoritarian deliberation still stands but new dynamics has emerged.

The paper is organized into four parts. The first section briefs He and Warren's theory and China's recent political development and brings the research questions. The second part introduces the case of Beijing's hutong service and discusses it by employing the authoritarian deliberation framework. In the next part, we focus on the hypotheses about why the deliberative mechanisms were adopted. After examining those raised by He and Warren,We present several new hypotheses regarding this issue. The paper ends with some thoughts for democratic governance and future work.

References:

He, B.,& Warren, M. E. (2011).Authoritarian Deliberation: The Deliberative Turn in Chinese Political Development. Perspectives on Politics, 9(2): 269-289.

Educational Inequality and Collective Action in Urban China

Zhen Lu (University of Sheffield)

Abstract

Since the economic reform started in the late 1970s, China has greatly upgraded its economic structure, and profound changes have taken place in China's society. During the past three decades, more than 200 million rural migrant workers (nonminggong) have migrated to cities for a living (NBS, 2012). This large-scale, persistent, internal migration phenomenon is one of the main drivers of China's economic growth. It is also a representative manifestation of the urbanisation process in this country (NBS, 2012). However, rural migrant workers have found that settling down and assimilating to the cities can be very challenging for them (Zhu, 2007). Among all the social problems that have been brought by internal migration in China and the difficulties migrants have encountered in their integration process, the problems of rural migrant children to gain access to education in cities have attracted extensive attention not only from the government, but also from social media, scholars, and even stimulated protests in China. Along with the increasing migrant population, the development of citizenship and perceptions of it, a fast-developing civil society, especially the growing collective action and louder voice for better conditions of migrant workers, have emerged. When this country looks like a huge monolithic one-party-state to an outsider, mainly because the position of the Chinese Communist Party and its direct control over key areas in the country remains unchallenged, there are spaces left for democratic activities within an authoritarian setting. China's highly decentralized government system, the variegated policy behaviour of state actors, and complicated relationships between governmental and non-governmental actors, are examples of such potential spaces for the democratic activities.

Using the problem of educational inequality, my research focuses on revealing the spaces for democratic deliberation in China, through investigating how different groups, especially disadvantaged groups like migrant population, protest and acquire their identity as citizens claiming educational rights. Using theories of policy implementation, my research also aims at examining how have governments in China cope with increasing resistance and attempt to transform a largely authoritarian, tightly controlled relationship to its citizens, to a different but more open and collective form of governance that listen to collective action.

This research adopts an interpretivist strategy, drawing on semi-structured interviews, direct observations, review of documentation and archival records. It is designed as a case study in the context of Changsha city. Qualitative interviews, direct observations, review of documentation and archival records will be the main sources of evidence in my study to support the research conclusion. This research will contribute to understanding around how different forms of citizenship begin to emerge in this changing society, and how the ruling party deals with the dilemma between development and decentralization in the issue of addressing educational inequality of migrant children.

Strong State, Smart Society: How does the presentation strategy of social demands affect the government response in China?

XUEJUN WU (National University of Singapore)

Over the past decades, there has been an ongoing debate around the state-society relations in China. Whether the Chinese government becomes more responsive has divided scholars into two major camps. (Yang 2004; Pei 2006) However, what is missing in the debate, as argued by its critique, is the explanation for the selectiveness of the government's behaviors. In other words, "why would an authoritarian state with the capacity to suppress public protests use this power only selectively?" (Reilly 2012: 41) Instead of delineating the growing responsiveness, such selectiveness shows a more nuanced picture by revealing the logic of the Chinese government. (Weiss 2014)

Contrary to the research which mainly focuses on the government to explain the selectiveness, this article contributes to the existing research by bringing the society into the debate. Although many scholars have noticed that there is an emerging independent civil society in China, (Teets 2013: 19-39) few researches have been conducted to scrutinize its impacts on governmental behaviors.

Based on the theory of threat, this article argues that how the society presents its demands also profoundly

affects the government response. This is because political threat, one decisive factor of authoritarian government behaviors, (Kang and Han 2008: 36-55) involves both material factor and perception. The material factor refers to "what the society asks for" while the perception deals with the information received by the government. The latter is seriously affected by the interactions between the government and the society and can distort the threat to a degree that it largely reshapes the outcomes. (Klaus 1976) In other words, this article argues: instead of merely focusing on "what the society asks for," we need also pay attention to "how the society asks" when analyzing the selectiveness of the government response.

