



# **Participation and Empowerment at the Grassroots: Chinese Village Elections in Perspective (Challenges Facing Chinese Political Development)**

*Gunter Schubert, Anna L. Ahlers*

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This monograph ties in the scholarly debate on Chinese village elections and their consequences for China's political system. It draws on comparative fieldwork conducted in six villages in two counties in Jiangxi and Jilin Provinces and one district in Shenzhen between 2002 and 2005, producing data from some 140 in-depth interviews of villagers and local officials up to the prefectural level. The major objective of this book is as much a critical assessment of the research literature of Chinese village elections published over the last fifteen years as to sharpen the reader's sight for the scope and limits of this important reform to generate regime legitimacy in the local state, an issue which has so far been neglected in the study of Chinese village elections. It hence contributes to our understanding of the nexus between political participation and cadre accountability at the grassroots, and highlights a number of factors ensuring the persistence of one-party rule in contemporary China.

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