Dear CPW:

Thank you for taking time to read this draft. This paper was presented at MPSA this year and I wish to develop it into my prospectus. My work uses China as a case to study how authoritarian regimes design the personnel system to manage intergovernmental relationship and sustain their rule. I will greatly appreciate any thoughts on how the paper can be improved. In particular, I look forward to feedback on 1.> how my work can be better situated in the broader literature of political institutions in authoritarian countries; 2.> how the appointment system works in other authoritarian regimes; 3.> other hypotheses that can be tested to understand the strategic choices behind appointment decisions; 4.> further evidence that should be presented to reinforce my argument.

This paper has been rewritten a few times to meet different requirements, so I apologize for the possible lack of coherence and consistency. I also understand that the paper is a bit too long, partly because I tried to explain in detail the procedures and processes of China’s personnel system. You may simply skim those descriptions and get the main ideas from the transitional paragraphs. Finally, the reference has not been updated, so some in-text citations do not appear there.

Thanks again for your patience!
A Government of Outsiders:
The Politics of Provincial Leader Rotation in China
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Introduction

A substantial number of authoritarian regimes collapsed during the second half of the twentieth century (Geddes, 1999), a trend that inspired optimism over the global spread of democratic order. In the mean time, many autocracies have weathered the third wave of democratization or revived on the ruins of fallen democracies. Intellectual curiosity about authoritarian survival has given rise to a rich literature on the resilience of political institutions under dictatorship and their adaptations under changing circumstances.¹

Authoritarian regimes have to deal with a long list of challenges ranging from economic reform and ideological adaptation to the management of elite rivalry and co-optation of social groups. Meanwhile, solutions to these challenges are only meaningful if the regimes maintain a robust central government capable of holding the nation together and keeping centrifugal forces at bay. After all, secessionism played an important, if not decisive, role in the collapse of one-party rule in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (Bunce, 1999; Brown, 2009). The task of maintaining unified national rule has arguably become ever more daunting in the global context of growing economic interdependence (Alesina et al., 2000; Hiscox, 2003).

In countries that have developed strong norms of democratic accountability and the rule of law, center-periphery conflict may be mitigated by a separation-of-power arrangement safeguarded by legal procedures (Bednar et al. 2001). By definition, such norms and procedures are foreign to autocracies, which have to draw upon their own norms to design institutions that would withstand centrifugal pressures. Communist regimes, for example, adhere to the principle of “democratic centralism” whereby the decisions of higher party organs have to be implemented in a disciplined manner throughout the party and society (Brown, 2009: 107). Generally, we expect the authoritarian way of resolving center-periphery tension to be characterized by increased top-down control rather than judicially enforceable rules. Among the various mechanisms of political control, the power to appoint and remove local officials stands out as the most direct channel of central influence.

The personnel dimension of central-local relations can be analyzed from a principal-agent perspective. Appropriate incentive structure needs to be designed for the subnational governments to act in the best interest of the center. However, unlike in an economic relationship where the goal of the principal can be reduced to profit-making, politicians may want to maximize different and often conflicting goals simultaneously (Huang, 1996, 184). Thus, it may be desirable to rotate local officials frequently to enhance their loyalty to the center, but too much detachment from the localities could lead to myopic, opportunistic behavior that undermines the quality of governance. Also, introducing nominally democratic institutions to select local officials can serve as an effective

¹ For example, see Gandhi & Przeworski 2007, Magaloni 2008, Magaloni & Kricheli 2010, Svolik 2012.
legitimization strategy, but legitimacy often comes with the risk of electing local leaders unresponsive to central demands. During the selection process, the center may institutionalize more participation from lower-level officials to gather better information about the candidates. Local input could improve the quality of leadership but also strengthen the bargaining power of local elites to the detriment of central control.

Loyalty and competence, power and legitimacy, hierarchy and participation – the problem of political control over subnational units is ultimately one of relative dilemmas. In this paper, I study the personnel management of provincial elites in China as a case to illustrate how authoritarian regimes design personnel rules to strike difficult balances between contradictory goals. During the post-Mao era, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has tightened its grip on personnel power as an effective mechanism to penetrate the operation of local governments and realize central policy preferences (Huang, 1996; Landry, 2008; Sheng, 2010). At the same time, China has also seen the development of detailed rules governing the selection and turnover of CCP leaders. These rules include, among other things, a lengthy period of bottom-up recommendation prior to appointment, semi-competitive election held at periodic party congresses, tenure requirements and mandatory retirement ages.

Using impersonal rules to insulate the appointment process from the whims of powerful individuals, the CCP hopes to constrain nepotism and corruption in the making of personnel decisions and improve the overall quality of Party officials. However, formal rules promoting electoral legitimacy, transparency and participation inevitably compromises the center’s ability to maintain undivided loyalty and top-down control. The analysis in this paper highlights these trade-offs by focusing on one aspect of the CCP’s personnel policy: the cadre transfer system. Under this system, Party leaders are routinely transferred between the central and provincial governments as well as among the provinces. While most existing studies analyze the appointment of provincial party secretaries and governors, my research explores the transfer of a broader set of provincial leaders, namely the members of the CCP’s provincial standing committee (PSC).

Specifically, I examine the interaction of cadre transfer with two other components of the Chinese political system: the intra-party elections held at provincial party congress and the Party’s centralized anticorruption regime. I argue that the CCP has utilized a set of practices to facilitate the cross-regional transfer of Party cadres, a crucial mechanism to sustain bureaucratic control and national integration. These practices effectively tip the balance of the personnel system in favor of hierarchical control at the expense of legitimacy, participation and tenure stability. All things considered, the development of rules and constraint remains an instrument for authoritarian survival, and room for discretion and flexibility is always reserved for the regime to deal with existing and unforeseen challenges.

The rest of the paper will be organized as follows. The next section will sketch the organization and decision-making rules of the PSC and the formal procedure leading to the appointment of PSC members. Section III discusses the importance of the cadre transfer policy for maintaining the CCP’s control over the provinces. Panel data on the composition of the PSC will be presented to show the temporal and cross-regional variations in the implementation of cadre transfer. In section IV, I explore the interaction between cadre transfer policy and the intra-party election held at provincial
II. Provincial standing committee: organization, decision-making and selection

The organization and decision-making rules of the PSC

At each level of China’s government, the Communist Party committee is vested with the ultimate decision-making authority and responsible for supervising the work of the state apparatus (Lieberthal, 2004: 233-240). According to an official CCP document regulating the work of local party committees, the provincial party committee should assume “all-encompassing leadership over the province’s political, economic, cultural and social development”. However, the provincial party committee is not a full-time body capable of making day-to-day decisions for the province. The CCP Constitution requires that a provincial committee plenum should be held at least twice a year. While no systematic data has been collected to calculate the average number of such plenums, case studies indicate that they are not held a lot more frequently than required by the CCP constitution. Moreover, many of the 50-80 members of the provincial committee also serve full-time positions in various cities and are away from the provincial capital for most of the year. Due to the low frequency of meetings and prolonged absence of most members, the provincial party committee needs to delegate its authority to a smaller body during its recess.

The CCP constitution stipulates that, when the provincial committee is not in session, a standing committee (PSC) composed of 10-15 members should assume the duty and authority of the full committee. Formally, members of the PSC derive their power from the provincial committee. In practice, however, the real line of authority flows from the small executive body to its parent body. (Lieberthal, 2004: 173). Members of the provincial committee often owe their membership status and career prospects in general to those sitting in the PSC. The infrequent meetings of the provincial committee are best seen as vehicles for announcing and legitimating major decisions already made by the smaller PSC. Although there are certainly circumstances under which the PSC feels obliged to elicit the support of the full committee, it is safe to say that the PSC enjoys overall dominance over its parent body.

Appendix I reviews the decision-making rules of the PSC, which are aimed to achieve a fine balance between the dominant role of the party secretary and the cherished principle of collective leadership. After the death of Mao, the Chinese leaders took great pains to build political institutions aimed at preventing arbitrary decision-making by a single top leader. As a result, “collective leadership…has become the defining feature of today’s Chinese elite politics” (Li, 2011: 138). These decision-making rules are but one example of the efforts to guarantee privileges for every member of

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2 Regulations on Chinese Communist Party Local Committee’s Work, Chapter 1, Article 3. 1996.
4 For example, Jiangsu province held 25 plenums between 2001 and 2011, meaning that on average 2.5 plenums are held every year.
a collective body, including the freedom to express opinions without fear of purge and the right to cast a vote. While the provincial party secretary has clear agenda-setting power and probably exerts disproportionate influence over the direction of PSC discussion, he understands that policies can only be made through consensus-building, power-sharing and factional compromise.

