Abstract  Chinese democracy has an interest today that exceeds its own national sphere and that of area studies. On the one hand, this question is strictly linked to global democracy; on the other, it could be assumed that perhaps there is more space for political experimentation in China than in many other consolidated democracies. Moreover, these challenges increase as world politics is beleaguered by the paradox of the unquestionable commitment to democratic principles and the disappointment and skepticism for its achievements. From these assumptions some classical issues related to Chinese democracy will be discussed: 1) Can we talk about democracy in China? Are
Chinese people suited for democracy? Is Chinese political culture compatible with democracy?; 2) Does talking about democracy in China constitute a Western imposition?; 3) Is democracy necessary?; And 4) Which democracy are we talking about? All these issues involving ideas, expectations and outcomes of democracy in China will be addressed through competitive theories in the wide field of contemporary debates on Chinese politics, such as Gradualism, Transition to Democracy, Critical Theory, New Confucianism and Deliberative Democracy.

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