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Democracy, Community, Trust: The Impact of
Chinese Village Elections in Context

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**DEMOCRACY, COMMUNITY, TRUST:
THE IMPACT OF CHINESE VILLAGE ELECTIONS IN CONTEXT**

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This paper analyzes data from collaborative surveys conducted in four Chinese counties in 1990 and 1996. Chinese project participants include survey researchers from the Research Center on Contemporary China at Peking University and the State Commission for Reform of the Economic System. American project participants include political scientists at the University of Michigan, the University of California at Santa Barbara, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison. We gratefully acknowledge support for various parts of the project from the Luce Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the University of Michigan, the Smith Richardson Foundation, and the Chinese State Education Commission. The 1990 mass survey data have been deposited at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan.

DEMOCRACY, COMMUNITY, TRUST: THE IMPACT OF CHINESE VILLAGE ELECTIONS IN CONTEXT

A few years before the cascade of revolutions that toppled most communist one-party states, inaugurating the newest wave of liberal democracy, Chinese leaders adopted a modest program of electoral democracy to strengthen communist party rule. The provisional law passed by the Chinese legislature in November 1987 was restricted in scope to the countryside, but was nonetheless of historic significance: it established popularly elected village committees as autonomous bodies of self-government, empowering ordinary Chinese villagers to choose and monitor their own leaders, communist or not. The law was designed to build public confidence at the rural grassroots in the wake of decollectivization and the atrophy of organizations, leadership, and the elite-mass relationship (White 1992; Wang 1997; Thurston 1998; Li and O'Brien 1999). Senior leaders and middle-ranking bureaucrats in Beijing pointed to widespread tensions and sporadic violence in the countryside and argued that elections could transform the situation, by imposing accountability and replacing coercive and corrupt "local emperors" with trusted, responsive, capable leaders (O'Brien 1994; Wang 1997; Li and O'Brien 1999; Shi 1999a; O'Brien and Li 2000). Not surprisingly, many local leaders disagreed with the proposed solution, if not the appraisal of the situation. They used a variety of means to exploit vagueness in the controversial 1987 law—limiting participation, transparency, and choice (O'Brien 1994; Kelliher 1997; O'Brien and Li 2000). The Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA), charged with implementing the law, worked to promote electoral contestation, secret ballots, voting booths, and citizen participation in the processes by which candidates emerge. Progress in implementation was highly uneven across provinces, counties, townships, and villages (Thurston 1998; Wang 1998; O'Brien and Li 2000). In November 1998, the Chinese legislature passed a

revised version of the law, no longer provisional, containing the measures of electoral democracy advanced by the MCA. Today, after more than a decade of experience, with four rounds of village elections completed in many provinces, a substantial empirical record has accumulated, enabling systematic study of the effect of these institutional changes. This article investigates the impact of grassroots electoral democracy on a basic element of the elite-mass relationship: beliefs of ordinary citizens that their leaders are trustworthy.

The data analyzed here are from two surveys of randomly sampled villagers in the same 57 villages in 1990 and 1996, merged with a set of separately collected data detailing features of elections in these villages over the same period of time (see Appendix 1). The analyses take advantage of uneven progress in grassroots democratization and ask how variation in democratic electoral quality across villages is associated with variation in changed views about the probity (or venality) of local leaders. Not least of all, the analyses also take account of informal institutions that make up the community context in which village elections were introduced—in particular, variation across villages in democratic culture and the role of lineage relationships.

In most previous studies, Chinese grassroots democratization features mainly as a dependent variable and only secondarily (if at all) as an explanatory variable. Fieldwork suggests that successful democratization may be largely explained by bureaucratic attention (O'Brien 1994; Wang 1997), provincial leadership (Pastor and Tan 2000), and village wealth based on a large collective economy (O'Brien 1994; Wang 1997). An analysis of nationwide survey data concludes that the effect of wealth on electoral contestation is curvilinear: it increases the likelihood that villages will hold contested elections, but the impact diminishes as wealth increases (Shi 1999b). As to the effects of grassroots democratization, fieldwork

suggests that electoral contestation may have improved governance and given villagers a sense of increased voice in local politics, but it may have intensified lineage conflict too (O'Brien 1994; White 1998; Li and O'Brien 1999). The law itself appears to have changed political discourse for villagers, providing them with a legitimate resource they employ in appeals to authorities at higher levels (Li and O'Brien 1996; O'Brien 1996). It has also prompted, in some localities, a greater role for ordinary villagers in supervising and subjecting to votes of confidence village communist party secretaries (Lawrence 1994; Li 1999). Systematic evidence of effects is scarce, however. In analyses of survey data, Manion (1996) finds a positive relationship between electoral contestation and congruence in views between villagers and their leaders, and Li (2002) finds a positive relationship between democratic electoral quality and trust in village leaders, reflected in a greater likelihood of villagers to appeal to their leaders to represent them against predatory exactions by higher authorities.

This article contributes to a growing literature on democratization in the Chinese countryside and, more generally, to an evaluation of ongoing political institutional change in China. In the broadest sense, the analyses here also add to our knowledge about the effects of new electoral democracy and the relationship between formal electoral institutions and informal networks. The evidence suggests that democratic quality of elections has a significant impact on trust in leaders: beliefs that leaders are "clean," not corrupt, seem to have grown more in villages where elections feature more contestation and where voting methods are more inclusive. At the same time, informal community influences, especially lineage relationships of harmony or conflict, are also important influences. This latter finding cautions against naive determinism when considering the possibilities or time frame for change induced by formal institutions alone.

Corruption and Trust

Taking advantage of a new abundance of subjective corruption measures, such as those compiled by Transparency International, many quantitative analyses treat perceived corruption as a rough proxy for actual abuses by officials of the public trust.¹ Certainly, where trust in officials is low, a likely reason is indeed low trustworthiness (Hardin 1999). Yet, the illegality of corruption and the obvious biases against reporting it, compared to many other crimes, pose an information problem—described by Myrdal (1968) more than three decades ago as a “folklore of corruption” and by Miller, Grodeland, and Koshechkina (2001) recently as a “culture of corruption.” Shared beliefs about the ubiquity of corrupt practices may be highly exaggerated, but can nonetheless persist in a community and themselves influence how ordinary citizens act in encounters with officials (Manion 2004).²

Mindful of this often serious incongruity of beliefs and actual practices but without rejecting the possibility that perceptions may reflect practices reasonably well, this article treats beliefs about the probity (or venality) of leaders as intrinsically important. That is, popular views about local corruption may quite imperfectly reflect local practices, but they surely reflect well the quality of elite-mass relationships. They reflect the breadth of trust within the community that leaders are working in the legitimate collective interest, not their own illicit private interest.