In addition to formal decision-making rules, members of the PSC also derive their power from the vast bureaucratic constituencies they represent. Although the CCP regulations do not specify which office-holders are entitled to enter the PSC, the provinces display a rather uniform pattern in terms of the posts concurrently held by PSC members, indicating a high level of centralized control over the PSC structure. As the heads of the provincial party apparatus, the full and deputy party secretaries are natural members of the PSC. The government apparatus is represented in the PSC by the governor and first deputy governor. Other functional or territorial units that claim PSC representation include, among others, the Organizational Department which does all the staff work related to personnel management, the Propaganda Department responsible for shaping the citizens’ values through media control, the Discipline Inspection Commission vested with the power to investigate and discipline party members, and the party committee of the provincial capital city. As holders of the most important party and government posts in the province, each PSC member is well positioned to bargain on behalf of the bureaucratic unit he represents and cut deals with other members.

*The selection and appointment of PSC members*

The members of the PSCs are on the “job title list of cadres managed centrally”, meaning that the authority to appoint and remove them rest with the CCP’s Central Committee. According to the CCP Constitution, the PSC positions are at once elective and appointive. On the one hand, the PSC members should be elected by the provincial party committee, which in turn should be elected by the quinquennial provincial party congress.⁵ On the other hand, when the provincial party congress is not in session, the Central Committee is granted the authority to transfer or appoint the PSC members.⁶ Thus, the Party Constitution provides two legal means by which a candidate may get into the PSC office: through the appointment order of the Central Committee and through the periodic election held at provincial party congress. Once in office, PSC members should complete a five-year term except in a few unusual cases.⁷ The rest of the section outlines the formal procedure leading to the selection of PSC members, beginning with the appointment by the Central Committee.⁸

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⁵ *The Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party*. Chapter 4. A cadre has to be elected a member of provincial party committee before he is nominated for a position in the PSC.

⁶ *The Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party*. Article 13. This article states that “when the congress of a local Party organization at any level or the congress of Party organization at the primary level is not in session, the next higher Party organization may, when it deems it necessary, transfer or appoint responsible members of that organization.”


⁸ This discussion mainly draws upon the following document: The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. 1995. *Provisional regulations on the selection and appointment of leading party and government cadres*. This provisional document was replaced by a permanent one in 2002 with minor changes. The formal process leading to the selection of party and government leaders is also discussed in Bo, 2004: 78-81; Manion, 2008: 614-616.
a. Getting into office through appointment

The appointment of PSC members may be further classified into two categories: the promotion of a lower-ranking cadre to the PSC and the transfer of an equal-ranking cadre. The former category involves steps and procedures far more complicated than the latter, indicating that the CCP imposes much greater scrutiny over the promotion process than the transfer between equivalent positions.

Promoting a candidate to the PSC consists of four steps: democratic recommendation, screening, deliberation and decision. First, the provincial party committee or the central organization department decides on the pool of candidates to be vetted for the post. The regulations are vague in terms of which of the two bodies has a more decisive influence over the recommendation process. It seems that for a few key positions deemed vital for central political control, such as the provincial party secretary and the head of the provincial organization department, the central organization department has gradually seized the initiative to nominate. Other positions in the PSC, however, are more likely to be nominated by the provincial party committee (in practice by the PSC), subject to the confirmation of the central organization department.

The recommendation process is “democratic” in that opinions are collected from a wide range of political elites, including the superiors, equals and subordinates of the potential nominees. The central organization department would solicit recommendation through meetings and individual interviews. At the recommendation meeting, participants would complete ballots to express their preferences.9 The votes are then counted and analyzed to form “an important basis” for the recommendation decision. My interviews suggest significant local variations in the importance of recommendation ballots for deciding the final nominees. Respondents gave different threshold that candidates have to pass to avert automatic elimination, such as receiving one third or fifty percent of the votes, or getting a top three ranking. One mid-level party secretary dismissed democratic recommendation as meaningless compared to the will of individual leaders (Author’s interview, Feb.19, 2014). All things considered, it appears that the recommendation votes at least serve a clearance function to block the promotion of highly unpopular candidates, although a lot depend on the general political environment of the locality.

Second, the central organization department will dispatch a screening team to gather information about the candidates generated by the recommendation procedure. To do this, the screening team may hold private meetings with relevant individuals, conduct opinion polls or interview the candidate. The screening team will report the results to the central organization department, which will in turn report to the Central Committee. Local Party leaders interviewed by the author described the vetting process as merely ceremonial as the screening team only stay for a couple of days and can barely scratch the surface of the candidates’ conditions (AI, Feb.10, 2014).

Third, before the names are presented to the Central Committee, the list of candidates must be vetted through a process of deliberation. The participants of the deliberation include the leaders of

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9 The 2002 regulation modified the 1995 provincial regulation by mandating the completion of ballots, not simply the filling out of recommendation forms.
the party committee, the legislature and the government apparatus at the provincial level. Finally, the Central Committee will hold collective discussions to decide whether a candidate should be promoted to the PSC post. The CCP Constitution delegates the day-to-day duties of the Central Committee to the politburo and its standing committee; therefore, the appointment of a PSC member is in fact decided in the politburo standing committee meetings. At the meeting, a leader from the central organization department introduces the candidate in light of the information gathered from the first three stages. The politburo members would then deliberate before taking a simple majority vote to decide on the promotion.

Compared with the promotion of cadres from lower ranks, transferring someone from an equivalent position to the PSC involves much simpler procedure and less bottom-up consultation. The transfer may take place between the PSCs of different provinces or between the center and province. According to a 1995 regulation on cadre transfer, the central organization department would first solicit opinion from the supplying and receiving work units before finalizing the transfer plan. Next, the politburo standing committee would hold collective discussion to approve the transfer decision. A 2006 revision of the regulation makes the process even more centralized and immune from local input by granting the organization department the right to draw transfer plan before consulting lower-level units.

b. Getting into office through election

Like its Russian counterpart, the CCP has historically embraced “intra-party democracy” in its official rhetoric. Although the actual exercise of these democratic rights was severely limited by the presence of dictatorial party leaders and harsh circumstances of revolutionary struggle, the CCP’s traditional commitment to intra-party democracy did leave the institutional legacy of making most party leadership positions formally elective. The CCP’s Constitution stipulates that “(t)he Party’s leading bodies at all levels are elected except for the representative organs dispatched by them and the leading Party members' groups in non-Party organizations.”

According to the same Constitution, members of the PSC should be elected at the provincial party congress once in five years. To be precise, the PSC is selected through a bottom-up, progressive electoral process that contains three tiers. At the lowest level, party organizations in various sub-provincial work units hold party conferences to elect their delegates to the provincial party congress.

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10 If the post in question is the provincial party secretary or governor, the appointment is decided in the full politburo meetings.
12 Again, if the transfer involves the provincial party secretary or governor, it should be decided in the full politburo meetings.
14 *The Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party.* Article 2. The CCP’s Constitution was amended at every National Party Congress (NPC). The phrase “the party’s leading bodies at all levels are elected” has appeared in every version of the Constitution except for the versions passed at the 9th and 10th NPC, both held during the Cultural Revolution. In those two versions, it was stated that the party’s leading bodies at all levels should be selected through “democratic consultation and election”. In practice, “democratic consultation” became synonymous with appointment by party leaders of the next higher level. See Lin, 2011: 546.
These work units represent a wide range of organized interests at the sub-provincial level recognized by the party-state. The total number of delegates may range from 400 to 800. The second-tier election takes place at the provincial party congress, where the delegates elect the members of the provincial party committee. Party regulations suggest that the size of the provincial party committee should vary from 50 to 80. At the top level, immediately after the conclusion of the provincial party congress, the newly elected provincial party committee holds a plenum to elect the PSC. It then elects the provincial party secretary and deputy party secretaries, all of whom must be chosen from the newly elected PSC members.

During Mao’s reign, these intra-party electoral procedures played a negligible role in the political process. Intra-party elections were conducted with the number of candidates equal to the number of seats. The lack of electoral competition meant that the candidate nominated for a post only needed to receive majority vote to be elected, a foregone conclusion under normal circumstances. Moreover, frequent political campaigns and turmoil made it impossible to observe routine democratic procedures (Lin, 2011).

With the passing of Mao, the CCP moved quickly to restore party members’ democratic rights to prevent the excessive concentration of power in the hands of the supreme leader that characterized the Mao era. In 1980, the Party adopted a decision on “Several Principles on Political Life in the Party” that, among other things, called for improvement in electoral procedure that would better allow party members to express their preferences during leadership selection. Most importantly, the document endorsed for the first time the idea of the cha’e election, or an election in which there are more candidates than seats (Niu, 1999: 32; Lin, 2011: 546). At the 13th National Party Congress held in 1987, the Party Constitution was amended to make the cha’e method mandatory in intra-party elections.

The plan to introduce electoral contestation was later fleshed out in specialized party regulations. In 1990, the Central Committee promulgated the Provisional Regulations Governing Grassroots CCP Organizing Elections, which was formalized in January 1994 as the Regulations Governing CCP Organization of Local Elections. The regulations applied cha’e method to the election of local party committees and their standing committees. More importantly, the regulations clarified the degree of contestation in local party elections by specifying the ratio of candidates to seats. When local congressional delegates elect the local party committee, the candidates should exceed the size of the committee by 10 percent of the number of candidates. In the next step, when the local party committee elects its standing committee, there should be one or two more candidates than seats.

