



# Social Protest and Contentious Authoritarianism in China

*Professor Xi Chen*

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## **Social Protest and Contentious Authoritarianism in China** Professor Xi Chen

Xi Chen explores the question of why there has been a dramatic rise in and routinization of social protests in China since the early 1990s. Drawing on case studies, in-depth interviews, and a unique data set of about 1,000 government records of collective petitions, this book examines how the political structure in Reform China has encouraged Chinese farmers, workers, pensioners, disabled people, and demobilized soldiers to pursue their interests and claim their rights by staging collective protests. Chen suggests that routinized contentious bargaining between the government and ordinary people has remedied the weaknesses of the Chinese political system and contributed to the regime's resilience. *Social Protest and Contentious Authoritarianism in China* challenges the conventional wisdom that authoritarian regimes always repress popular collective protest and that popular collective action tends to destabilize authoritarian regimes.

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