

the people's deputies fulfill their function within the complex authoritarian political system.

In the conclusion, which is a model of brevity, Manion starts by saying that the book tells two stories. One story is about the political elites and representation by design (chapters one to three) and the other is about society (chapters four to five). This is one possible way to understand the structure of the book. However, I find the connection between chapter four, which is based on a survey of 983 villagers and their views on congress delegates, and chapter five, which focuses on urban activist independent candidates, rather weak. To me, chapter five stands out from the rest of the book, but not in a negative way. Manion seems to emphasize the first three chapters since the summary of the book on the very first page only refers to that part of the study. Certainly the research behind this part of the book is impressive and the results are clear and robust. Yet the findings mainly confirm what previous research on local congresses suspected. In contrast, chapter five is more explorative and its conclusions can only be tentative, but it tells us something about a phenomenon about which we know very little. The many anecdotal examples related to independent candidates also make this chapter a fascinating read that adds to the impression that this is a highly relevant book for our understanding of contemporary Chinese politics.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in China's people's congress system, but its value goes far beyond that. It will be useful for students and researchers interested in Chinese politics, authoritarianism and comparative politics. Melanie Manion's book is a great contribution to the field of Chinese politics.

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Populist Authoritarianism: Chinese Political Culture and Regime Sustainability

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Weaving multiple public opinion surveys collected from mainland China (between 1987 and 2015) in this book, Wenfang Tang, a leading survey researcher on Chinese politics, provides a thorough and comprehensive analysis of a key empirical puzzle in today's largest authoritarian regime: why do the Chinese people consistently show strong government support while China witnesses increasing social unrest? To effectively tackle this empirical puzzle, Tang brings the CCP's revolutionary experiences and governing style to the centre of his theorization and analysis. More specifically, building upon the literature of political culture in comparative politics, Tang argues that China's political culture, primarily shaped by the CCP's mass-line-inspired political mobilization, collectivization and provision of social services, exerts great influence on the Chinese people's political attitudes and behaviour. According to Tang, this political culture can be best described as "populist authoritarianism," which consists of six key components, namely (1) mass line ideology, (2) accumulation of social capital, (3) public political activism and contentious politics, (4) a hyper-responsive government, (5) weak political and civil institutions, and (6) a high level of regime trust.

Chapter one demonstrates the salience of political culture for understanding China's public opinion and political behaviour; and briefly summarizes the influence on China's contemporary political culture of the mass line ideology and the CCP's early rule via collectivization and provision of social services. Chapter two presents a general picture of political support in today's China, with a particular emphasis on the complex relationships among life satisfaction, government satisfaction and popular demand for democratic change. To address the puzzling co-existence of high political support and increasing life dissatisfaction in today's China, Tang emphasizes the salience of different levels of government in his analysis, following existing research's differentiation between vertical and horizontal political support. Tang's analysis suggests that, while showing high support of national government and political institutions, the Chinese people are more likely to express their dissatisfaction against local governments, which, in turn, could increase their inclination toward joining collective political actions against the latter. Chapters three and four expand chapter two's analysis of political support by incorporating the following two factors respectively: national identity (i.e. nationalism) and social capital (i.e. interpersonal trust). Tang argues that the CCP strategically diverts the Chinese people's potential challenge over its political monopoly by mobilizing nationalism; furthermore, China's communal trust (i.e. sub-type of interpersonal trust as theorized by Tang) contributes significantly to its high regime support. And this communal trust has been effectively cultivated by China's bureaucratic-communal political environment. Chapter five pairs mainland China with Taiwan for a comparative examination of political trust, which allows for some effective control over the influence of Confucian traditions. With such a most-similar-system design, Tang argues that the two societies' distinct political systems provide the best explanation for their diverging patterns of political trust.

Chapters six and seven examine the behaviour components of the populist authoritarianism model, namely, regime-inspired contentious politics and individual dispute resolution. Tang argues that contentious politics in today's China is partly a result of its populist authoritarian tradition; and the CCP intentionally encourages such behaviour for various purposes. When it comes to individual dispute resolution, Tang argues that the CCP has been quite effective in resolving such disputes, mostly via traditional official channels like mediation rather than its newly promoted institutions like courts, trade unions and the legislature. Chapter eight serves as a key methodology foundation for Tang's proposed populist authoritarianism model, addressing the validity issue of public opinion data on political support in contemporary China. Using both list-experiments embedded in large-scale sampling surveys and Implicit Attitude Measures administered in labs, Tang convincingly shows the limited influence of political desirability on China's public opinion data. In other words, China's high political support cannot be simply brushed away as a result of preference falsification captured by survey instruments. In chapter nine, Tang reviews the key components of the populist authoritarianism model and examines its connections with major lines of research in comparative politics, including authoritarian politics and civic culture. Tang also cautions that although the CCP regime enjoys strong support from its people, this system's institutional deficiency should not be ignored. Given the nature of public opinion, it might witness drastic changes; if such changes cannot be effectively and timely addressed via institutional channels, the CCP regime might be confronted with some serious crises.

Theoretically and methodologically, Tang's work on populist authoritarianism sets a new standard for future research on public opinion in China. Tang has been quite rigorous and cautious in drawing conclusions from a variety of sources of data

collected via distinct research designs. Theoretically, Tang skillfully strikes a balance between generalizability and contextualization in proposing the populist authoritarianism model. Readers can easily identify similar cases in other regions and settings, which allow further comparative research, and can also clearly see the lasting imprint of the CCP's revolutionary experiences and governing style on contemporary China's public opinion. I believe this book makes an original contribution to existing research on China's public opinion, in particular, and authoritarian politics, in general. Furthermore, this book is easy to comprehend for graduate and undergraduate students in the fields of China studies, political science and sociology.

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Land Bargains and Chinese Capitalism: The Politics of Property Rights under Reform

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The undisputable centrality of land to the political economy of China over the past two decades has attracted tremendous attention from scholars and the general public alike. In an age of ubiquitous grassroots land conflicts and an economy excessively dependent on the real-estate market, understanding how land and property rights are governed is both intellectually exciting and practically important. In this well-researched book, Meg Rithmire examines an immensely interesting and yet previously underexplored issue, namely the significant subnational variation in property-rights institutions among Chinese cities, especially in the early reform period.

To explain this variation, Rithmire theorizes property rights as “political bargains struck between local state actors and groups in society under conditions of uncertainty” (p. 3), and relates these bargains to the broader local political economy that is shaped by local reform dynamics and central policies. She argues that when state-sector reforms were relatively easy to implement, local governments tailored property-rights institutions to direct land to capital accumulation, while when reforms were difficult due to resource or moral restrictions, local governments instead decentralized control of property rights to distribute land among potential losers of reform. Through a comparison of three carefully selected cities – Dalian, Harbin and Changchun – the empirical analysis shows that access to foreign capital, the local government's quest for legitimacy, and preferential policies from Beijing have jointly influenced local property-rights practices in Chinese cities.

In developing her theory, Rithmire systematically traces the evolution of land institutions in China, finding that after an initial period of liberalization and decentralization, the locally diversified property-rights regimes have gradually converged to a nationwide, more predatory one. This is because, she argues, the fiscal recentralization in the mid-1990s dramatically increased the local state's dependence on land revenues, giving rise to a more universal and active pursuit of “land finance” (*tudi caizheng*).

One significant theoretical contribution of the book, among many others, lies in its well-structured comparative perspective. While the significance of land in capital accumulation and as a locus of conflicts has not gone unnoticed in earlier works (for