Admittedly, the amount of electoral competition guaranteed by formal institutions remains highly restricted. First of all, the minimum level of electoral contestation mandated by the regulations is

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18 *Regulations Governing CCP Organization of Local Elections*. Article 17.
extremely low, requiring only 10 percent of the candidates for local Party committee and one to two candidates for the standing committee to lose the election. Moreover, the regulations exempt the party secretary and deputy secretaries, the most powerful party posts, from electoral contestation. Apart from these restrictive measures, the regulations are extremely vague with respect to how candidates are nominated. Although all nominees are required to go thorough the cumbersome procedure of democratic recommendation, organizational screening and deliberation as in the case of promoting individuals to the PSC, in all likelihood, the nomination is mainly determined jointly by the outgoing PSC and the central organization department.

This section has argued that the PSC is at the core of the provincial power structure and its decision-making rules balance the supremacy of party secretary with the principle of consensus building and collective leadership. During the reform era, the CCP has been meticulous in establishing formal rules to regulate the appointment of Party officials, subjecting the selection process to a variety of procedural steps and opening it up to more players. These detailed rules were established to contain long-standing problems in the Party’s personnel work such as the fast promotion of powerful leader’s confidants and the appointment of cadres suspected of corruption. Meanwhile, the Party intends to reap the benefits of formal selection rules without conceding personnel control over lower-level party committees. By examining the operation of the cadre transfer system, I show that the Party center adopted various strategies and practices to maintain bureaucratic control over the provinces while complying with standard personnel procedure. In the next section, I explain the importance of cadre transfer policy for maintaining central authority and present provincial-level data on the actual implementation of the policy over a 20-year period.

III. The cadre transfer system and central-local relations

The importance of cadre transfer for central control

With some adaptations, the Communist leaders in China adopted the Soviet nomenklatura system of appointing and supervising important office-holders (Manion, 1985; Burns, 1989). Although the system has undergone several rounds of adjustments since 1949, the power to appoint top provincial leaders (those above vice-ministerial rank) has remained firmly in the hands of the Party center (Lieberthal, 2004: 234-7). The issue of localism may have taken different forms since the CCP came to power, but the central authorities have always considered personnel management an essential tool to induce the compliance of the provinces. In particular, the central leadership has long held the belief that an effective way to contain localism is to transfer officials to work in unfamiliar provinces.

Localism, as the central leaders see it, is closely associated with officials working for long periods of time in a particular province. Allowing officials to be stationed in one place gives them the opportunity to form close ties with the local elites, both in the political circle and in business. Once a provincial leader succeeds in developing extensive factional following, the province starts to resemble his “sphere of influence” and may become unresponsive to central demands. To prevent

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\(^{20}\) Regulations Governing CCP Organization of Local Elections. Article 4.
the establishment of such local strongholds, the central leaders have used their monopoly of personnel power to implement a cadre transfer system. Under this system, officials are routinely transferred to equivalent positions in unfamiliar provinces, denying them the opportunity to form stable bases of power in any locality. One county-level party secretary explained to the author: “the cadre transfer policy can stop the formation of ‘compact soil’ and local stronghold in the officialdom. (As an example of local stronghold,) some localities have seen the head of the Politics and Law commission appointing his brothers as police chief and chief prosecutor. During the Mao era, cadre transfer was referred to as ‘mixing up the sand’ (can shazi) to prevent the emergence of such local factions. The mission of a transferred cadre is to fulfill the task assigned by the center and higher-level organs.” (AI, Feb. 10, 2014)

The implementation of the cadre transfer policy has produced a localist-outsider division in provincial politics. The localists, defined as those who are working in the province where they’ve spent most of their bureaucratic career, often face different policy constraints than the outsiders who have been transferred to a new province. Through long service in a geographic or functional area, a politician is often able to cultivate an “influential constituency” whose support may prove crucial for the politician’s career prospects (Dittmer, 1978: 28-32). Thus, a localist’s main constituency naturally consists of the elites and masses within the province. To forge and maintain a support base, he has to supply it with monetary rewards, patronage and other benefits.

An outsider, by contrast, has been cut off from his main support base when transferred to a new province. Since a rotated official only serves a short period of time in one province before being transferred to the next destination, it is unlikely that the outsider would have available to him the long time window necessary to build a local constituency. Even if he does, his attempts to do so would lack credibility in the eyes of the provincial elites who expect him to leave the province soon. Also, compared with the localists, the outsiders are much more likely to be promoted to important positions in the central government. As such, instead of looking out for the interests exclusive to the province, the outsiders will be keen to please the central leaders by ensuring the faithful execution of central policies.

Consequently, the center sees the appointment of outsiders as an effective check on localism. Moreover, the proportion of outsiders appointed serves as a good indicator of the intensity with which the center applies the cadre transfer policy to extend central control over the provinces. Teiwes, for example, surveyed the number of outsiders among the provincial party secretaries and concluded that “the power to assign, remove and transfer provincial officials is a potent weapon in curtailing localist tendencies” (1967: 15-22). In another classic study, Vogel showed how the center sent northern cadres to Guangdong to enforce its land reform policies. As a result, “the Communist from the north penetrated thoroughly into all important party and government organs…Never in Chinese history had Guangdong localism been so thoroughly infiltrated” (Vogel, 1969: 123).

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21 In my data set of PSC members, the median tenure for an outsider PSC member is 6 years. In comparison, a typical localist PSC member has spent over 30 years working in the province.

22 In my data set of PSC members between 1997 and 2007, 32 of these PSC members have later been promoted to politburo. 28 or 88 percent of them have had the experience of working as an outsider in an unfamiliar province.
During the reform era, as a response to the perceived escalation in localism caused by decentralization and globalization, the center intensified the reshuffling of provincial leaders to strengthen central control. Measuring the proportion of outsiders among provincial party secretaries and governors between 1976 and 1992, Huang argued that “the number of provinces controlled by outsiders steadily expanded since the early 1980s” (Huang, 1996: 194). Similarly, Zheng found the transfers of central and provincial leaders in the early 1990s to be “unusually frequent”, and concluded that “it was no coincidence that frequent transfers occurred as the center-provincial conflicts intensified” (Zheng, 1997: 220-1) More recently, Bo also highlighted the increasingly frequent transfers of political elites between 1990 and 2002, which serves the purposes of “resolving conflict, balancing or weakening the power of (the central leaders’) opponent, and carrying out a certain policy at local levels” (Bo, 2004: 85). Finally, scholars have detected the selective application of the cadre transfer policy to suit the center’s needs. If the center considers certain provinces particularly prone to localism, more outsiders could be parachuted to these “trouble spots” to assert central control (Tong, 1989, Sheng, 2010).

To recapitulate, existing literature shows that the monopoly of personnel power gives the center important leverage over the provinces. The center is capable of applying the cadre transfer policy selectively to rein in the most recalcitrant provinces. It should be noted, however, that most existing studies drew their data from a very small set of provincial elites, namely the provincial party secretaries and governors. This approach does little justice to the collective decision-making style of the provincial leadership and limits the amount of cross-provincial variations. To remedy these shortcomings, I broaden the scope of study to include the members of the PSC. The second part of this section will present data to show how the evolution of the cadre transfer policy has transformed the composition of the PSC and how this transformation exhibits curious patterns of regional variations.

The appointment of outsiders to the PSC: 1992-2012

As noted above, the center stepped up the reshuffling of provincial officials since the early 1990s, partially in response to the perceived escalation in central-provincial tension during the era of economic decentralization. In 1990, the Central Committee (CC) of the CCP announced its decision to regularize the practice of cadre transfer. A provisional regulation promulgated by the CC in 1999 lay out specific rules to guide the transfer of party and state leaders. According to the

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23 Zheng (1997) and Bo (2004) did extend their subjects of study to deputy party secretaries and vice governors. Their works, however, are largely descriptive with little analysis of cross-provincial variations in personnel arrangement.

24 This limitation has become more severe in recent years as localist party secretaries and governors have become increasingly rare. At the end of 2012, for example, as few as two out of thirty-one provincial party secretaries are localists. The number of localist governors is higher but still limited to eleven out of thirty-one. In other words, about two thirds of the provinces have adopted the pattern of assigning both top posts to outsiders. The shrinking regional variation in the promotion of outsiders among party secretaries and governors makes it difficult to compare personnel arrangements across provinces or to infer the political considerations behind these arrangements.


regulation, PSC members who had held the same position for ten years must be transferred; those who had served on the PSC of the same province for ten years should be duly transferred.\textsuperscript{27} Moreover, the regulation singled out a few functional departments to be subject to more routine cross-regional rotation, including the organizational department, the discipline inspection commission and the department of public safety. The emphasis on these functional departments indicates that the center considered personnel management, anti-corruption and public safety the most important issue areas for central control and most susceptible to undue local influence. In 2006, the provisional regulation was replaced by a permanent one that includes some minor revisions.\textsuperscript{28}

Given that the central Party has promulgated several authoritative documents to institutionalize the transfer of cadres, it would be informative to examine how this policy has been implemented with respect to the PSC. In particular, since a stronger presence of outsiders in the PSC would imply greater central intervention in a province’s personnel affairs, it is tempting to know how the proportion of outsiders has varied across time and in different provinces. For this purpose, I obtained the lists of PSC members for every provincial unit during the 1992-2012 period. I also gathered data on the career trajectory of these members to distinguish between localists and outsiders. In this study, an outsider is defined as an official who, at the time of becoming a PSC member in a given province, has spent a longer period of his career outside the province, either in other provinces or the central government, than within the province. Conversely, a localist is an official who, at the time of becoming a PSC member in a given province, has spent a longer period of his career within the province than outside it. Applying this definition, most cases are clear-cut.\textsuperscript{29} In the rare instance of an official whose previous experience is evenly divided between two provinces or between one province and the center, I took the liberty of placing emphasis on the formative years of his professional career. Overall, this coding scheme is driven by the assumption that one’s political and psychological attachment to an institution is greatly affected by the length of service in that institution.

