Supporting Information

Table of Contents

A Descriptive Statistics

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Full General-Level Position (MR Commander or Above)	0.262	0.440	0	1
Awarded Rank of Shangjiang (After 1987)	0.236	0.425	0	1
CCP Central Committee Full Member	0.223	0.417	0	1
CCP Central Committee Full or Alternate	0.297	0.457	0	1
CCP Politboro Member	0.019	0.138	0	1
CCP Central Military Commission Member	0.074	0.263	0	1
Career tie to top leader	0.160	0.367	0	1
Career tie to top leader (excluding MR)	0.084	0.277	0	1
Xi Jinping network	0.053	0.223	0	1
Hu Jintao network	0.039	0.193	0	1
Jiang Zemin network	0.033	0.180	0	1
Deng Xiaoping network	0.060	0.238	0	1
Xi Jinping network (excluding MR)	0.012	0.107	0	1
Hu Jintao network (excluding MR)	0.004	0.062	0	1
Jiang Zemin network (excluding MR)	0.010	0.101	0	1
College-level graduate	0.657	0.475	0	1
Postgraduate training	0.085	0.279	0	1
Combat Experience After 1949	0.130	0.336	0	1
Long March Veteran	0.085	0.279	0	1
Served as Commissar	0.394	0.489	0	1
Ethnic Minority	0.022	0.146	0	1
Princeling	0.040	0.196	0	1
Rural Birth	0.213	0.410	0	1

B Dataset and Coding Rules

B.1 Building the dataset

The full dataset includes information on 1,231 officers who held a position equivalent to or higher than deputy commander or deputy commissar position in a military region, general office, or branch command. Table A2 includes the positions whose officers were included in the dataset. To create and verify information, I consulted a number of publicly available sources. All of these materials are open-source and available in university libraries in the United States and China or through online databases. These source included:

- People's Liberation Army Press, *Biographies of Generals in The People's Liberation Army* (解放军将领传)

- People's Liberation Army Press, *Biographies of High-Ranking Officers in The People's Liberation Army* (中国人民解放军高级将领传)

- The Baidu Baike encyclopedia and the Chinese-language version of Wikipedia

- The People's Liberation Army Daily (解放军报) which is published by the Central Military Commission

- Profiles of generals appearing in Chinese media outlets such as *Pengpai* (澎湃)

In addition I consulted other sources to confirm information, such as party organization histories (组织史资料).

B.2 Coding rules

I code career connections between officers and party leaders and between officers and other officers. To do so, I draw on career biographies collected for each officer down to the level of brigade commander.

- **Promoted to General-Level Position**: Promoted to the leader (commissar or commander) of a Military Region (正大军区职) or a position of equivalent or higher rank. The primary rank for the holders of these positions is full (three star) general or *shangjiang*. (Note that the standard system of promotion to one, two, and three star general was not in use for much of the 1980s and promotions only became semi-regular starting in 1993.)

- **Promoted to CMC**: Promoted to the CCP Central Military Commission.

A3

- **Promoted to CCP Central Committee** (appendix): Promoted to full member of the CCP Central Committee.

- **Promoted to CCP Politburo** (appendix): Promoted to full or alernate Politburo status.

- **Promoted to Shangjiang** (appendix): Promoted to three-star general. Note that this rank was discontinued until 1988 and was not in regular use until 1993, so it cannot adequately capture Deng-Era promotions.

- **Career tie to paramount leader**: An officer was coded as connected to a party leader if they served in the same military region, military district, or office at the same time. In the case of Xi Jinping, this included service in the Fujian Military District (1998-2002), Zhejiang Military District (2002-2007), Shanghai garrison (2007), and the Nanjing military region between 1998 and 2007; in the case of Hu Jintao, the Chengdu military region between 1985 and 1992 and the Guizhou (1985-7) and Tibet Military Districts (1987-1992); for Jiang Zemin, the Shanghai Garrison and Nanjing Military region between 1985 and 1989; and Deng Xiaoping, the General Staff Office between 1975 and 1980 and the Second Field Army during the Chinese Civil War. For the cross-sectional analysis, I exclude officers who were promoted before the leader they were tied to becomes CMC chairman. For the panel analysis, the variable takes on a value of 1 only when the leader they are tied to is the current CMC chairman.

- **Tie to paramount leader (excluding military region)**: This measure, the results for which appear in the appendix, excludes military region-level ties, focusing on military districts (and for Deng, the Second Field Army and the Chief of Staff office).

- **Combat experience after 1949**: This includes service in wars and skirmishes with South Korea/The United States, India, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Officers were coded 1 if they served in both front line combat or logistical support roles, or if biographies mentioned they had served and their role was ambiguous.

- **Domestic Threat**: Includes periods from 1990 to 1993 in wake of Tiananmen elite split (note some 1989 promotions occurred before so the year is excluded) and 2012 to 2005 in aftermath of Bo Xilai incident.

- **Domestic Threat, Main Alternate Measure**: In addition to the above, includes transition to Deng in 1979-82.

- **Domestic Threat, Additional Alternate Measures**: In the appendix, drops individual years as a robustness test.

- **Foreign Threat**: Includes period from 2000 to 2003 in the immediate aftermath of the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

- **Foreign Threat, Main Alternate Measure**: In addition to the above, includes conflict with Vietnam, 1979 to 1982.

- **Foreign Threat, Additional Alternate Measures**: In the appendix, drops individual years as a robustness test.

- **College-Level Education**: I code as 1 if an officer graduated from college or a military academy and 0 otherwise.

- **Rural birth**: Coded as 1 if an officer was known to be born in a county city, township, or village, 0 otherwise.