Acknowledging the significance of the society, our analysis proceeds in three steps. Firstly, I will discuss how my analysis bridges the gap of current research on the state-society relations in China and clarify the concepts of the presentation strategy of social demands and the governmental response. Secondly, I am going to introduce two cases, namely the "Poisonous Land" case in Changzhou in 2016 and the "Para-xylene Project" (hereafter, PX Project) case in Xiamen in 2007, to delineate the selectiveness of the government behaviors caused by different presentation strategies. Finally, besides reemphasizing the importance of "bring the society back," I describe and explicate the limitations and the possible direction for further research.

Reference:

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From Mass Line to Deliberative Democracy: How Chinese Political Elites Perceive and Practice Democracy

Kaiping Zhang (Stanford University)

Political elites' conception of democracy has been largely shaping China's prospect of democratization. Over the years, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) remains cautious about political reform notwithstanding transition into market economy. The "socialist deliberative democracy" marks one of China's most recent political reforms. How do Chinese officials perceive and practice deliberative democracy? What are the implications for China's prospects of democracy?

I argue that the Chinese deliberative democracy inherits, rather than import, its core concept from the native political tradition. It serves functional purposes of enhancing governing capacities through consulting the non-ruling parties and the public. Using a new national survey of Chinese officials, I find that officials align views of deliberative democracy with their latent democratic orientations. The orientation yields powerful explanations for officials' behaviors of public engagement.

Mass Line, often summarized as "from the masses, to the masses," stands among the CCP's core political principles from the revolutionary era. It embodies the CCP's ideal relationships with the people, emphasizing that officials should listen closely to people's needs and serve the people through benevolent policies. I argue that socialist deliberative democracy upgrades this old-fashioned working guideline into a modern form of democracy. At the core, both highlight decision-making through consulting the people; they share the goal of collecting public support and supervising local officials. Yet borrowing semantic similarities with the western notion, promotion of deliberative democracy appears a remarkable advancement in political reform that does not challenge the CCP's leadership.

I employ a new national survey of over 2000 Chinese officials to examine how public officials perceive and practice the "socialist deliberative democracy." I identified questions that were conceptually related to relations with the people. Principal Component Analysis suggests a dominant latent trait exists in their responses. I performed Confirmatory Factor Analysis to test the hypothesized structure of the orientation, and validated the results using Latent Trait Analysis. Results show that Chinese officials vary along a spectrum of democratic orientation: While some believe the public should participate in decision making, a considerable body indeed

holds paternalistic views that officials should make decisions for the people. The orientation varies by the levels of education, time in office, and administrative levels.

Roughly one-third of officials interpret democracy according to the mass line. Democratic-oriented officials consider deliberative democracy as a benevolent means to consult the public, monitor public officials, and scientific policy-making. Paternalistic-oriented officials, contrarily, value its utilitarian function for collecting public support, mitigating conflicts, or believe it is merely a political show for career advancement without yielding substantial impacts. Regression analyses further show that democratic-oriented officials are significantly more likely to engage people in decision making through channels such as public hearings and online forums.

This study suggests that the "socialist deliberative democracy" deeply coincides with the CCP's political philosophy. Local officials perceive and practice deliberative democracy in accordance with their latent democratic orientations, which may open up a promising ground for public participation, or turn it into window dressing.

Authoritative Pattern of Chinese Deliberative Democracy ——A quantitative analysis of the relationship between "authoritarian level" and "public concern" in Chinese public price hearing

Xuan Qin (Nanyang Technological University)

China, a country with a long history of authoritarianism is permeated with various deliberative democratic practices during the past 20 years, such as public forum, public hearing and resident's meeting. However, most of the existing researches on Chinese deliberative democracy are qualitative analysis focused on single cases; it is hard to see quantitative studies dealing with a large number of cases to provide a comprehensive picture. My study attends to fill this gap. This study collects data of 207 public price hearings in China to test the correlation between "authoritarian level" and "public concern". Using the authoritative theory of Mark Warren, this study comes to the conclusion that both of the efficiency and legitimacy will be improved if the authoritative resources could be distributed more to the "settled" issues with less controversies.