

A Middle Class Without Democracy

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A MIDDLE CLASS WITHOUT DEMOCRACY

Economic Growth and the Prospects for Democratization in China

JIE CHEN



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著者:Jie Chen

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What kind of role can the middle class play in potential democratization in such an undemocratic, late developing country as China? To answer this profound political as well as theoretical question, Jie Chen explores attitudinal and behavioral orientation of China's new middle class to democracy and democratization. Chen's work is based on a unique set of data collected from a probability-sample survey and in-depth interviews of residents in three major Chinese cities, Beijing, Chengdu and Xi'an—each of which represents a distinct level of economic development in urban China-in 2007 and 2008. The empirical findings derived from this data set confirm that (1) compared to other social classes, particularly lower classes, the new Chinese middle class-especially those employed in the state apparatus-tends to be more supportive of the current Party-state but less supportive of democratic values and institutions; (2) the new middle class's attitudes toward democracy may be accounted for by this class's close ideational and institutional ties with the state, and its perceived socioeconomic wellbeing, among other factors; (3) the lack of support for democracy among the middle class tends to cause this social class to act in favor of the current state but in opposition to democratic changes.

The most important political implication is that while China's middle class is not likely to serve as the harbinger of democracy now, its current attitudes toward democracy may change in the future. Such a crucial shift in the middle class's orientation toward democracy can take place, especially when its dependence on the Party-state decreases and perception of its own social and economic statuses turns pessimistic. The key theoretical implication from the findings suggests that the attitudinal and behavioral orientations of the middle class-as a whole and as a part-toward democratic change in late developing countries are contingent upon its relationship with the incumbent state and its perceived social/economic wellbeing, and the middle class's support for democracy in these countries is far from inevitable.

作者介绍:

Jie Chen, Professor and Chair of Political Science, Old Dominion University

Jie Chen is William Borah Distinguished Professor of Political Science, serves as Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at University of Idaho. He also holds the titles of the Changjiang Scholar Chair Professorship and Zhiyuan Chair Professorship bestowed, respectively, by the Ministry of Education, PRC, and by Shanghai Jiaotong University, China. He has authored and co-authored six books, including *Popular Political Support in Urban China* (Stanford University Press, 2004), and *Allies of the State: China's Private Entrepreneurs and Democratic Change* (with Bruce Dickson; Harvard University Press, 2010), and many articles, which appeared in scholarly journals, such as *Journal of Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *the China Quarterly*, *Asian Survey*, *Modern China*, and *Journal of Contemporary China*.

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标签

政治学

民主转型

海外中国研究

中国政治

比较政治

中产阶级

陈捷

英文原版

评论

如果这本书没有“中国”作为卖点，能不能出街都是个未知数

问卷设计、量化、访谈和讨论都过于粗糙。其实我对量化中国民主价值观的类似研究一直存在不适感，总觉着很多研究都是在不考虑物质基础和民主价值的内在关联或中国人答题习惯的情况下就匆匆量化。比如这本书里，在像中国需不需要重大的政治改革这样的问题上，大部分人看到的第一反应肯定是懵逼，不知道填什么（更何况改革什么也没细化说明，受访者怎么选？）。有些问题有误导性，会让受访者觉得要在抽象的政治自由和社会稳定之间做非此即彼的抉择，很多人当然宁可选社会稳定也不选抽象的政治自由（这成了作者衡量民主价值支持度的依据之一）。即便没误导，从小有饭吃有得玩的世界的人毕竟无法理解为什么那些过穷日子后发家致富的人（这个研究里的一代人）的顾虑，后者切身理解穷有多可怕。空口白话喊自由谁不会，但要因此舍弃其他东西毕竟是另一回事。

呵呵了。

为什么中产阶级是保守的。

麻烦给被访起个名字吧==为什么Oxford U Press会出版这本书。。。大概是研究问题选得好吧。

中规中矩的著作（我的博论也长得差不多，作者的英文写作水平好像也跟我差不多。。），填补了部分空白。访谈和数据结合得不好。数据分析和论述也偏粗糙。

粗略翻了，中产能不能带来民主的老问题，但他自己说创新在用了quantitative的方法。结构中规中矩，语言平淡无味。

這本書簡而言之就是說某國的中產階級的崛起與利益都跟國家緊扣在一起，這也意味著他們不太可能反對現行體制。
這本書唯一意義可能在於告訴我們相對(國家)獨立的中產階級才比較可能擁護民主改革，似乎martin lipset
這些現代化理論當年想得不夠多。這本書能在OUP出版很大可能也是因為它研究案例人口數夠多夠牛逼的緣故，否則像這本書問你抽象政治價值與具體社會現象之間作取捨，本身已經是一個methodologically flawed research了。

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书评

发现这本书竟然没有书评,那我就来写个简短的书评吧,告诉大家这本书到底讲的什么。才看到这本书的书名时, A middle class without democracy, 我内心暗自一惊, 心想老师选的教科书如此激进? 以为这是一本讲述中国民主化进程的书, 更确切的说是讲述中国某种程度上或者某些阶级...

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