The year-to-year change in the proportion of outsiders in the PSCs is depicted in Figure 1. The annual figures in the chart are computed by averaging the proportion of outsiders in the PSCs across 31 provinces. Despite the 1990 central Party circular to promote the transfer of cadres, the proportion of outsiders stayed close to 20 percent between 1992 and 1998. Thus, there is no evidence that inter-provincial transfer at the PSC level intensified during this period. However, in 1999, the year the center promulgated the provisional regulation on cadre transfer, the proportion of outsiders started a secular trend of increase until it reached a height of 50 percent in 2011. Interestingly, although the number displays an unmistakable upward trend over this period, there are also years when the proportion of outsiders declined slightly. It should also be noted that the drop tends to occur at the end of a five-year political cycle (1997-2002, 2002-2007, 2007-2012).

\textsuperscript{27} The text of the regulation did not specifically address the PSC. The discussion here interprets the regulation to highlight how its provisions would apply to the PSC.


\textsuperscript{29} Indeed, most outsiders had no working experience in the province to which they were transferred; most localists had worked exclusively in one province.
The aggregate trend of PSC members can be compared to that of the top two provincial leaders: provincial party secretary and governor (Figure 2). Two things may be learned from such a comparison: first, the proportions of outsiders among the top two leaders have been significantly higher than among the PSC members, indicating tighter central control over more important positions. Second, the increase in the number of outsider party secretaries and governors started in 1993, about five years earlier than the corresponding rise among the PSC members. Based on these notable differences between the two trends, it seems that cadre policies regarding the provincial collective leadership demonstrate dynamics distinct from those applied to the top two leaders.

Needless to say, the national trend conceals regional differences in the degree to which cadre transfers are practiced. To see the cross-provincial variations in the proportion of outsiders over the studied period, we turn to Figure 3. In this chart, the provinces are sorted in ascending order based on the average proportion of outsiders in the PSCs between 1992 and 2012. For each province, the vertical line shows the range of change in the proportion of outsiders over the 20-year period and the triangle indicates the average. As the chart shows, the practice of transferring outsiders to serve on the PSC has been exercised quite unevenly across the provinces. At one end of the spectrum, provinces such as Hainan and Hebei have been dominated by outsiders, who claim an average of 60 percent of the PSC seats. At the other, Shanghai and Liaoning have seen the average proportion of outsiders stay as low as 20 percent over this period. Moreover, the proportion of outsiders has experienced more drastic changes in some provinces than others. In Fujian, for example, the number ranges from 0 percent to over 70 percent, indicating that the province’s personnel assignment went through some major readjustment during this period. By contrast, the provincial leaderships in Xinjiang and Zhejiang have undergone much less dramatic shifts in the share of outsiders as the gap between the highest and lowest point remained under 25 percent.

These descriptive statistics provide unmistakable evidence that the center intensified cross-provincial transfer of PSC members since 1999. Next, I investigate the interaction between cadre transfer and two critical aspects of the Chinese political system: the intra-party elections held at provincial party congress and a highly centralized anti-corruption regime. This investigation reveals that, whenever formal rules of cadre appointment stand in the way of the center’s plan to transfer provincial officials, the CCP has established counter measures to minimize the constraint of such rules and maintain flexibility in personnel management.

IV. The CCP’s local elections and provincial personnel management

As depicted in Section II, one of the two legal means for a PSC member to come into office is through the progressive, three-tier electoral process at each provincial party congress. Since the 1980s, the Party has introduced a limited degree of competition into the process in the form of the cha’e election. In the context of the CCP’s repeated emphasis on promoting intra-party democracy, the Party’s congressional election constitutes the most authoritative and legitimate way of selecting Party leaders. Subjecting candidates to semi-competitive election not only adds a veneer of democracy to China’s one-party rule but also forces Party committees at all levels to be more prudent in the selection of candidates. More careful scrutiny of the quality of candidates might help
prevent the selection of highly unpopular, corrupt officials, reduce state-society tension and improve the status of the CCP as an organization (Fewsmith, 2006; Manion, 2008).

However, the CCP wants to have the cake and eat it too. That is, it wants to enjoy all the benefits associated with electoral procedure without relinquishing the authority of Party committees to firmly control the selection of Party leaders at lower levels. Months before the opening of the provincial party congress, the central organizational department would work in tandem with its provincial counterparts to prepare a personnel plan to be realized at the congress. The plan slates specific individuals to be elected to the PSC; it also matches each of these individuals with a specific post traditionally held by a PSC member. Thus, in the personnel plan, the center would express clear intention as to who should be the next provincial party secretary, governor, head of the provincial organization department and so forth (An, 1994).

Once the center’s personnel plan for the PSC has been nailed down, the provincial organization department will be handed the task of ensuring the electoral success of the candidates designated by the center (the designated candidates hereafter). In other words, measures will be taken to guarantee that these “chosen ones” survive the election for the provincial party committee, which eliminates 10 percent of the candidates, and the PSC election, which eliminates one to two candidates. Ever since intra-party elections were held to select Party leaders, the CCP has developed a variety of informal practices with dubious legitimacy to shape the outcome of these elections. The discussion below focuses on two such practices: the nomination of “partner candidates” and informal campaigning on behalf of the designated candidates.

One mechanism to control electoral contestation is for the Party committee to nominate sure losers to compete with the designated candidates. Euphemistically known as “partner candidates”, these designated losers usually lack name recognition and diverse career experience. Placing these weak candidates on the ballot is supposed to guarantee the election of the more well-known, senior designated candidates. Before the election, delegates will be informed of who these “partner candidates” are and expected to comply with organizational intent by voting them out (AI, Feb. 8, 2014. Some local Party committees even use the low proportion of votes received by the “partner candidates” as an indicator of their organizational success. That the People’s Daily, the CCP’s principle mouthpiece, published an article denouncing the designation of “partner candidates” in local elections betrays the widespread, regularized nature of this practice.  

In case the nomination of weak rivals is not sufficient to ensure the desirable outcome, the organization department also resorts to informal campaigning on behalf of the designated candidates (Wu, 2000). Before the formal election, the organizers often conduct opinion polls among the voters to assess the challenges faced by the designated candidates. Based on this valuable information, the organizers would make use of multiple strategies to influence the views of individual voters: the incumbent provincial party secretary will make speeches to exhort the delegates to vote for specific individuals (AI, Feb 1, 2014.); organizers will contact individual voters to persuade them to change their preferences and vote for the designated candidates; and so forth.

30 The online version of the article is available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012-02/02/c_122644253.htm.
These informal practices, along with the force of party discipline, might have reduced electoral competitiveness significantly, but they cannot make the election of designated candidates a sure bet. Since the adoption of the cha′e method in the 1980s, “democratic accident”, a sarcastic term used by political insiders to describe the electoral defeats of designated candidates, has occurred from time to time. Due to the extreme sensitivity of party election results, the Chinese authority does not publicize systematic data about the candidates and the votes they received.\footnote{Even if such data were available, an outsider lacking knowledge of the list of designated candidates would still be unable to ascertain whether the electoral results have deviated from the center’s personnel arrangement.} Fortunately, sources such as the Chinese press, western publications and Internet blogs revealed a number of cases in which designated candidates for the PSC suffered unexpected electoral defeats.\footnote{Admittedly, because the blogs are merely personal journals maintained by the bloggers on the Internet, the authenticity of information provided by them is more questionable than in the case of print media. This concern can be somewhat eased by the fact that I only collect information from the largest blog space providers in China such as sina.com and 163.com. Whenever possible, I corroborate this information with the published CVs of the officials involved as well as official press coverage of the party congresses.} These cases offer a tantalizing glimpse of how the center’s personnel plans may be thwarted by the electoral processes that the Party itself has created.