By all accounts, corruption exploded in mainland China in the early 1980s. Chinese leaders acknowledge corruption has become more serious than at any time since the communists won power in 1949 and, probably correctly, view it as the greatest threat to communist party rule today. Despite more than two decades of anticorruption reform, corruption in China has grown

more or less unabated (see Liu 1983; Ostergaard 1986; Zafanulli 1988; Gong 1994; Manion 2004). It is widespread, extending to practically every sort of official activity in every sector. It is also a highly volatile issue in Chinese society: it was perhaps the major issue in the 1989 protests in Beijing and other cities (Manion 1990; Ostergaard and Petersen 1991; Sun 1991; Mason 1994). Increasing income inequality has exacerbated its volatility, because of a perception that the wealthy have attained their status corruptly.³ Since the mid-1980s, corruption has ranked at or near the top of every public opinion poll as the most urgent problem confronting the country. The national legislature, which rarely dissents in its votes, reflected popular dissatisfaction by presenting the chief procurator with the lowest rates of approval on record for his reports on the anticorruption effort in 1997 and 1998. In 1998, the report barely passed (Rowan 2001).

In the Chinese countryside, corruption mainly takes the form of predatory exactions—excessive compulsory and irregular non-tax charges exacted from peasants by local authorities in the wake of decollectivization in the 1980s. In 1985, the central authorities set overall limits on non-tax charges: combined, they were not to exceed 5 percent of the township average per capita income in the preceding year. In fact, exactions have grown well beyond this limit, mainly through the “three arbitrary practices,” imposing a variety of arbitrary fees, fines, and apportionments.⁴ Everywhere, the exactions are highly regressive (Lu 1997; Bernstein and Lu 2000, 2003).

Predatory exactions are especially common in central and western China, where rural industry has grown more slowly than in other areas, and local governments rely mainly on agriculture for administrative support and to carry out developmental projects imposed by higher

levels. The root causes of many such exactions are decreases in local government revenues and increases in local government responsibilities in the fiscal decentralization of the 1980s and 1990s. Relative to total local government expenditures, the revenue yielded by predatory exactions is not all that large but it amounts to a huge proportion of local administrative expenditure—about 80 percent in 1995, for example (Wedeman 2000). Revenues exacted are spent on bonuses, housing, offices, and banqueting, in short, collective consumption by local authorities (Lu 2000; Wedeman 2000).

Bernstein and Lu (2000, 2003) argue that peasants have clear ideas about which sorts of exactions are legitimate and which are not: arbitrary fines, fees, and apportionments inspire particular resentment. They cite a Central Committee document on rural instability that points to more than 6,000 instances of rural unrest in 1993, many extending across several townships. In many such instances, the public security forces, armed police, or local army units suffered casualties, including deaths, as they worked to restore order. Similar outbreaks of rural unrest occurred in the mid-1990s and after, all with the same dominant complaint: predatory exactions.

Electoral Democracy

Studies appearing in recent years find a fairly consistent empirical association of democracy with less perceived corruption—although scholars disagree on the strength of the relationship and whether or not long experience of democracy is required for any significant impact (Goldsmith 1999; Treisman 2000; Sandholtz and Koetzl 2000; Knack and Azfar 2001).⁵ Theoretically, for a number of reasons, electoral democracy can be expected to enhance collective beliefs, accurate or not, that leaders are generally “clean,” not corrupt.

First, by design at least, electoral democracy promotes probity of elected leaders.

Democratic elections align interests of officials with interests of voters through two mechanisms: choice and monitoring. Electoral choice means voters can choose officials they believe are less likely to abuse public office. The prospect of reelection also affects the conduct of elected officials; in this way, elections act through the monitoring mechanism. In rural China, where villages average about 1200 residents, electoral choice can be based on personal knowledge, accumulated over decades and updated continuously. Compared to elections in contexts of larger scale, where gathering information requires more resources, village elections have the potential to check improper conduct more effectively.⁶ An institutional design that subjects officials to voter choice and rejection at regular intervals can be expected to constrain leaders—who are chosen through a process in which ordinary villagers have a voice—to act in the collective rather than their own private interest. In fact, the evidence does suggest a relationship between actual official probity and democratic quality of village elections.⁷ The main point here, however, is not that electoral democracy always or necessarily constrains venal officials, but that ordinary citizens can expect it generally to have this constraining effect, especially in the small village context and by comparison with the decades-old system of appointments from above.

Second, to the extent that electoral quality covaries with other qualities of governance, we can expect to see an association with popular beliefs that reflects this. That is, democratic electoral quality may be a proxy for a bundle of institutional features that promote beliefs about trustworthiness of local officials. The empirical association of democracy with perceived clean government across countries, noted above, has much to do with attendant non-electoral mechanisms (press freedoms and rule of law, for example) that enhance transparency and

accountability. In rural China, elections are only one element of grassroots democratization; increased financial transparency and villager participation in decision making are others. Village electoral quality may be associated with beliefs in the probity of local officials because elections are of a piece with other institutional features that also promote such beliefs.⁸

Community Context

Formal institutions are never the whole story, of course. The introduction of electoral democracy in rural China, as in the liberal democracies that replaced communist rule, has taken place in particular contexts that themselves have different implications for how ordinary citizens perceive their leaders. These contexts are defined by existing patterns of vertical and horizontal linkages. Here, I consider two features of community context that can be expected to affect the quality of elite-mass relationships: lineage structure and democratic culture.

Responding to Putnam's (1993) work linking social trust and democratic vitality, Levi (1996) cautions that social networks are a source of both trust and distrust: they promote trust of those inside the network and distrust of those outside it. Warren (1999) extends this argument into the political sphere, noting that competitive electoral campaigns manufacture particularized trust by cultivating the distrust of other communities of interest. Chinese village elections do not feature campaigns as such, but these issues are relevant to the effect of informal institutions, such as lineage relationships that confer social identity, on popular beliefs about local corruption. Chinese sociologist Xiao (2001a: 87) concludes, on the basis of fieldwork in the late 1990s, that village elections are a powerful catalyst for clan activity: "Elections increase [both] clan trust and clan suspicions; they temporarily moderate conflict within clans and intensify conflict between clans."⁹ Xiao and his collaborators find clan influence in elections reflected in a higher

likelihood of winning leadership positions for candidates from big clans, the use by candidates of clan affiliation as a credential to win votes, and the practice by a majority of villagers of voting for their own clan.

