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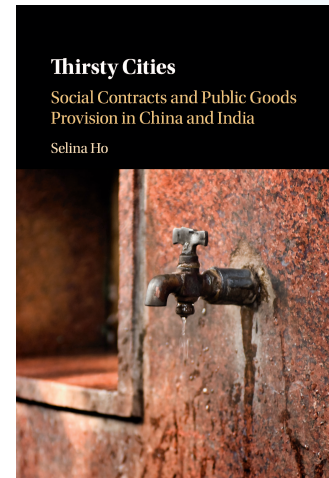
Social Contracts and Public Goods Provision in China and India

Selina Ho

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Why does authoritarian China provide a higher level of public goods than democratic India? Studies based on regime type have shown that the level of public goods provision is higher in democratic systems than in authoritarian forms of government. However, public goods provision in China and India contradicts these findings. Whether in terms of access to education, healthcare, public transportation, and basic necessities, such as drinking water and electricity, China does consistently better than India. This book argues that regime type does not determine public goods outcomes. Using empirical evidence from the Chinese and Indian municipal water sectors, the study explains and demonstrates how a social contract, an informal institution, influences formal institutional design, which in turn accounts for the variations in public goods provision.

1. Public goods provision in China and India; Part I. Social Contracts: 2. Social contracts, institutional design, and public goods provision; 3. The Chinese social contract; 4. The Indian social contract; Part II. Comparing Urban Water Management in China and India: 5. Comparing China's and India's water institutional frameworks; 6. Quenching thirst in China's first-tier cities: Shenzhen and Beijing; 7. Water constraints in India's megacities: New Delhi and Hyderabad; 8. Conclusion: types of social contracts and can social contracts change?



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'An excellent study on the differential performances of China and India in distributing public goods provisions. With the aid of case studies of water supply in four Chinese and Indian cities, Selina Ho captures an enduring puzzle as to why India lags behind China in offering collective goods to its population, despite its democratic credentials. A must read for all interested in development as well as all politicians and bureaucrats in India!'

T. V. Paul,
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