For example, one of the earliest and most high profile victim of cha′e election was Chen Yuan, son of Chen Yun who served as one of China’s most influential leaders during the 1980s. Chen Yuan’s prominent family background led to his speedy ascent to high-level positions in the municipality of Beijing. Before Beijing’s 6th Party Congress to be held in 1987, the central organization department had slated Chen to become the deputy Party secretary of Beijing, a position concurrently held by a PSC member. To get this job, Chen first needed to be elected a member of the Beijing’s Party committee. At the congress, 750 delegates were given the task of choosing by secret ballot 50 people to serve on the Beijing Party committee from a list of 55 candidates. Unexpectedly, Chen was among the five people who lost. In addition to the delegates’ resentment of favoritism shown to children of top Party leaders, Chen’s upset loss was also attributed to the well-entrenched forces of localism in Beijing. Chen had a relatively short tenure in Beijing after his transfer from the central government in 1982, and the suspicion of outsiders held by local delegates might explain Chen’s lack of support. The electoral loss dealt a heavy blow to Chen’s political ambition. The rest of Chen’s career was mainly spent in the state-owned banking sector.

Table 1 provides a summary of the eight cases identified from various sources in which designated candidates failed to acquire the PSC position due to electoral defeats. It must be stressed that these cases cannot be regarded as a random sample of all “democratic accidents” at the provincial level because they’re selected based on the availability of information. With this caveat in mind, several important facts can still be learned from the table. First, the phenomenon of intra-party elections thwarting “the intent of the organization” seems to have persisted since the introduction of cha′e election in 1987: two of these cases occurred in the 1980s, another two in the 1990s and four in the 2000s. Second, candidates for the PSC faced two electoral roadblocks: three cases saw the candidates failing to get elected as members of the Provincial Party Committees; in the remaining five cases they lost in the PSC election. Finally, five out of the eight lost candidates were outsiders.\footnote{The account of Chen’s electoral loss is based on He, 1996: 179-189.}
who had worked for an average of four years in the province when the election took place. This lends support to an insight I gained from a respondent that “democratic accidents” were typically an expression of local cadres’ distrust of outsiders.\footnote{The interviewee used the Fujian province as an example to show how a strong tradition of localism has caused mutual distrust between local cadres and those sent from Beijing. Author’s interview with a county-level party secretary. Feb 10, 2014.}

Thus, local party congress election does seem to complicate the accomplishment of the center’s personnel plan. Moreover, the five-year term requirement for the elected PSC members could also potentially constrain the center’s need to reshuffle provincial leadership at its will. To cope with these formal constraints, the CCP resorts to its power to make “recess appointment” to maximize its flexibility in making personnel decisions. As mentioned, while the CCP’s Constitution stipulates that the Party’s leading bodies should all be elected, it also allows the Party center, when it “deems it necessary”, to transfer or appoint PSC members when the provincial party congress is not in session. In particular, the power of recess appointment provides a convenient channel to appoint outsiders to the PSC. Not only does recess appointment encounter no constraint of electoral procedure but it also gives the outsider time to build a local constituency for the next election. After the recess appointment and before the next provincial party congress, the outsider will be given opportunities to build a reputation of competence as well as a network of local support. The outsider’s status as a PSC incumbent with some working experiences in the province makes it easier for the organizers of the congress to conduct informal campaigning for him and secure his election.

To test the claim that the center makes use of recess appointment to facilitate the cross-regional transfer of cadres, we could explore systematic evidence to see if outsiders and localists tend to enter office through different legal means. During the 1992–2012 period, 894 cases of PSC members taking office can be identified with specific timing information.\footnote{The following tests only include the cases for which the specific month of taking office can be identified from the Baidu Encyclopedia. The availability of this information seems to be random, so the results are not driven by any systematic difference between the selected and missing cases.} Among them, 256 cases were completed through party congress election, compared to 638 cases of appointment between party congresses. While this contrast alone proves that recess appointment is frequently employed by the CCP to make personnel changes, the more interesting question is whether such appointment is applied to outsiders with greater intensity. As can be seen from Table 2, 285 or 57 percent of the 500 localist cases were realized through appointment, whereas 353 or 89.5 percent of the 394 outsider cases were of the same nature. The difference of the two proportions is significant at p=0.001 level.

While this simple test provides strong evidence that outsiders are much more likely to assume PSC offices through appointment, there are two possible explanations for this phenomenon. First, recess appointment is mainly a strategy to help the outsiders prepare for the electoral challenge at the provincial party congress. In this case, the outsider will be appointed to the PSC a few months before the congress to gather local support. My interviews confirm that “taking office ahead of time (ti qian ren zhi)” has become a routine practice for transferring cadres across regions. Second, recess appointment is simply used by the center to maximize its discretion to transfer cadres at any time, regardless of the election cycle and five-year term requirement. A crude method to disentangle the
two mechanisms is to study the timing of cadre transfer in relation to provincial party congress. The operation of the first mechanism would see the transfers concentrated in the months leading up to the congress. If the second mechanism is predominant, however, such concentration should not be observed. An analysis of the data clearly supports the second explanation. Among the 346 cases in which a PSC member is transferred from another province or the center, only 78 or 22.5 percent of them took place within the year before the provincial party congress.

V. Anti-corruption and provincial personnel management

Compared with intra-party elections, the impact of anti-corruption efforts on personnel arrangement is less intuitive but equally consequential. Political corruption in China has grown in frequency, scale and complexity during the reform period. Data on the perception of corruption in developing countries from Transparency International demonstrates “a clear drop in the scores of corruption in China from 1980 and 1995 that reflects the increase of corruption in this period” (He, 2000: 245). Measured by the percentage of major cases filed, the number of senior cadres charged and the amount of corrupt monies involved, China has seen a clear intensification in high-stake, high-level corruption (Wedeman, 2004). Meanwhile, the forms of corruption have evolved over time due to the deepening of reform and structural changes in the economy (Gong, 1997, He, 2000, Zhu, 2012).

The Chinese authorities are keenly alert to the corrosive effects of corruption on the regime as they constantly emphasize the importance of anti-corruption work as a “life-and-death matter” for the CCP. At the outset of the reform era, China re-established various anti-corruption agencies that were paralyzed during the Cultural Revolution (He, 2000: 266). In addition to routine enforcement measures, Chinese leaders also launch anti-corruption campaigns characterized by short bursts of hyper-enforcement by state and party agencies. According to Wedeman, such campaign-based strategies are needed to supplement routine anti-corruption institutions in preventing corruption from spiraling out of control (Wedeman, 2005).

Because anti-corruption activities usually entail the dismissal and replacement of government officials, the CCP’s anti-corruption regime is inherently intertwined with issues of personnel management. The rest of this section will elaborate two inter-related points to substantiate this connection. First, I argue that the CCP has established a highly centralized anti-corruption regime that grants the central Party exclusive jurisdiction over top provincial officials. Second, to consolidate the CCP’s rule, anti-corruption efforts in China are selectively enforced to remove local officials who started to assert independence from the Party center. These drastic measures create an environment of crisis, urgency and pressure in which routine personnel process of consultation and bargaining tends to be set aside. As such, anti-corruption campaigns offer the CCP an opportunity to enact personnel plans difficult to achieve through politics-as-usual.
The centralized nature of the CCP’s anti-corruption regime

The Party-state nature of the CCP regime makes it inevitable that Party apparatus dominates the investigation and punishment of corrupt activities. The Discipline Inspection Commission (DIC), a functional department within the CCP, is vested the power to investigate allegations of malfeasance by party members and impose a variety of disciplinary measures ranging from issuing warnings to expulsion from the party. Only when the DIC believes that one of its cases involves criminal activities does it remand it to the state judicial system for criminal investigation and prosecution (Wedeman, 2012: 146). Since in China almost all officials of any significance are party members, the DIC for all intents and purposes monopolizes the initiation of anti-corruption investigation.

The DIC is a vast, hierarchically organized bureaucracy extending from the Party center down to the provincial, municipal, county and township level. Party regulations are quite specific about the jurisdiction and scope of authority of the DIC at each level. For the purpose of this study, the relevant information is that the ultimate authority to investigate and punish the wrongdoings of the PSC members is firmly in the hands of the Party center. According to relevant regulations, when a case involves violation of party discipline by a member of the PSC, only the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC) is authorized to formally file the case and organize a work team to investigate. After the investigation is concluded, the CDIC will send an investigation report along with all supporting materials to the provincial party committee, which will then decide a disciplinary action on the accused PSC member. If the punishment reaches the level of dismissal of party posts, placing an individual on party probation or expulsion from the party, the decision must be made with a two thirds majority of the provincial party committee, subject to the approval of the Central Committee. Under “special circumstances”, the Politburo may impose the disciplinary measure to be subsequently confirmed by the provincial party committee. All told, there is little ambiguity that the Party center has the final say over whether a PSC member should be investigated, how the investigation is conducted, and what punishment should be handed down to the suspect.