The notion that the mere introduction of village elections unleashes clan conflict and formalizes the structure of clan influence was argued by Chinese opponents of grassroots democratization in the 1980s (see Kelliher 1997; Wang 1997). Critics warned of the potential for extreme strife in villages where evenly matched lineages compete for power. As this warning suggests, the implications of clan influence for elite-mass linkages depend in large part on clan structure. For example, in case studies of four villages in southern China, Tsai (2002) finds relations between villagers and village officials in multiple-surname villages are characterized by conflict and distrust. In single-surname villages, however, dense community networks allow villagers to sanction officials, who are sensitive to wide social disapproval and, therefore, rarely act so as to incur actual sanctions. Similarly, Kennedy (2002: 479), investigating villager satisfaction with the electoral process, finds “the interests of the lineage organization and the village as a whole are linked” in single-surname villages and that the situation breeding greatest dissatisfaction is one in which villages have two or three large clans.

In sum, theoretical reasons and empirical evidence suggest lineage relationships matter. If, as Xiao and others have argued, elections stimulate clan salience and activity, then social distrust among villagers of different lineages may increase and, among villagers, distrust of leaders from different lineages may increase—reflected in perceptions that leaders are corrupt. This is to be expected most where elections feature a few clans vying for village rule. In single-surname villages or villages with a highly fragmented clan structure, however, we do not expect

to observe this sort of increased distrust.

Democratic culture is a contextual influence of a different sort. Here, it is important to take into account the extent to which electoral democracy may not matter very much if it merely puts a formal institutional face on already existing local norms and practices. In a statistical sense, this implies controlling for different points of departure in democratic culture. Obviously, in the broadest sense, Chinese tradition does not supply the roots of any identifiable democratic culture.¹⁰ However, to varying degrees, ordinary Chinese have participated in actions that monitor elite conduct, especially (but not only) in the past two decades. Individual-level correlates of these actions in both urban and rural contexts have been clarified in a number of fairly recent studies (see Jennings 1997; Shi 1997, 2000; Zhong, Chen, and Scheb 1998). Of interest here, however, is local variation in democratic culture across villages that differ little from one another in the distribution of gender, age, education, and political resources.

Dependent Variable: Change in Trust in Local Leaders

The discussion above argues that electoral democracy can be expected to have an impact on beliefs about the prevalence of corruption, promoting views that leaders are trustworthy. At the same time, community context also matters. The discussion frames the following specific research question for the analyses below: how and how much is variation across villages in electoral quality and clan structure, controlling for initial differences in democratic culture, associated with variation in changed views of ordinary villagers about the probity of their leaders?

Accordingly, the dependent variable in the analyses below is a measure of change in trust in leaders, based on 1990 and 1996 survey responses to questions about the prevalence of

corruption among local officials. Overall, responses suggest a change in the direction of broader trust,¹¹ but some part of the apparent increase in trust may be attributable to changed question wording.¹² Differences in question wording pose a problem for a descriptive measure of change, but not for the village-level inferential analyses below.¹³ This is because systematic biases that can be reasonably presumed to arise from differences in wording across time can also be reasonably presumed to operate similarly across villages.¹⁴

The most straightforward dependent variable for the question of interest here is village-level change in proportions of respondents reporting most local officials are “clean,” not corrupt. Unfortunately, as percentages are constrained between 0 and 100, this formulation is also incorrect. The correction here is a logarithmic transformation of the dependent variable to permit estimation of a linear model.¹⁵ Results with the correction are essentially the same as those for the more easily interpretable dependent variable, however. For this reason, I focus discussion on estimation of effects on the latter (although I present both models). Positive numbers indicate a more widely held perception that most officials are “clean” in 1996, interpreted here as a change in the direction of broader trust.¹⁶

Explanatory Variables: Democratic Electoral Quality

The measures of democratic quality of village elections used as independent variables in the analyses below here are village-level averages for all elections held in the 1990–96 period.¹⁷ Basically, the measures are borrowed from Pastor and Tan (2000), who employ a normative and practical perspective developed from observing elections in a number of countries, including elections in the Chinese countryside. Democratic electoral quality is measured as openness of nomination and selection of candidates, degree of electoral contestation, and inclusiveness of

voting procedures.¹⁸

Openness of Candidate Nomination and Selection

Villages across China use a variety of methods to generate initial nominations of candidates for village committee positions (see Elklit 1997; Howell 1998; Pastor and Tan 2000; Kennedy 2002). Typically, nominations originate from more than one source. Processes in which ordinary Chinese participate include nominations by groups of individual voters, village “small groups,” household representatives, and village representative assemblies.¹⁹ Processes in which ordinary Chinese are not involved include nominations by the village election leading small group, village communist party branch, and the township government. Certainly, the former processes can be manipulated by leaders. Whether such manipulation actually occurs or the extent to which it influences outcomes in a given election is very difficult to discover, at least for any large number of villages. Clearly, however, manipulated or not, these processes of nomination operate through the villagers and can be expected to affect views about the fairness of elections and election outcomes. In this sense, they differ fundamentally from the processes monopolized by leaders.

Not all candidates initially nominated are selected to appear on the ballot. The formal candidate list may be reduced through various processes, sometimes depending on how many initial candidates are nominated. If initial nominations yield no more candidates than positions, selection may nonetheless involve some form of candidate vetting. Again, these processes may or may not involve villager participation: successive elections that whittle down the number of candidates, sometimes from a great many candidates, are one method involving extensive villager participation.

For each election in 1990–96, nomination and selection are coded as three-level ordinal variables, with higher values indicating greater openness of the process to villagers.²⁰ The analyses below consider openness of nomination and selection independently,²¹ with variables that average values for each across elections in each village.

Electoral Contestation

A more obvious component of electoral choice is the degree of electoral contestation. Pastor and Tan (2000) posit as an ideal two candidates for each position, but many Chinese village elections (including most in our 57-village sample) do not meet this criterion. Despite efforts over the years by the MCA and its subordinate bureaus, a number of village elections offer no choice among candidates (although the 1998 law requires it). To be sure, even in elections without choice, villagers can reject candidates and produce a “failed election,” as successful candidates must receive a majority of votes cast. Nonetheless, choice among candidates is unequivocally an important component of democratic electoral quality.

