

Research Workshop in Historical Development and Political Economy

Topic 2

The Emperor Strikes Back

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The Emperor Strikes Back

Kung, James Kai-sing. "The emperor strikes back: Political status, career incentives and grain procurement during china's great leap famine." *Political Science Research and Methods* 2.2 (2014): 179-211.

Mao Strikes Back

- ▶ Mao was still actively engaged in persuading the provincial leaders whom he suspected may have been least incentivized
 - Demonstration effect: to motivate the lowly ranked Full Members since they were likely to be less radical
 - * Lowest-ranked FMs lacked the incentives to act out of character (a long way from attaining an office in the Politburo)
 - * Whereas the highest-ranked AMs were unlikely to require any persuasion to act radically

This Paper

- ▶ Identifies the causal effect of the membership status on political radicalism using a Regression Discontinuity (RD) Design
- ▶ Membership status: AM (= 1) vs. FM (= 0) is determined by ballot ranking on the 8th National Congress of CCP, with a cut-off point of 97
- ▶ Exploit the discontinuity in the assignment of membership to identify its causal effect on excessive grain procurement
- ▶ If someone got persuaded, “personality” is no longer fixed

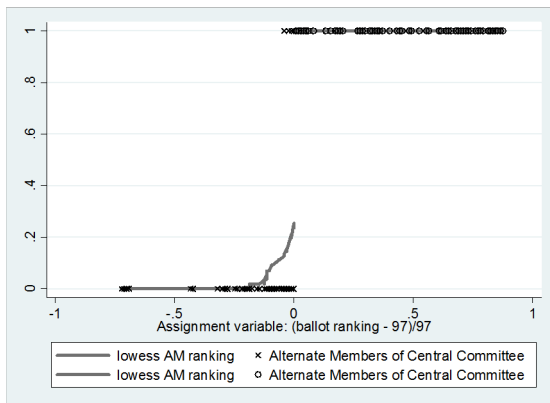
Determinants of Central Committee Membership Ranking

- ▶ Selection of CC members upon the 8th National Congress of CCP
 - 1,026 delegates competed for one of 170 seats in 1956
- ▶ Three rounds of voting:
 - First round of voting ⇒ A list presented to all delegates ⇒ After discussion, a revised list
 - Second round of voting ⇒ A list presented to the delegates again
 - Final round of voting (a secret ballot)
 - Ballot ranking
- ▶ Membership assignment based on ballot ranking
 - The cut-off point of 97
- ▶ Further change of ranking is autopilot
 - Move up the rank upon the death of a more senior member

Name	Ballot ranking in:											
	1957	1958		1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	Membership in 1966	
	Membership in 1957	Membership in 1958										
Wu Lanfu	30	FM	30	FM	30	29	28	28	28	27	27	FM
Shu Tong	56	FM	56	FM	56	55	54	53	53	52	51	FM
Li Baohua	73	FM	72	FM	72	71	70	69	69	68	66	FM
Lin Tie	77	FM	76	FM	76	75	74	73	73	72	70	FM
Hu Yaobang	81	FM	80	FM	80	79	78	77	77	76	74	FM
Ouyang Qin	83	FM	82	FM	82	81	80	79	79	78	76	FM
Xie Fuzhi	86	FM	85	FM	85	84	83	82	82	81	79	FM
Li Jingquan	91	FM	89	FM	89	88	87	86	86	85	83	FM
Wu Zhipu	92	FM	90	FM	90	89	88	87	87	86	84	FM
Tao Zhu	95	FM	93	FM	93	92	91	90	90	89	87	FM
Zeng Xisheng	96	FM	94	FM	94	93	92	91	91	90	88	FM
Wang Enmao	99	AM	97	FM	97	96	95	94	94	93	91	FM
Wei Guoqing	101	AM	99	AM	99	98	97	96	96	95	93	FM
Ye Fei	105	AM	103	AM	103	102	101	100	100	99	97	FM
Huang Huaqing	119	AM	117	AM	117	116	115	114	114	112	110	AM
Huang Oudong	124	AM	122	AM	122	121	120	119	119	117	115	AM
Wu De	131	AM	129	AM	129	128	127	126	126	123	121	AM
Zhang Desheng	133	AM	131	AM	131	130	129	128	128	125		AM
Yan Hongyan	145	AM	143	AM	142	141	140	139	139	136	132	AM
Jiang Weiqing	154	AM	152	AM	151	150	149	148	148	145	141	AM
Tan Qilong	157	AM	155	AM	154	153	152	151	151	148	144	AM
Pan Fusheng	164	AM	162	AM	160	159	158	157	157	154	150	AM
Jiang Hua	166	AM	164	AM	162	161	160	159	159	156	152	AM
Wang Renzhong			169	AM	167	166	165	164	164	161	157	AM
Zhang Zhongliang			170	AM	168	167	166	165	165	162	158	AM
Tao Lujia			171	AM	169	168	167	166	166	163	159	AM
Liu Jianxun			173	AM	171	170	169	167	167	164	160	AM
Wang Feng			180	AM	178	177	176	174	174	171	167	AM
Zhou Xiaozhou			181	AM	179	178	177	175	175	172	168	AM
Zhang Pinghua			185	AM	183	182	181	179	179	176	172	AM
Liao Zhigao			189	AM	187	186	185	183	183	180	176	AM
Yang Zhilin												
Zhou Lin												
Liu Shunyuan												
Gao Feng												
Yang Jingren												
Jia Qiyun												
Yang Shangkui												
Wang Zhao												
Zhao Ziyang												