Evidently, the centralized design of the anti-corruption system shows that determining the political fate of the PSC members is a matter too important to be left to the provincial agencies. It also reflects the central leaders’ recognition that the provincial anti-corruption bodies are too beholden to the provincial party committee, whose daily business is managed by the PSC, to deter corrupt activities by top provincial leaders. In terms of personnel, the provincial party committee has nomenklatura authority over all members of the Provincial Disciplinary and Inspection Committee (PDIC) save for its top leader, the secretary (Manion, 2004: 125). Furthermore, the all-encompassing power of the provincial party committee allows it to exercise general leadership over anti-corruption enforcement. It could set priorities and determine the resources devoted to investigation, prosecution

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37 The dominance of the DIC in the handling of corruption cases over state organs such as the Ministry of Supervision and the judicial system is underscored in a internal party regulation, which states that “(t)he DIC exercises its inspection authorities in accordance with the Party Constitution and this Regulation, without the interference of state organs, social organizations or individuals”. Central Discipline and Inspection Commission. 1994. Regulations on Case Inspection Work by the CCP’s Discipline Inspection Organs. Article 3.
38 The following discussion is based on Regulations on Case Inspection Work by the CCP’s Discipline Inspection Organs and The Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party. Chapter 7 and 8.
and punishment in corruption cases. It may also coordinate actions between the PDIC and other anti-corruption agencies (Ibid: 124-5). Therefore, it is not realistic to expect the PDIC to enforce anti-corruption measures vis-à-vis high-ranking provincial leaders such as the PSC members. Any practical deterrence against corruption by top provincial leaders could come nowhere but the Party center.

Central-local tension and selective anticorruption enforcement

It is widely accepted among China scholars that those officials punished by the anticorruption regime are only the tip of the iceberg of a much broader phenomenon in the political system. Since China’s anticorruption agencies are under the tight control of the CCP, they lack political neutrality that will enable them to apply anticorruption measures equally to all party officials. Instead, these agencies are bound to enforce rules selectively to suit the needs of political leaders at the helm of the party apparatus. As Shirk (1993, 144) points out, selective toleration of corruption can be viewed as “a side payment to officials to give them a personal stake in reform…Because an individual official knows that higher-ups could charge him with corruption at any time, lack of exposure is in fact special treatment for which the official gratefully exchange political support”. Another study of China’s anticorruption efforts contends that selective enforcement enhances the CCP’s hierarchical control structure by punishing “any corrupt official whose political allegiance has become suspect” (Fan and Grossman, 2001).

While there must be many reasons behind the selective punishment of corrupt officials, this paper focuses on the central-local dimension of China’s anticorruption regime. As mentioned, the central leaders have stayed vigilant to signs of localism throughout the PRC’s history. Given the center’s monopoly of the power to investigate top provincial officials on corruption charges, there are reasons to believe that anticorruption campaigns can function as an important mechanism of intergovernmental control and integration. Indeed, it has been argued that anticorruption campaigns are used to force local officials into compliance with the center’s macroeconomic policies: “(d)uring economic austerity periods, some local officials comply with the center’s directives, but others don’t. Anticorruption enforcement campaigns enable the center to rein in non-complying local officials” (Quade, 2007). I make the broader argument that anticorruption efforts are not intended to achieve any specific policy goal but serve as a general mechanism to prevent local officials from asserting independence from the Party center.

To illustrate how the mechanism functions in practice, I examine two high-profile corruption cases implicating top provincial officials who concurrently served on the Politburo, the CCP’s highest decision-making body. The first case involves Chen Xitong, the mayor of Beijing from 1983 to 1992 and the CCP’s Beijing party secretary from 1992 to 1995.39 Chen’s main crime was accepting bribes from real estate developers in exchange for advantages like leases and approval for construction projects on prime real estate; he had also diverted $4 million of public funds to build luxury villas for his own private use. Chen was tried and convicted on charges of corruption and...

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dereliction of duty as a public official, and he was given the heavy sentence of 13 years in prison.

Although official rhetoric claims that the prosecution of Chen Xitong demonstrates the CCP’s resolution to tackle corruption in high places, it was clear to every sharp-eyed observer that Chen’s downfall was primarily due to the threat he posed to the Party center as an enormously powerful local leader. Chen was one of the very few in China who served as the top leader of the same provincial-level locality for over a decade. Through his long tenure in Beijing, Chen has effectively turned the nation’s capital city into a stronghold impervious to outside influence. “Under Chen”, Bo observed, “there formed a network of cadres, the ‘Chen system’, whose formal power was supplemented by informal power connections among them. They were comrades in public and buddies in private. They believed that no one in Beijing dared to touch them” (Bo, 2000: 483-4). Counting upon his power network and impressive record of pushing economic reform in Beijing, Chen even hinted in public that he should have been selected as the CCP’s Secretary in General ahead of Jiang Zemin. It should be noted that the personal rivalry between Chen Xitong and Jiang Zemin reflects a deeper, more structural conflict between a strong capital city and the center: the leaders of Beijing have historically used the capital as a power base to defy the center (Bo, 2000: 484). In this sense, the exposure of Chen’s corrupt activities provided the center a golden opportunity to purge Chen’s personal network and re-assert the center’s control over the nation’s capital.

The other Politburo member convicted of corruption is Chen Liangyu (no relation to Chen Xitong), the mayor of Shanghai from 2001 to 2003 and the CCP’s Shanghai party secretary from 2003 to 2006. In September 2006, Chen Liangyu was dismissed as Shanghai party secretary for his role in a scandal involving the illegal embezzlement, transfer and investment of Shanghai’s city pension fund. Chen was subsequently sentenced to eighteen years in prison on charges of diverting pension funds and accepting bribes from real estate developers.

Like Chen Xitong’s case, Chen Liangyu’s fall from grace should be viewed as a struggle for power between the center and the localities. In fact, Chen Liangyu challenged the central leadership in a much more vehement and direct manner. During his tenure as Shanghai’s party chief, Chen served as a de facto spokesman for the interests of coastal provinces in the face of national government power. When the central government took macroeconomic measures to cool down the real estate market and stabilize housing prices, Chen spoke up against such austerity measures and articulated a coherent argument for unfettered market solutions to land use issues: “(l)owering housing prices is a problem that should be resolved through the relationship of market supply and demand. To try to solve this problem by holding meetings means trying to solve the problem through administrative measures. But administrative measures cannot resolve a problem of market supply and demand, because supply and demand have their own scientific laws.”

In defending the economic interests of the coastal region, Chen Liangyu was rude and dismissive of top national leaders, a gesture that probably contributed to his fall. It was widely reported in the

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40 The discussion of the Chen Liangyu case is based on Fong, 2004; Li, 2007; Naughton, 2007; Wedeman, 2012: 164-5.
41 The speech is quoted in Naughton 2007: 2-3.
overseas media that Chen “mounted a full-front attack” against the premier’s regulatory policies in a 2004 Politburo meeting, arguing that such measures “had hurt eastern provinces like Jiangsu and Zhejiang badly and would retard overall economic growth in the next few years”. Chen even warned that premier Wen and his cabinet must take “political responsibility” for any damage done to the economy if they pressed ahead with the austerity measures (Fong, 2004). While Chen’s stance was consistent with the economic vision of the coastal provinces, it ran contrary to the national government’s attempt to achieve a more regionally balanced model of socioeconomic development. Therefore, the then CCP Secretary in General Hu Jintao quickly rejected Chen’s criticism and urged all local governments, including Shanghai, to faithfully carry out the Politburo’s macroeconomic policy. In the context of the political and policy rivalry between Chen and national leaders, it seems reasonable to conclude that Chen’s removal was another example of the center using anticorruption campaign as a tool to force intransigent localities into compliance.

**Anti-corruption and outsider appointment**

The foregoing discussion is not meant to dismiss China’s anticorruption effort as a farce merely motivated to purge political enemies. On the contrary, I agree with Wedeman’s assessment that the CCP has launched a sustained fight against corruption, even at the highest level of government, and that such effort has been relatively successful in keeping corruption under control (Wedeman, 2012). What the case studies do suggest, however, is that the imperative to maintain central authority remains an underlying theme behind the CCP’s war on corruption. The centralized nature of China’s anticorruption agencies, combined with selective enforcement as a mechanism to contain localism, lead us to hypothesize that the central government will take advantage of corruption scandals at the local level to implement personnel changes that are difficult to realize through normal political processes. More specifically, the purge of a top provincial official on grounds of corruption could precipitate the appointment of a string of outsiders with the mandate to consolidate central control over the province.