Electoral contestation in the analyses here is the mean of the ratio of candidates to positions on the village committee. Nearly one-third of villages in the sample consistently feature elections without choice. Electoral contestation often takes on a value of about 1.3, with one-third more candidates than positions.

Inclusiveness of Voting Procedures

The 1998 law on village elections and village self-governance mandates direct individual voting by secret ballot in voting booths. In most villages, individual villagers do vote by marking ballots themselves, although not infrequently in public all-village meetings. Household representatives usually vote in place of others in the household who are working outside the

village. In some villages, it is not uncommon for heads of households to vote by proxy for all household members. In other villages, the village representative assembly determines the final outcome of the village election. In our 57-village sample, data on voting procedures are incomplete,²² but among the 47 villages for which complete data exist, nearly all maintain stability in voting procedures.²³

When considering voting procedures, what is of interest here is the breadth of participation of villagers as individual voters in elections. This is not necessarily reflected well in figures on voter turnout—probably because turnout is a key performance measure, for which local officials mobilize greatly even if they ignore other features of electoral quality. Fortunately, our 1996 survey asked respondents if they had ever voted in an election for the village committee. The proportion of respondents who report having voted is in fact highly correlated with inclusiveness of voting procedures in the villages for which data are available.²⁴ That reported voting reflects village-level features is quite clear. Overall, 56 percent of villagers in the sample report never having voted in a village election, but variation across villages is huge. In the top quarter of villages in the sample, more than 77 percent of villagers report having voted, but in the bottom quarter, less than 13 percent report having voted. As respondents are a random sample of the village population and variation across villages in individual-level characteristics is trivial, it is reasonable to suppose that village-level variation is related to village-level features.²⁵

To avoid dropping observations due to missing data, the analyses here use village-level reported voting percentages as a proxy for inclusiveness of voting procedures. Certainly, reported voting reflects more than this. It reflects the salience of elections—related not only to

voting procedures but also to the recentness of elections.²⁶ For this reason, months between the 1996 survey and most recent election is included in the analyses below as a control variable. That reported voting reflects the salience of elections beyond voting procedures and distance in time is, however, an important consideration. We can think of reported voting as capturing features of electoral quality that prominently include inclusiveness of voting procedures and recentness of elections but also include other village-level features that go unmeasured in the model.

Explanatory Variables: Lineage Relationships and Economic Change

The introduction of elections, however badly or well implemented, offers an opportunity for exclusive groups with different identities to manufacture distrust. Villages with lineage relationships that do not divide the community into a few exclusive groups may have a “leg up”: elections are unlikely to foment increased social and political distrust. Additionally, economic decentralization offers new opportunities for local leaders. Changes in trust may be due to changes in administrative performance related to the local economy, not to electoral quality.

Lineage Relationships

Without extensive fieldwork, it may be impossible to know the degree to which lineage is an important influence in any particular village, but potential importance can be measured approximately by considering village surname diversity. To be sure, the same surname does not always connote the same lineage or a close horizontal association within the lineage, even in the rural context. Within a village, different lineages may have a common surname but trace descent from different founding ancestors, and a single lineage can be divided into different lineage branches (for examples, see Cohen 1990). That is, while surname diversity is a good indicator of

lineage diversity, it is possible for a single-surname village to be characterized by conflict between lineage branches and even lineages. Fortuitously, however, none of the 57 villages in our sample approximates a single-surname village.²⁷

A proxy measure for the potential importance of lineage relationships can be computed from a random sample of surnames in the village. The lineage measure in the analyses below is computed using such samples for each village and applying to each the standard formula for effective number of parties, which describes the distribution of seats in parliamentary democracies.²⁸ Lower values reflect greater surname concentration, higher values greater surname diversity.²⁹ As there are no single-surname villages, small values suggest the possibility of conflict—two or three lineages vying for dominance or a strong but not predominant lineage in a village with many lineages—rather than village harmony. Because small values here suggest conflict, not harmony, and larger values suggest the weakness (or irrelevance) of lineage influences on politics, the predicted relationship to change in trust in local leaders is positive.

Economic Change

Economic change related to quality of administrative performance may also explain variation in changes in trust. Improvement (or deterioration) in incomes and income distribution can reflect variation in local leadership in the context of new opportunities presented by economic decentralization. Consider income change first. As improving prosperity is one of the most important roles of local leaders, villagers may credit (or blame) local leaders for changes in local wealth—and may conflate economic success with trustworthiness. Additionally, localities that flourished in the 1980s and 1990s, typically through the growth of rural industry or private entrepreneurship, provided local leaders with comparatively stronger revenue bases upon which

to draw to support a bloated administration and meet unfunded central mandates. Whether or not improved prosperity is associated with fewer actual predatory exactions, it can reasonably be expected to affect beliefs about local predation. As to change in income inequality, against an historical background of Maoist egalitarianism, many ordinary Chinese associate growing inequality with low moral scruples of those with wealth and power (He 1997). Where inequality has increased, villagers may blame local officials, attributing the change to poor administrative performance, as above, or may view widening disparity as evidence that those in positions of leadership are not impartial in the distribution of opportunities. In short, increased inequality may promote beliefs that leaders are unworthy of the popular trust, for some (but not all) of the same reasons that increased incomes promote beliefs in their trustworthiness.

In the analyses below, village-level change in income is measured by subtracting 1990 from 1996 per capita income. As positive values indicate increases in per capita income, the predicted relationship to the dependent variable is positive. Village-level change in income inequality is derived from reported household income in the 1990 and 1996 surveys. The measure subtracts the 1990 from the 1996 village standard deviation of reported household income.³⁰ As positive values reflect increases in income inequality, a negative relationship to the dependent variable is predicted: that is, greater increases in income inequality should be associated with greater decreases in trust in local leaders.

Control Variables

As argued above, electoral democracy may matter little if elections essentially put a formal institutional face on existing informal institutions—widely shared practices and accompanying expectations about elite-mass relations. The analyses below attempt to control

for different points of departure in democratic culture by reflecting the monitoring orientation of villagers toward local leaders before electoral democracy can be expected to have an impact on trust.³¹ The variable reflecting the scope and intensity of monitoring orientations is based on a simple additive index of responses to six items asked in the 1990 survey: questions about interest in village elections, attention to public affairs, actions communicating this attention to local officials, and beliefs about the efficacy of such actions.³² The analyses below use village means of sums of individual-level positive responses.

