ZOOM WEBINAR BOOK TALK

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Centre for Comparative and Public Law
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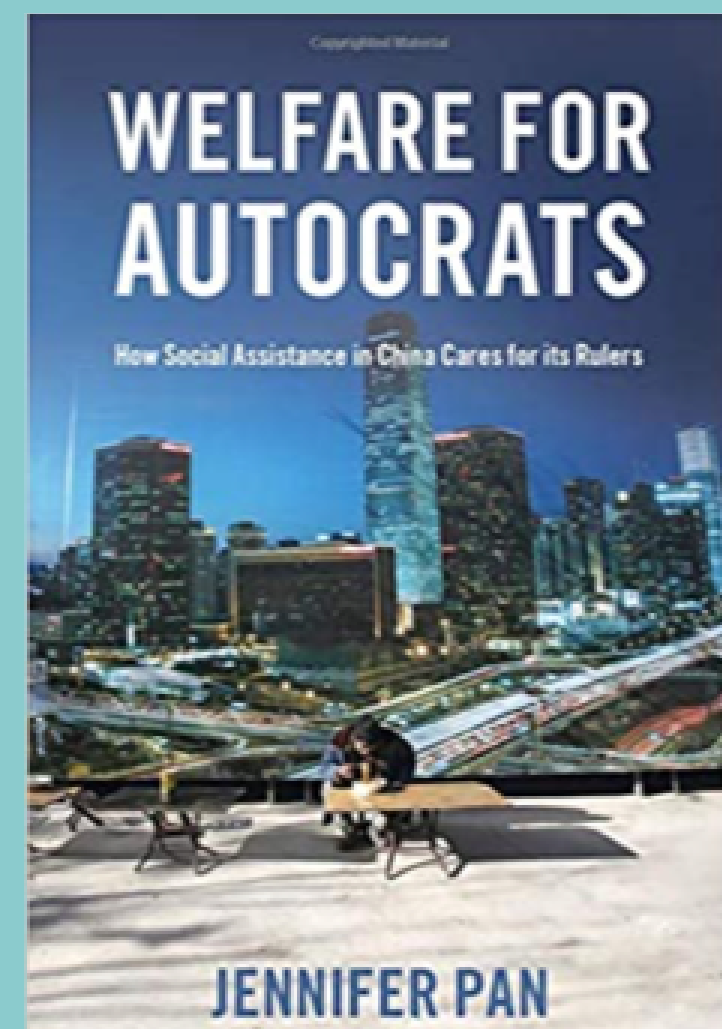## WELFARE FOR AUTOCRATS: HOW SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN CHINA CARES FOR ITS RULERS (OUP, 2020)

with the author -
Jennifer Pan

WELFARE FOR AUTOCRATS

How Social Assistance in China Cares for its Rulers

JENNIFER PAN

6 JAN 2021 (WED)   12:00-13:15 (HK TIME)

What are the costs of the Chinese regime's fixation on quelling dissent in the name of political order, or "stability?" In Welfare for Autocrats, Jennifer Pan shows that China has reshaped its major social assistance program, Dibao, around this preoccupation, turning an effort to alleviate poverty into a tool of surveillance and repression. This distortion of Dibao damages perceptions of government competence and legitimacy and can trigger unrest among those denied benefits. Pan traces how China's approach to enforcing order transformed at the turn of the 21st century and identifies a phenomenon she calls seepage whereby one policy--in this case, quelling dissent--alters the allocation of resources and goals of unrelated areas of government. Using novel datasets and a variety of methodologies, Welfare for Autocrats challenges the view that concessions and repression are distinct strategies and departs from the assumption that all tools of repression were originally designed as such. Pan reaches the startling conclusion that China's preoccupation with order not only comes at great human cost but in the case of Dibao may well backfire.

AUTHOR:
Dr Jennifer Pan is an Assistant Professor of Communication, and an Assistant Professor, by courtesy, of Political Science and Sociology at Stanford University.

CHAIR:
Dr Benjamin Chen, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

This webinar is organized by the Centre for Comparative and Public Law, HKU and will be held via Zoom Meeting. Prior registration is required. Click HERE to register. For inquiries, please email Winnie Law at winniewm@hku.hk.