An examination of PSC-level personnel appointments after the two corruption cases reviewed above provides prima facie evidence for such a hypothesis. Before the removal of Chen Xitong, who had spent his entire career in the Municipality of Beijing, all the members of Beijing’s PSC were localists as defined in section III. When Chen Xitong was dismissed as the CCP’s Beijing party secretary in April 1995, he was replaced by Wei Jianxing, a central government official who had no experience working in Beijing’s party or municipal government apparatus. The fact that Wei served concurrently as the head of CDIC suggested that it required the appointment of the CCP’s anticorruption czar to see through Chen’s prosecution and restore central authority in the aftermath of Chen’s purge. The appointment of Wei was followed by the arrival of a succession of outsiders between 1995 and 1996, a scenario completely inconceivable before Chen’s dismissal. The proportion of outsiders in Beijing’s PSC rose from 0 percent in 1994 to 18 percent in 1995 and peaked at 36 percent in 1996. Since then the number has stayed at around 30 percent, making the year 1995 a watershed in Beijing’s personnel structure.
Chen Liangyu’s downfall had similar personnel implications for the Municipality of Shanghai. Before Chen’s dismissal, localists cadres enjoyed indisputable dominance in Shanghai’s PSC. From 1995 to 2006, the proportion of outsiders in Shanghai’s PSC was 0.09 on average, and in all those years but one there was only one outsider sitting on the Municipality’s highest decision-making body. In September 2006, Chen stepped down as Shanghai’s party chief to face corruption charges and was replaced by another localist, Han Zheng. Immediately after Chen’s removal, the appointment of outsiders to Shanghai’s leadership squad intensified. Yang Xiaodu and Shen Deyong were appointed to Shanghai’s PSC in October and November, respectively. Shen, a legal specialist who served as the vice president of the Supreme People’s Court before being appointed the head of Shanghai’s Discipline and Inspection Commission, was clearly given the task to see through the investigations regarding the pension fund scandal. Meanwhile, Han proved to be merely a caretaker Party secretary and was replaced by Xi Jinping, an outsider transferred from Zhejiang province, in March 2007. The expansion of outsider influence in Shanghai’s political system is illustrated by statistics: the proportion of outsiders increased from 7 percent in 2005 to 21 percent in 2006. In 2007 it climbed further to 38 percent and has largely stabilized ever since.

To be more confident about the claim that the center will seize the opportunity of local corruption scandals to appoint more outsiders to the PSC, we still have to examine why such personnel plans cannot simply be realized via routine political processes. After all, members of the PSC are under central nomenklatura authority, meaning that their appointment and removal are ultimately decided by the center. What might prevent the center from making whatever personnel arrangements it wishes just by invoking its formal nomenklatura authority? Why does the implementation of personnel changes sometimes require the assistance of anticorruption campaigns?

Any answer to these questions has to consider the fact that, despite the center’s formal nomenklatura authority, in practice the decision to appoint a PSC member often involves protracted bargaining and negotiation between central and provincial leaders. For one thing, as described in section II, although the authority to decide on the appointment of a PSC member rests with the standing committee of the politburo, the shared power to nominate a candidate between the center and provinces gives the latter significant influence over the final outcomes. More importantly, China’s economic reform since the late 1970s has increased the political clout of the provincial leaders, granting them more de facto influence over the selection of local officials. According to Susan Shirk, the relationship between central and local leaders in China is characterized by reciprocal accountability. This means that although the top Party leaders in the Politburo, acting on behalf of the Central Committee, select provincial officials, they in turn can have a say in selecting the Politburo and other important policy matters through their membership of the Central Committee. Since local officials form a significant bloc in the Central Committee, the top Party leaders can hardly afford to ignore their views when contemplating important personnel or policy decisions. As such, central and local leaders are caught in a relationship of interdependence in which “neither side has a definitive right” and “the lines of authority run in both directions” (Shirk, 1993: 83).

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43 Between 1978 and 2002, the average share of provincial leaders in full Central Committee membership is 32.12%. The calculation is based on data from Sheng (2005).
John Burns provided some anecdotal evidence that the center had to negotiate with local leaders before filling an important provincial post, especially when such decisions involved “economically powerful provinces with histories of localism” (Burns, 1994, 471). In one case, Ye Xuanping, the well connected, localist governor of Guangdong, resisted his transfer to Beijing until the center agreed to replace him with another localist candidate in 1991. This goes to show that, facing strong local leaders with close ties to the province, the center may find it difficult to impose a unilateral personnel decision on the province without fueling political tension and instability.

However, the delicate balance of power between the center and provinces will be inevitably disrupted once a local corruption scandal is revealed. When an entrenched, homegrown leader like Chen Liangyu is removed from power, the locality lost a powerful spokesman who could defend the interest of local cadres and resist the importation of outsiders. Moreover, the eruption of a corruption scandal signals the failure of local officials to run a clean and honest government. It also justifies the arrival of outsiders to scrutinize the exercise of power in the province. Therefore, in the aftermath of a major corruption case, the province has little leverage to bargain with the center on personnel decisions. At this critical juncture, the center will be in the strongest position to appoint more outsiders to the PSC.

To systematically test the relationship between anti-corruption campaigns and the appointment of outsiders, I use a single-equation error correction model (ECM) on a panel dataset. The dependent variable of interest is the proportion of outsiders in a province’s PSC, a value that ranges from 0 to 1. The primary independent variable is whether, in a particular year, the province experienced a major corruption scandal, defined as the beginning of the shuanggui process on a PSC member or a deputy governor. During this process, the cadre suspected of corruption will be detained at an appointed time and place to “confess” to wrongdoings for which the Party’s disciplinary body believes there is already substantial evidence. Anti-corruption efforts against less important officials are unlikely to have far-reaching implications for provincial personnel. In the dataset, there are 34 corruption scandals of PSC members and 15 of deputy governors.44

The analysis also takes into account a number of other factors that might affect the dependent variable. For example, provinces with larger revenue base or more developed economies may be better positioned to bargain with the center, leading to lower proportions of outsiders. The models therefore control for the province’s revenue as a percentage of total local government revenue and GDP per capita. They also control for whether a provincial party congress was held in a given year. To account for the possibility that the proportion of outsiders has a tendency to increase due to factors the models cannot capture, a trend variable is included that takes the value of 1, 2, 3…up to the last year for which we have observation.

The basic idea of the ECM is that there exists a long-term equilibrium between two or more time series variables, but with short-term deviations from the equilibrium. Thus, changes in X might immediately affect Y in this period, but they could also disturb the equilibrium between Y and X,

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44 Both PSC members and vice governors are ranked at vice-ministerial level (provincial party secretary and governor have full-ministerial rank). However, PSC members are ahead of the vice governors in the CCP’s pecking order due to the latter’s exclusion from the Party’s core decision-making body.
sending Y on a long term movement to a value that reproduces the equilibrium state given the new value of X. The ECM is used here because it allows for changes in key variables to have short-run or permanent effects on the predicted outcome. For example, the impact of a corruption scandal on personnel appointment may be confined to the year in which the scandal erupted. Alternatively, the scandal could increase the proportion of outsiders for the duration of several years. The ECM is flexible enough to allow the data to determine whether the effects are long-term or short-term.

The basic form of ECM is:

$$\Delta Y_t = \alpha + \beta_0 \Delta X_t - \beta_1 (Y_{t-1} - \beta_2 X_{t-1}) + \epsilon_t, \quad (1)$$

where $\beta_0$ estimates the short-term effect of an increase in X on Y; $\beta_1$ estimates the speed of return to equilibrium after deviation; $\beta_2$ estimates the long-term effect of a one-unit change in X on Y, which is distributed over future periods according to the rate of error correction – $\beta_1$.

Thus, the ECM specification requires that we include on the right-hand side: (a) the differenced value of the independent and control variables, (b) the lagged dependent variable, (c) the lagged levels of the independent and control variables. Table 3 reports the results of the fixed effect regressions. Model 1 includes all the control variables mentioned above and all the observations between 1992 and 2012. Because for some provinces data on provincial leadership was not available until 1997, model 2 only includes observations after 1996 to obtain a more balanced panel dataset. In model 3, ‘corruption scandal’ is defined more stringently to include only investigations into the wrongdoings of PSC members. Model 4 increases the number of observations by excluding the revenue variable for which there is significant missing data.

The regression analysis lends support to hypothesized relationship between local corruption scandals and the appointment of outsiders. To facilitate the interpretation of coefficients from model 1 in Table 3, I transform them into the ECM format so that:

$$\Delta Y_t = 0.45 + 0.017 \Delta \text{SCANDAL}_t - 0.01 \Delta \text{PARTY CONGRESS}_t + 0.019 \Delta \text{REVENUE}_t - 0.44 \Delta \text{GDP PER CAPITA}_t - 0.28 (\text{OUTSIDER}_{t-1} - 0.189 \text{SCANDAL}_{t-1} + 0.1 \text{PARTY CONGRESS}_{t-1} + 0.027 \text{REVENUE}_{t-1} + 0.366 \text{GDP PER CAPITA}_{t-1} - 0.039 \text{TREND}_{t-1}) \quad (2)$$

As shown in Table 3, the coefficient for $\Delta \text{SCANDAL}_t$ ($\beta_0$ in equation 1) is statistically insignificant, suggesting that a corruption scandal has no effect on the proportion of outsiders in the same year. Meanwhile, the coefficient for $\text{SCANDAL}_{t-1}$ ($\beta_2$ in equation 1) is significant at $p = 0.001$ level. In an ECM model, cumulative effects cannot be read off the coefficients but have to be recalculated according to the error correction term. Thus, the long-term effects of a corruption scandal on the proportion of outsiders is 0.189 (0.053 divided by 0.28, or $\beta_1$ in equation 1), spread over future time period at a rate of 28% per period. In substantive terms, the eruption of a major scandal will lead to a 0.053 increase in the proportion of outsiders next year, a 0.038 increase two years from now, a 0.027 increase three years from now and so on. In a typical PSC with 13 members, the cumulative effect of 0.189 means the appointment of 2.45 more outsiders. According to the error correction rate, 80 percent of this total effect will be realized over the five-year period following the corruption case.
The four models are quite consistent in terms of the effects of the main independent variable. It is worth noting that, when we confine the corruption cases to those involving PSC members, their impact on provincial personnel becomes more substantial. In model 3, the fall of a PSC member has a statistically significant positive effect on the outcome, and the long-term effect accumulates to 0.25. This implies that political earthquakes of greater magnitude will have larger personnel implications. Unsurprisingly, GDP per capita has a negative short-term effect, confirming the expectation that wealthy provinces are in a better bargaining position to reserve important posts for localists. A province’s economic size and the holding of provincial party congress do not have significant effects on the outcome variable. This, however, does not mean that the provincial party congress is not important for understanding the dynamics of outsider appointment. To explore the interaction between the timing of party congress and appointment, the unit of analysis must focus on month rather than year, as we have done in section IV.