Although surely inadequate, monitoring orientation is by no means unsuitable as a reflection of village democratic culture. Such a culture is likely to be resistant, although not impervious, to change. Not surprisingly, village-level monitoring orientation computed from responses to the 1990 survey is strongly correlated with that computed from responses to the same questions asked in 1996.³³ Also, democratic culture may help explain variation across villages in inclusiveness of voting procedures: where villagers are interested, attentive, and already communicate effectively with local elites, less inclusive voting is probably not needed to boost voter turnout—and is probably less acceptable to villagers too. This endogeneity of culture and institutions is indeed suggested in a strong and significant correlation between voting procedures and monitoring orientation in 1990.³⁴

The analyses also include as control variables village size (1990 population) and village wealth (1990 per capita income).

Analyses and Discussion

Table 1 summarizes the hypothesized direction of relationships for variables of analytic interest, and Table 2 presents results from WLS multivariate regression estimations for the most

easily interpretable dependent variable.³⁵ Model I includes all variables, and Model II only the analytic variables of significance and control variables. Appendix 2 presents the same estimations yielding essentially the same results using logarithmic transformations of the 1990 and 1996 village percentages. Appendix 3 presents summary statistics for variables used in the analyses.

[Tables 1 and 2 about here.]

What matters? Have the formal institutions of electoral democracy had an impact on how ordinary Chinese villagers view local leaders? Has electoral democracy, which by design can be expected to promote both trustworthiness and trust, in fact promoted broader trust? If so, what exactly is it about electoral democracy that matters? The findings presented in Table 2 suggest that the obvious and elemental features of electoral democracy matter. Other things equal, two electoral variables increase the breadth of trust in local leaders: the extent to which ballots offer choice and procedures encourage voting participation by individuals. That is, greater electoral contestation and more inclusive voting procedures matter, as predicted. More subtle electoral features, reflecting openness of the process to villager participation before the election—in nomination and selection of candidates—are not statistically significant in the analyses presented in Table 2. Indeed, the relationships are not even in the predicted direction. This is puzzling and at odds with stories in the Chinese press and observations of village elections by Americans over the years. A possible explanation may be insufficient variation in the 57 villages sampled here. Anecdotal evidence about the importance of villager participation in nomination and selection of candidates often points to localities where elections feature successive series of primaries that often begin with many dozens of candidates nominated

directly by villagers. More subtle variation in these processes may simply not make enough difference to beliefs about the trustworthiness of local leaders, although it may matter to outcomes not examined here.³⁶

The association of electoral contestation and inclusiveness of voting procedures with increased local trust does not, of course, rule out a hypothesis about a different causal mechanism and direction than described above. Electoral quality may itself reflect trustworthiness. The implementation of electoral democracy implies a willingness to practice methods by which ordinary citizens can hold leaders accountable. Local officials who fear an honest electoral verdict because they have abused the popular trust are unlikely to put into place mechanisms that allow citizens to sanction them through the ballot box. That is, greater trustworthiness may produce elections of higher democratic quality. Of course, the leaders who set guidelines for local electoral practices are not the vote seekers in Chinese village elections, but officials at the higher township or county levels—and this offers some reassurance about the greater plausibility of the explanation proposed above.

The results presented in Table 2 also point to the importance of basic economic features. Other things equal and regardless of starting point, increases in village prosperity, measured here as per capita income change, are associated with increases in trust. This may be due to a conflation of administrative performance, economic success, and trustworthiness of local leaders in the eyes of ordinary Chinese. Alternatively, the stronger revenue bases associated with village wealth may reduce the need for predatory exactions to support local government. Improved village prosperity may actually allow local leaders to be more trustworthy and, therefore, more widely trusted. These causal processes are not mutually exclusive. Either or

both may be at work here.

Perhaps the most intriguing finding reported in Table 2 has nothing to do with formal electoral institutions or basic economic change, but with community context—namely, the influence of lineage relationships. Clans clearly matter. Other things equal, in villages where lineage structure lends itself most to clan conflict, that is, where villagers can identify with one of only a few clans, clan influence in the new context of village elections promotes distrust. This contrasts with villages where clans are more numerous and therefore not a salient feature dividing villagers into distinct categories. While the sample of 57 villages does not present an opportunity to test clan influence in single-surname villages, where clan identity promotes village harmony, the expectation is that the association of surname concentration with decreased trust would not hold in villages with this lineage structure.

Conclusion

Five years after the introduction of electoral democracy in Poland, Sztompka (1996) observes a culture of endemic social and political distrust, partly a legacy of socialism. It is perhaps naive to expect to find an impact of elections on trust in leaders with less than a decade of accumulated experience. Yet, the analyses presented here strongly suggest that the formal institutions of electoral democracy matter: designs that encourage contestation and participation do better at promoting the trust of ordinary citizens in their leaders than do designs that restrict competition and exclude voters. At the same time, context matters, here, community context: as elections are opportunities for open conflict, they are also opportunities for the manufacture of distrust where the structure of relationships is most conducive to conflict rooted in identities (here, clans) rather than issues. In sum, while formal institutions of elections matter, informal

institutions of community matter too.

The influence of electoral and lineage institutions on changes in local trust points to the strength and limitations of policy interventions. Chinese leaders in Beijing did not lose the gamble of the late 1980s, aimed at strengthening communist party rule by enhancing legitimacy and promoting accountability of local leaders in the Chinese countryside. Of course, arguments presented here are about changes in trust, which does not necessarily reflect trustworthiness. At the least, however, findings point to a public relations success of village electoral democracy, no small achievement for a communist party in the current global context. More than this can perhaps be claimed, however. There is some evidence to support the conjecture that the views about probity measured here are not unrelated to actual probity. In 1996, we asked respondents whether or not they had personally experienced corruption. A significantly higher proportion of respondents who report an encounter with corruption also believe most local officials are corrupt, compared to those who report no such encounter (63 percent, compared to 28 percent).³⁷ The forms of corruption reported by respondents are the predatory exactions described above.³⁸ This finding suggests that democratic quality of Chinese village elections may, as theory leads us to expect, promote real trustworthiness as well as trust.