Determinants of Central Committee Membership Ranking

- ▶ Discontinuity in Membership Status:



Determinants of Central Committee Membership Ranking

- ▶ The role of lobbying in determining the ballot ranking
 - Crux is they cannot precisely influence the number of votes and eventual ranking
- ▶ Compare ballot ranking with the ranking in the Politburo (a proxy for power)
 - *Different*

	Ranked in Politburo	Ranked by Ballot
Mao Zedong	1	1
Liu Shaoqi	2	2
Zhou Enlai	3	6
Zhu De	4	5
Chen Yun	5	8
Deng Xiaoping	6	4
Lin Biao	7	9
Lin Boqu	8	3
Dong Biwu	9	7
Chen Yi	10	21
Luo Ronghuan	11	14
Li Fuchun	12	13
Peng Zhen	13	29
Peng Dehuai	14	22
He Long	15	37
Liu Bocheng	16	20
Li Xiannian	17	24

RD Estimates

TABLE 3 *Regression Discontinuity Estimations of Alternate Members' Political Radicalism*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Model 1: AM	3.561** (1.405)	4.158** (1.709)	8.532*** (2.548)	8.734*** (2.816)	8.508*** (2.366)	8.206*** (2.289)
Personal characteristics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial characteristics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Province dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	176	176	176	176	176	176
No. of provinces	22	22	22	22	22	22
R-squared	0.58	0.58	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.61
AIC	946.09	947.39	940.37	940.31	941.99	940.76
Model 2: AM	3.419** (1.627)	4.344** (1.608)	8.008*** (2.056)	8.986*** (2.587)	8.736*** (2.226)	8.289*** (2.068)
Personal characteristics	No	No	No	No	No	No
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Observations	176	176	176	176	176	176
No. of provinces	22	22	22	22	22	22
R-squared	0.57	0.58	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.61
Assign.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assign 2		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- ▶ The effect of AMs remains significantly positive after controlling for different orders of polynomials (The optimal order of polynomials is 4)

RD Estimates

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- ▶ The effect of AMs is much larger than the baseline results: the RD estimate yields a coefficient of 8.734—more than three times the estimate of the fixed effects model (2.826)

RD Estimates

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R-squared	0.57	0.58	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.61
Assign.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assign.2		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assign.3			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

► Results changed trivially after dropping all the personal characteristics

Conclusion

- ▶ This paper revisits this hypothesis using a more rigorous Regression Discontinuity (RD) design—by exploiting the discontinuity in the assignment of membership
- ▶ The results show that Alternate Members—especially the highly ranked ones—are much more politically radical
- ▶ To motivate those with the least career incentive—the low ranked Full Members, Mao promoted them using his own power