VI. Conclusion

During the reform era, the Chinese Communist Party has devoted a great amount of energy to setting up elaborated procedural requirement for the selection of leading cadres. This paper has provided an overview of these formal rules, including the lengthy process of soliciting views from lower-level cadres, the use of collective deliberation followed by a voting system to make personnel decisions, and the introduction of semi-competitive election. These institution-building efforts reflect the CCP’s desire to constrain arbitrariness and corruption in the personnel system and improve the quality of the Party’s leadership.

However, strict compliance with these rules is not always in harmony with the regime’s other essential objectives. Thus, while the cadre transfer system is crucial for keeping localism at bay, the center’s free hand to transfer cadres may be tied by intra-party electoral procedure, regularized participation by local elites and the principle that local leaders should complete a five-year term. This paper has identified a series of practices developed by the CCP to neutralize the constraint of formal rules. Informal measures are adopted to reduce the competitiveness of local party election. Recess appointment is frequently utilized to facilitate the reshuffling of provincial leaders. Anti-corruption campaigns are launched against high-level provincial leaders to create a crisis mode that paves the way for outsider appointment. Very few of these practices are outright illegal, but effectively they offset those formal rules aimed for electoral competition, bottom-up participation and tenure stability.

From a broader perspective, opening the selection process to more players with greater transparency and regularity should be seen as authoritarian leader’s strategy to bolster its resilience by building credible power-sharing institutions and facilitating bargaining with rivaling elites (Magaloni, 2008, Magaloni and Kricheli 2010, Svolik, 2012). The coexistence of institutionalized processes and countermeasures to get around them underscores the nature of authoritarian legality as an instrument for political stability and survival. As Mary Gallagher (2014) pointed out, “(i)nstitutionalization brings the allure of constraints and rules on others while continued state-led
control over deployment of these institutions provides opportunity for discretion and flexibility…
This is one of the privileges (and dilemmas) of single-party regimes. It makes the rules; it doesn’t
necessarily bind itself to those rules.” Dictator’s instinctive emphasis on top-down control at the
expense of norms, constraints and predictability may provide significant flexibility to cope with
pressing issues, but it also comes at a serious cost. In China’s case, the constant transfer of provincial
cadres discredits the electoral procedure supposed to produce leaders with fixed tenure. High-profile
corruption cases run the risk of panicking and antagonizing the regime’s loyal followers and
therefore must be initiated with extreme caution. Finally, the short tenure of outsiders often
incentivizes them to engage in myopic behavior such as irresponsible borrowing and image projects.
Whether the benefits of discretionary power will outweigh these costs, though, remains a fascinating
topic to be examined in the future.

Figure 1: proportion of outsiders in Provincial Standing Committees: 1992-2012
Figure 2: proportion of outsiders in provincial leadership: 1992-2012
Figure 3: average proportion of outsiders in PSCs in 31 provinces: 1992-2012
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centrally designated candidate</th>
<th>Timing of the election</th>
<th>Provincial Party congress</th>
<th>Election lost</th>
<th>Slated post</th>
<th>Career background of the candidate</th>
<th>The candidate elected instead</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chen Yuan</td>
<td>December. 1987</td>
<td>Beijing's 6th Party congress</td>
<td>provincial party committee</td>
<td>deputy party secretary</td>
<td>outsider</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>He, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song Ruixiang</td>
<td>May. 1988</td>
<td>Qinghai's 7th Party congress</td>
<td>provincial party committee</td>
<td>governor</td>
<td>outsider</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu Hongren</td>
<td>Nov. 1993</td>
<td>Shandong's 6th Party congress</td>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>localist</td>
<td>Han Yuqun</td>
<td>blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hou Wujie</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Shanxi’s PSC special election</td>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>head of propaganda department</td>
<td>localist</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Southern People Weekly Magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Hanmin</td>
<td>Oct.2001</td>
<td>Guangxi’s 8th Party congress</td>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>outsider</td>
<td>Li Jinzao</td>
<td>blogs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jiang Xiaoyu</td>
<td>May. 2002</td>
<td>Beijing's 9th Party congress</td>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>head of propaganda department</td>
<td>localist</td>
<td>Sun Zhengcai</td>
<td>blogs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bao kexin</td>
<td>April.2007</td>
<td>Guizhou's 10th Party congress</td>
<td>provincial party committee</td>
<td>deputy governor</td>
<td>outsider</td>
<td>Shen Yiqin</td>
<td>blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayichaolu</td>
<td>May.2012</td>
<td>Jilin's 10th Party congress</td>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>deputy party secretary</td>
<td>outsider</td>
<td>Zhuang Yan</td>
<td>The Economic Observer</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Localists</th>
<th>Outsiders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elected at party congress</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed during recess</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cases</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of recess appointment</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 3: determinants of the proportion of outsiders in PSC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D.scandal</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.58)</td>
<td>(1.29)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.party congress</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>-0.0064</td>
<td>-0.0091</td>
<td>-0.017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-1.27)</td>
<td>(-0.77)</td>
<td>(-1.16)</td>
<td>(-2.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.revenue</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.71)</td>
<td>(0.36)</td>
<td>(0.66)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.GDP per capita</td>
<td>-0.44**</td>
<td>-0.66***</td>
<td>-0.45**</td>
<td>-0.43**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-2.75)</td>
<td>(-3.50)</td>
<td>(-2.85)</td>
<td>(-3.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.D.trend</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>(.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.outsider</td>
<td>-0.28***</td>
<td>-0.31***</td>
<td>-0.28***</td>
<td>-0.26***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-8.85)</td>
<td>(-9.24)</td>
<td>(-9.04)</td>
<td>(-9.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.scandal</td>
<td>0.053***</td>
<td>0.044**</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.049***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.40)</td>
<td>(2.83)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.party congress</td>
<td>-0.028*</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>-0.026*</td>
<td>-0.034**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-2.23)</td>
<td>(-1.69)</td>
<td>(-2.03)</td>
<td>(-2.94)</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.revenue</td>
<td>-0.0076</td>
<td>-0.0060</td>
<td>-0.0063</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.61)</td>
<td>(-0.43)</td>
<td>(-0.51)</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.GDP per capita</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.074</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-1.37)</td>
<td>(-0.85)</td>
<td>(-1.46)</td>
<td>(-1.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.trend</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
<td>0.012**</td>
<td>0.011**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.56)</td>
<td>(2.33)</td>
<td>(2.66)</td>
<td>(3.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.scandal (PSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.025*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.98)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.scandal (PSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.069***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.72)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.46*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.76)</td>
<td>(1.20)</td>
<td>(1.85)</td>
<td>(2.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>539</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>0.2200</td>
<td>0.2363</td>
<td>0.2232</td>
<td>0.2063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

t statistics in parentheses
* p<0.05,  ** p<0.01,  *** p<0.001
Appendix I Deliberation and Decision-making Rules of the PSC

Deliberation and decision-making at PSC meetings are regulated by both central Party regulations and rules promulgated by provincial party committees to flesh out the central document. The following is a summary of the main decision-making rules as stimulated in these documents.

1. The party secretary convenes and presides over the PSC meetings, which should be held at least twice a month. He also determines the agenda for each meeting after consulting with other PSC members. Once the agenda is set, the participants should not discuss items outside of the agenda.

2. At least half of the PSC members must attend the meeting to fulfill its quorum. For PSC meetings that discuss personnel issues, the quorum is raised to two thirds of the PSC members.

3. When a motion is put to a vote, it will pass when supported by a simple majority of the attendees. Depending on the issue, the PSC members can express their vote verbally or by a show of hands, and the voting can be recorded or conducted anonymously. In some local party regulations, it is also suggested that if the members for and against a motion are roughly equal in number, the decision should be postponed until a clearer majority can be assembled.

4. Everything that falls under PSC jurisdiction must be decided through collective deliberation. No individual or minority has the right to decide important issues. At PSC meetings, members should be given adequate time to express their views freely. Once the PSC has made a decision, however, every member is obligated to carry out the decision unconditionally.
References


He, Pin, et al. *Zhong Gong "Tai Zi Dang" = CPC Princes*. Mississauga, Ont.: Ming jing chu ban she; 明鏡出版社, 1996. Print. 05"Zhongguo Ju Shi" Xi Lie ;5; 05《中國局勢》系列 ;5chi .