At the same time, policy interventions such as electoral institutions take place in particular contexts, which also matter and are less susceptible to institutional engineering from above. While not hamstrung by the context in which it is introduced, electoral democracy does offer new opportunities for informal institutions to develop, thrive, and affect elite-mass relationships, for better or worse. Opponents of Chinese village elections voiced concerns about clans and clan conflict. Some of those concerns appear to be well-founded, whatever the

motivation of the arguments. At the least, the findings on community context caution against an overly deterministic view of how and how fast formal institutions of electoral democracy will make their effects known.

While appreciating the impact of elections on trust (and perhaps trustworthiness), it is nonetheless useful to place village electoral democracy in perspective. There is a growing scholarly consensus that, despite great variation, grassroots electoral democracy is flourishing and affecting the lives of ordinary Chinese villagers in important ways, for the better. Elections of leaders at higher levels share none of the features of democracy described here, however. Between village and nation are townships, counties, municipalities, and provinces. Although a few townships have seen a few bold electoral experiments, it is undeniable that democratic electoral quality is most evident at the lowest level, where it matters greatly for governance and stability but least of all for the making of policy.

NOTES

1. Transparency International has produced a Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) annually since 1995, ranking 90 or more countries in recent years. Studies based on the CPI include Goldsmith (1999), Treisman (2000), Sandholtz and Koetzle (2000), and Anderson and Tverdova (2003). Other studies use the International Country Risk Guide, one of the sources for compilation of the CPI. For examples of studies using objective measures, see Golden and Chang (2001) and Seligson (2002).

2. Oldenburg (1987) also found the folklore (or culture) of corruption flourishing in beliefs among Indian peasants about the land consolidation administration in the 1980s, inaccurate beliefs successfully peddled by independent middlemen who pocketed the bribes themselves.

3. For example, 60 percent of Chinese surveyed by People's University Social Survey Center in the mid-1990s were of the view that "hardly any" or "not many" of those with wealth had obtained it by legitimate means. See He (1997).

4. In the mid-1990s, a survey of 100 counties by the ministry found fees, fines, and apportionments amounted to 10 percent of incomes (Bernstein and Lu 2000, 2003). Effectively, rural taxes exceeded 20 percent in these counties; they were as high as 40 percent in others (Wedeman 2000).

5. At the same time, Weyland (1998) links democratization with increased corruption in Latin America, pointing to the role of economic liberalization and political power dispersal in increasing the number of opportunities for bribery and "veto players" requiring bribes.

6. This feature of village context links perceived corruption with social trust, a linkage that is less relevant in most modern electoral setting (see Newton 1999a, 1999b). This issue is taken up below in the discussion of community.

7. See the discussion of corrupt encounters in the conclusion.

8. See O'Brien (1994) and Wang (1997) on "up-to-standard" and "paralyzed" villages.

9. See also Xiao Tangbiao et al. (2001b).

10. See especially Nathan (1985). For survey evidence, see Nathan and Shi (1993); Chu and Chang (2001); and Shi (2001).

11. Aggregating responses across the 57 villages: 35 percent report a majority of local officials are "clean" in 1990; the comparable proportion for 1996 (reporting a minority are corrupt) is 51 percent. In the 1990 survey, 15 percent of respondents did not answer this question; the comparable proportion for 1996 is 23 percent. Increases in missing data may be due to the relative directness of the 1996 question item.

12. In the earlier survey, conducted six to eight months after the eruption of the urban protests in 1989, we judged questions about corruption as too sensitive to ask directly. Instead, we asked about clean government: “There has been a lot of talk recently about clean government. How many of the officials here are clean, that is, how many are honest and upright officials? Would you say they constitute the overwhelming majority, most, a minority, or hardly any?” In the relatively less politically charged climate of 1996, we asked about corruption directly: “There has been a lot of talk recently about official corruption. How many officials do you think are corrupt in this locality? Would you say they constitute the overwhelming majority, most, a minority, or hardly any?”

13. There is, however, a different question that remains unanswered: for respondents, who are “local” leaders? Is the place referent the village or some larger unit and, if the village, are leaders elected village committee leaders or unelected communist party branch leaders? The evidence suggests that the empirical referent for most respondents is the village: in both 1990 and 1996, villagers overwhelmingly report they pay greatest attention to either national or village affairs (and, obviously, national leaders are not “local leaders”). Among respondents who express some interest in public affairs and are then asked a follow-up set of questions, only 10 percent (in both surveys) report they pay the greatest attention to township or county affairs. Whether village committee or communist party branch officials (or both) are the empirical referent is less clear. That village committee officials probably feature prominently (if not exclusively) in the referent is suggested by a strong negative correlation between perceptions of the scope of local corruption and assessments of the performance of the village committee head, a question asked in 1996 ($-.419$, significant at $.01$, with 864 observations).

14. That is, although the dependent variable may reflect more or less than exact change in villages, it is a valid measure of change to use in the statistical analyses below that estimate the effects of variables on change. It is reasonable to assume that at most the difference in question wording results in the second construct differing from the first by a constant. Then, although the exact change over time is $v_{i2} - v_{i1}$, the measured difference will be $v_{i2} + \alpha - v_{i1}$. This is equivalent to subtracting a constant from the dependent variable, which will affect only the estimate of the constant in the estimated equation.

15. I thank Langche Zeng for suggesting the following transformation: $\log [1996 \text{ fraction} \div (1 - 1996 \text{ fraction})] - \log [1990 \text{ fraction} \div (1 - 1990 \text{ fraction})]$, where 1990 and 1996 fractions are proportions of village respondents reporting most officials are clean in 1990 and not corrupt in 1996, respectively. With the logarithmic transformation of the dependent variable, two cases drop out of the sample because percentages for one year are 100.

16. In all but five villages the change is in this positive direction; in three of the five villages where trust in local leaders contracts from 1990 to 1996, the decrease is small.

17. For most villages, these measures average electoral quality across two elections, and there is considerable stability on individual measures within villages across elections. In computing the mean values for the analyses here, I eliminated 1996 elections in six villages

because they were held after the 1996 survey was conducted. Obviously, to include them would confound the analysis of the impact of electoral quality on the dependent variable here.

18. Pastor and Tan (2000) also emphasize the importance of the secret ballot. Chinese village elections do not yet commonly feature secret ballots, in the sense of routine voting in the privacy of voting booths. Voting often takes place at all-village meetings, and ballots are marked in the open. These practices amount to relatively private ballots, when compared to public voting such as by applause or show of hands (also fairly uncommon). In our 57-village sample, data on ballot privacy are incomplete for three villages. Ballots are completed in relative privacy in 51 villages; that is, voting is overtly public in only three villages. To avoid dropping observations from what is already a fairly small sample, the analyses here do not include ballot privacy. Results of all of the analyses are substantively and statistically the same when the ballot privacy variable is included, however. Ballot privacy is not significant in any of the analyses, but substantive conclusions are not indicated as there is little variation on this variable. Obviously, the analyses also have nothing to say about the impact of secret ballots cast in voting booths.

