

Incentivized Development in China

China's economy, as a whole, has developed rapidly over the past 35 years, and yet its richest county is over 100 times richer in per capita terms than its poorest county. To explain this vast variation in development, David J. Bulman investigates the political foundations of local economic growth in China, focusing on the institutional and economic roles of county-level leaders and the career incentives that shape their behavior. Through a close examination of six counties complemented by unique nationwide data, he presents and explores two related questions: *What is the role of county Party secretaries in determining local governance and growth outcomes?* and *Why do county Party secretaries emphasize particular developmental priorities?*

Suitable for scholars of political economy, development economics, and comparative politics, this original study analyzes the relationship between political institutions, local governance, and leadership roles within Chinese government to explain the growing divergence in economic development between counties.

David J. Bulman is an economist at the World Bank and an adjunct lecturer at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He is a core author of the *World Development Report 2017* and contributed to *China 2030* and *Urban China*. Bulman has been a visiting scholar at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center, a University of Chicago and Ford Foundation New Generation China Scholar, and an inaugural China Public Policy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School.

Incentivized Development in China

*Leaders, Governance, and Growth in
China's Counties*

DAVID J. BULMAN



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 978-1-107-16629-5 — Incentivized Development in China
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 Frontmatter
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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

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 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107166295

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First published 2016

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Names: Bulman, David Janoff, author.

Title: Incentivized development in China: leaders, governance,
 and growth in China's counties / David Janoff Bulman.

Description: New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2016. |
 Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016026216 | ISBN 9781107166295 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: China—Economic conditions—Regional disparities. |

Regional economics—China. | Provincial governments—China. |

Central-local government relations—China. | Economic development—China. |

BISAC: POLITICAL SCIENCE / Government / International.

Classification: LCC HC427.95 .B86 2016 | DDC 338.951—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016026216>

ISBN 978-1-107-16629-5 Hardback

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Acknowledgments

The research for this book began in 2010, and over the past six years I have accrued debts to numerous individuals and organizations. I first started exploring county-level variation in China as a PhD student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). At SAIS, Mike Lampton mentored me and molded my understanding of the Chinese political system, and he has continued to be a source of inspiration and support since I graduated. A student could not ask for a more helpful and gracious advisor. Pieter Bottelier's enthusiasm for sharing his unparalleled expertise and insights made study of the Chinese economy both fascinating and enjoyable. Monica Martinez-Bravo helped generate many of the ideas related to promotion incentives through our original work on China's county leaders, and she provided critical methodological suggestions and advice throughout the research process. Along with helpful comments when this book was still a dissertation, Aart Kraay has been my mentor at the World Bank and, more than anyone, has influenced the way that I approach academic and policy questions. Kellee Tsai asked challenging questions that shaped my research during its early stages, and her comments helped move the project from dissertation to book manuscript. During the long research process, fellow SAISers Greg Fuller, Khalid Nadiri, John Gans, Ross Herbert, Amanda Kerrigan, and Selina Ho provided important camaraderie and an invaluable sounding board for ideas, albeit at the occasional expense of short-term productivity.

Tony Saich and Edward Cunningham gave me the opportunity to develop my dissertation into a book manuscript by inviting me to be one of two inaugural China Public Policy Postdoctoral Fellows at the Ash Center at Harvard Kennedy School. Tony's expertise on local governance

in China is unparalleled – the book already reflected his research before I joined the Ash Center – and many improvements to the manuscript reflect comments and suggestions I received from Tony as a fellow. Edward was generous with his time guiding me through the book writing process and helping me shape my arguments to make them more compelling and reach a wider audience. Kaori Urayama offered support and guidance. Kyle Jaros, the other inaugural fellow, gave the book and various chapters multiple close readings, adding essential insights every time. Other fellows and seminar participants at the Ash Center were an important source of tough questions and suggestions.

Several other individuals and institutions deserve my thanks. The Hopkins-Nanjing Center hosted me as a visiting scholar in fall 2012, for which I am extremely grateful. Scholars at the Center and at Nanjing University, particularly Bu Maoliang and Qi Lingling, provided key insights as well as friendship. The University of Chicago and Ford Foundation New Generation China Scholars Program provided financial resources essential for my fieldwork and provided a venue to present and discuss early work. At these discussions, Dali Yang, William Parish, Tao Ran, and student participants provided important insights for developing my argument. Bo Zhiyue and Zhang Xiaobo were extremely generous in sharing data. The librarians at the Library of Congress and research assistants at SAIS, with the help of a grant from the SAIS Economics Department, helped collect data on tenures of county leaders. An early version of material in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 was presented at the Association of Asian Studies 2013 conference, and I thank participants at the conference, particularly Dorothy Solinger, Lynette Ong, and Fubing Su, for their helpful comments, questions, and encouragement. At Cambridge University Press, Robert Dreesen gave an opportunity to a first-time author, and, along with Brianda Reyes, guided me through the entire process. Three anonymous reviewers read the manuscript closely and provided helpful suggestions.

The ideas and conclusions in this book were generated over the course of many months of fieldwork in Jiangsu and Anhui, and my greatest debt is to those who gave their time helping me understand economic and institutional development in their counties. These individuals must remain anonymous, but I thank them for everything they taught me and for providing friendship that prevented fieldwork from becoming a lonely experience.

Finally, I thank my family. My parents and my sister instilled in me a love of learning that made the research process interesting and

Acknowledgments

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rewarding. They have provided unwavering support for this and for all things, and I cannot thank them enough. Cassandra, you came into my life during the process of researching and writing this book, and you've made my life so much better. Thank you for supporting me and inspiring me. Isaac, you were lucky enough to miss this entire process, but your imminent arrival provided the incentive I needed to hurry up and finish.