19. Village “small groups” are the former production teams under collectivized agriculture, and they often coincide with “natural villages.” Village representative assemblies are elected in many villages, especially large villages, to monitor village committee financial decisions and contribute to decisions relating to village economic management. See Lawrence (1994) and Thurston (1998).

20. Villager monopoly of the process takes on the value of 3, monopoly by leaders the value of 1, and participation by both villagers and leaders the value of 2.

21. I have constructed different versions of these variables—with the underlying idea that there are tradeoffs, that openness in selection may have be of little import if, for example, the communist party branch monopolizes initial nominations. The different constructions do not yield different results in the analyses here. Without a clear theoretical or empirical basis for choosing one version over another, I present the most straightforward construction here.

22. For ten villages, researchers could not obtain data for all elections; for three villages, they could obtain data for no elections.

23. Of these, most (62 percent) permit only direct individual voting, and one also permits proxy voting by household representatives. In six villages, household representatives decide the election outcome and in nine the village representative assembly decides.

24. Correlation is .654, significant at .01. Voting procedure is coded as a four-level ordinal to reflect inclusiveness, with greater inclusiveness taking on higher values. For example, direct individual voting takes on a value of 4, and voting by the village representative assembly a value of 1.

25. Zhong and Chen (2002) explain reported voting in village elections as a function of individual democratic orientation, but their model includes no village-level variables—so the impact of basic institutional features, such as inclusiveness of voting procedures, is unknowable. At the same time, the adoption of voting procedures may be somewhat endogenous, a point taken up in the discussion of village democratic culture below. Relatedly, see the discussion in Shi (1999c) on voting in elections at the workplace: Shi finds that Chinese workers pursue their political interests by voting if elections offer choice. Zhong and Chen also consider evasive responses (in the analyses here, a component of missing data) as substantive neutral responses on a five-point scale, which makes their results difficult to evaluate.

26. Reported voting is strongly and significantly correlated with the number of months between the most recent election and the 1996 survey ($-.470$, significant at $.01$).

27. Here, village refers to “administrative village,” which contains within it some number of “natural villages.” It is certainly possible (and not unlikely) that some natural villages in the 57 administrative villages are single-surname villages—but this poses no problem for the measure described here. Basically, village committees are elected for administrative villages, not natural villages.

28. Adapted for the analyses here, the formula is $1 \div \sum(\% \text{ village sample for each surname}^2)$, where village sample refers to the random sample of surnames in the village.

29. A single-surname village takes on a value of 1, a village equally divided between three surnames a value of 3. Here, large values reflect fragmentation and probably the weakness of lineage relationships as influences. For example, the unusually high value of 23.12 in one village comes from a random sample of 34 surnames in a village where the most common surname is shared by less than 9 percent of villagers sampled.

30. To encourage valid reports of income, we asked respondents in both surveys to report household income by choosing from among 15 income ranges, beginning with under 500 yuan and extending up to more than 10,000 yuan. To compute standard deviations, I transformed reported ranges into range midpoints: for example, responses of 2500–2999 yuan became 2750 yuan. For the highest range, 10,000 and more, I used 10,500. Certainly, this transformation is less than ideal, and it is biased against very high income households. The standard deviation resulting from this transformation is a reasonable approximation of income distribution in the village, given the structure of available data.

31. In fact, the variable is based on responses to our first survey, largely reflecting orientations in 1990, one and a half years *after* the provisional law went into effect. This problem, to the extent that it is a problem, is mitigated somewhat by measuring democratic orientation with question items on relevant past behaviors, not only attitudes and opinions.

32. Summary percent of “yes” responses is: 1.2 percent for all six items, 4.7 percent for five items, 7.3 percent for four items, 13.5 percent for three items, 17.5 percent for two items, 20.6 percent for one item, and 16.1 percent for no items. Question items are as follows: (1) “Have

you ever written a letter to an official or offered an opinion or suggestion to an official?" (2) "Have you ever contacted a delegate of the county people's congress, the township people's congress, or a member of the village committee?" (3) "Some people pay a lot of attention to current government activity, and some people are not interested. Would you say you spend a lot of time thinking about government activity, spend some time thinking about it, think about it once in a while, or hardly ever think about it?" "Percent yes" reported in table 2 is percent responding "a lot of time" or "some time." (4) "Have you attended an all-village meeting recently?" (5) "If you heard that leaders of this village were considering a measure that you thought unjust or harmful, what do you think you could do about it? What else do you think you could do?" "Percent yes" reported in table 2 is percent offering any non-passive response to this open-ended question. I considered as "passive" responses such as "submit," "comply," "nothing can be done about it," "completely powerless," "speaking up will change nothing," "let it be," "tolerate it," "forget about it," "does not matter," and "don't dare to do anything." (6) "Now we would like to talk about elections. How interested are you in village committee elections? Would you say you are very interested, somewhat interested, not too interested, or not interested?" Percent yes reported in table 2 is percent responding "very interested" or "somewhat interested." Responses to the six items tend to be highly correlated at the individual level (all significant at .01). Expressed as village population percentages, they tend to be highly correlated at the village level too (significant at .05 or .01).

33. The correlation is .768, significant at .01

34. The correlation is .561, significant at .01.

35. WLS estimations take into account different numbers of respondents in each village. The range is from 12 to 30 respondents. See Appendix 1.

36. See Kennedy (2002) for a systematic investigation of recent village elections that demonstrates the importance of nomination procedures.

37. Missing data is 254 respondents (21 percent). The Pearson chi-square for the cross-tabulation is 72.96, significant at .01 (with 864 observations). There is also a fairly strong and statistically significant correlation between reported personal experience with corruption and reported opinions about both the prevalence and seriousness of local corruption (.319 and .356, respectively, significant at .01).

38. The three most common responses, accounting for nearly three-quarters of all responses, describe the use of public office for excessive exactions from ordinary villagers, the use of public office to appropriate public goods, and the use of public funds for feasting and banqueting.

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Appendix 1. Data Collection

Survey data analyzed in this article are from two surveys, conducted in 1990 and 1996, in four counties, twenty townships, and 57 villages as part of a collaborative project begun by political scientists at Peking University and the University of Michigan. Located in Hebei, Hunan, Anhui, and Tianjin, the counties are a non-probability sample selected to exhibit some regional variation from a sampling frame of about twenty counties in which, based on the experience of our Chinese colleagues, we could reasonably expect agreement from local authorities to facilitate fieldwork. The townships and villages surveyed are probability samples, selected according to a nested sampling design. In each of the four counties we drew a stratified probability sample of five townships, selected with probability proportionate to size and stratified by per capita income. In each selected township we drew a sample of three administrative villages selected with probability proportionate to size. Three villages in one of the Hunan townships are excluded from this analyses, due to lack of data on village elections.

The sample of villagers is a systematic random sample using interval sampling of individuals drawn from official household registration lists (aggregated at the village level), after first eliminating from the lists individuals below age 18 and above age 80. In the 1996 survey, we attempted to interview again, if they could be found, respondents interviewed in 1990, but also added respondents to fill out the village sample, with the same sampling method used in 1990. The analyses presented here use the 1990 and 1996 surveys as representative samples of the populations in 57 villages. For the 1990 survey, there are 1115 respondents, for the 1996 survey 1216 respondents; on average, 20 and 21 respondents per village respectively. Panel data for key variables are insufficient to conduct the analyses here at the individual level.

Data on village elections were collected in summer 1997 by researchers at the Research Center on Contemporary China at Peking University. Demographic and economic data were gathered at the same time, using a structured data collection schedule. Questions on elections asked about the most recent three village elections, beginning in 1996 and extending as far back as 1988. All electoral data were obtained from village communist party branch secretaries and heads of village committees, relying on memory and such records as existed at the village level. Visiting villages myself in fall 1997, I found that information provided by village leaders about the electoral process generally accorded with that provided by villagers, but was sometimes different from that provided by township officials. In one Hunan township, researchers could not locate knowledgeable former leaders of the three villages surveyed to report on past elections because of an administrative merger that changed the status of these villages.

Appendix 2. Impact of Elections and Context on Change in Trust in Local Leaders

| Independent variables | Model I | Model II |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Electoral contestation | .8680442* (.4441221) | .8364866* (.3970052) |
| Openness of candidate nominations | -.0259062 (.1534788) | |
| Openness of candidate selection | -.0973594 (.1274416) | |
| Reported voting | .0189653** (.006048) | .0188902*** (.0058947) |
| Surname diversity | .0622769** (.0242864) | .0663529** (.0216609) |
| Per capita income change | .0007351* (.0003026) | .0007499** (.0002942) |
| Income inequality change | -.0000636 (.0001879) | |
| Monitoring orientation | .3279702 (.2180428) | .3200787 (.2105036) |
| 1990 population | .0000655 (.0001773) | .0000634 (.0001713) |
| 1990 per capita income | .0008046 (.0005807) | .0006681 (.000543) |
| Months since most recent election | .0032882 (.0076647) | .0030864 (.0074659) |
| Intercept | -3.292884** (1.209545) | -3.428687** (1.077485) |
| ADJUSTED R ² | .445 | .470 |
| OBSERVATIONS: 55 villages | | |

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. Dependent variable is computed using logarithmic transformations of 1996 percent village population reporting minority of local officials are corrupt minus 1990 percent reporting majority of local officials are “clean.” Models are WLS estimations, coefficients are unstandardized, standard errors are in parentheses, significance tests are one-tailed.

Appendix 3. Summary Statistics for Analyses in Table 2 and Appendix 2

| Variable | Maximum | Minimum | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Change in trust | -47.92 | 70.59 | 26.27 | 21.68 |
| Log change in trust | -2.16 | 3.04 | 1.19 | 1.03 |
| Electoral contestation | 0.92 | 2.00 | 1.28 | 0.28 |
| Reported voting | 0 | 92.59 | 45.06 | 30.08 |
| Openness of candidate nominations | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.93 | 0.88 |
| Openness of candidate selection | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.72 | 0.88 |
| Surname diversity | 1.91 | 23.12 | 8.92 | 5.73 |
| Monitoring orientation | 0.80 | 3.57 | 1.97 | 0.71 |
| Per capita income change | 412.00 | 2254.00 | 1237.95 | 446.60 |
| Income inequality change | -1139.66 | 1734.64 | 238.18 | 618.21 |
| 1990 population | 400.00 | 3961.00 | 1387.58 | 700.02 |
| 1990 per capita income | 277.00 | 1469.00 | 635.89 | 208.08 |
| Months since last election | 1.00 | 63.00 | 18.74 | 16.19 |

Table 1. Hypothesized Relationships: Explanatory Variables and Change in Trust in Local Leaders

| Explanatory variables | Relationship |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Electoral contestation | + |
| Reported voting | + |
| Openness of candidate nominations | + |
| Openness of candidate selection | + |
| Surname diversity | + |
| Per capita income change | + |
| Income inequality change | - |

Table 2. Impact of Elections and Context on Change in Trust in Local Leaders

| Independent variables | Model I | Model II |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Electoral contestation | 17.07502* (8.758429) | 17.0912* (7.825397) |
| Openness of candidate nominations | -.6473897 (3.059035) | |
| Openness of candidate selection | -1.534766 (2.516208) | |
| Reported voting | .3760728** (.1185668) | .3791136*** (.1153367) |
| Surname diversity | 1.364633** (.4845797) | 1.445781*** (.4330493) |
| Per capita income change | .0140168* (.0060236) | .014512** (.005831) |
| Income inequality change | -.0011717 (.0036461) | |
| CONTROL VARIABLES | | |
| Monitoring orientation | 6.745625 (4.317) | 6.718715 (4.164209) |
| 1990 population | .0022643 (.003501) | .0024416 (.0033578) |
| 1990 per capita income | .0167176 (.0115448) | .0142982 (.0108224) |
| Months since most recent election | .0070349 (.1519062) | .0081604 (.1478434) |
| Intercept | -64.98389** (23.87792) | -69.35094*** (20.9239) |
| ADJUSTED R ² | .494 | .518 |
| OBSERVATIONS: 57 villages | | |

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. Dependent variable is 1996 percent village population reporting minority of local officials are corrupt minus 1990 percent reporting majority of local officials are "clean." Models are WLS estimation, coefficients are unstandardized, standard errors are in parentheses, significance tests are one-tailed.