- **Princeling**: Coded as 1 if an officer had a parent who served as a national-level leader, 0 otherwise.

- **Served as commissar**: Coded as 1 if an officer ever held a post as a commissar or deputy commissar, 0 otherwise.

- **Ethnic minority**: Coded as 1 if an officer belongs to a non-Han ethnic group, 0 otherwise.

- **Long March veteran**: Coded as 1 if an officer participated in the 1934-5 Long March.

- **Cohort decade fixed effects**: Fixed effects for the decade of birth for each officer.

Table A2: Positions in the PLA Leader Dataset

Central Military Commission	Vice Chair
	Member
General Staff Department	Director
	Deputy Directors
	Assistant Directors
General Logistics Department	Director
	Deputy Directors
	Assistant Directors
General Armaments Department	Director
	Deputy Directors
	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
Air Force	Commander
	Deputy Commander
	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
Navy	Commander
	Deputy Commander
	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
2nd Artillery Corps	Commander
	Deputy Commander
	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
People's Armed Police	Commander
	Deputy Commander
	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
Shenyang Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander
Beijing Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander

Lanzhou Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander
Jinan Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander
Nanjing Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander
Guangzhou Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander
Chengdu Military Region	Political Commissar
	Deputy Political Commissar
	Commander
	Deputy Commander

C   Cross-Sectional Analysis: Robustness Tests

C.1   Alternative Outcomes

Table A3: Alternate Outcomes: Promotion to the Central Committee, Full and Alternate Members

	Dependent variable:					
	Central Committee Full Member			Central Committee Full or Alternate Member		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	0.133***		0.097**	0.122**		0.097**
	(0.045)		(0.045)	(0.048)		(0.049)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.267***	0.200***		0.251***	0.208***
		(0.052)	(0.058)		(0.053)	(0.058)
College-Level Education			0.132***			0.205***
			(0.028)			(0.031)
Long March Participant			−0.036			0.021
			(0.086)			(0.092)
Political Commissar Experience			0.057*			0.020
			(0.031)			(0.034)
Ethnic Minority			0.070			0.060
			(0.113)			(0.125)
Princeling			0.037			0.024
			(0.082)			(0.096)
Rural Birth			0.035			−0.025
			(0.041)			(0.043)
Constant	0.187***	0.189***	0.006	0.263***	0.264***	−0.043
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.146)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.149)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	764	779	755	764	779	755
R^2	0.014	0.046	0.096	0.010	0.034	0.099
Adjusted R^2	0.013	0.045	0.079	0.009	0.033	0.082

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A8

Table A4: Alternate Outcomes: Promotion to CCP Politburo and Three-Star General (Shangjiang)

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to CCP Politburo			Promoted to 3-Star General		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	0.064***		0.051**	0.093**		0.112**
	(0.024)		(0.021)	(0.045)		(0.044)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.023	−0.003		0.172***	0.183***
		(0.020)	(0.020)		(0.051)	(0.052)
College-Level Education			0.016*			0.140***
			(0.009)			(0.029)
Long March Participant			0.027			0.107
			(0.055)			(0.067)
Political Commissar Experience			−0.009			0.060*
			(0.011)			(0.032)
Ethnic Minority			−0.008			0.066
			(0.008)			(0.132)
Princeling			−0.018**			−0.020
			(0.008)			(0.081)
Rural Birth			0.036**			0.073*
			(0.016)			(0.040)
Constant	0.009**	0.016***	0.113	0.210***	0.214***	−0.031
	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.136)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.147)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	764	779	755	764	779	755
R^2	0.029	0.003	0.071	0.007	0.019	0.087
Adjusted R^2	0.028	0.002	0.054	0.005	0.017	0.070

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

C.2 Alternative Explanatory Variables

Table A5: Alternate Explanatory Variable: Leader Connections Limited to Military District

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to General			Promoted to CMC		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader (Military District Only)	0.335***		0.194***	0.305***		0.202***
	(0.064)		(0.067)	(0.061)		(0.059)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.348***	0.281***		0.153***	0.091**
		(0.052)	(0.056)		(0.042)	(0.040)
College-Level Education			0.113***			0.048***
			(0.030)			(0.016)
Long March Participant			0.101			0.199***
			(0.092)			(0.070)
Political Commissar Experience			0.123***			−0.024
			(0.032)			(0.017)
Ethnic Minority			0.137			0.073
			(0.127)			(0.076)
Princeling			0.003			−0.008
			(0.078)			(0.039)
Rural Birth			0.076*			0.067***
			(0.042)			(0.026)
Constant	0.234***	0.217***	0.302*	0.049***	0.055***	0.261
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.169)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.160)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	778	779	769	778	779	769
R^2	0.044	0.071	0.166	0.103	0.039	0.233
Adjusted R^2	0.043	0.069	0.151	0.102	0.037	0.219

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

C.3 Alternative Explanatory Variables and Outcomes

Table A6: Alternate Explanatory Variable and Alternate Outcomes 1

	Dependent variable:					
	Central Committee Full Member			Central Committee Full or Alternate Member		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader (Military District Only)	0.244***		0.189***	0.231***		0.198***
	(0.064)		(0.066)	(0.065)		(0.068)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.267***	0.230***		0.251***	0.230***
		(0.052)	(0.057)		(0.053)	(0.056)
College-Level Education			0.117***			0.190***
			(0.029)			(0.032)
Long March Participant			−0.023			0.027
			(0.089)			(0.091)
Political Commissar Experience			0.074**			0.037
			(0.031)			(0.033)
Ethnic Minority			0.063			0.055
			(0.116)			(0.128)
Princeling			0.026			0.014
			(0.079)			(0.094)
Rural Birth			0.038			−0.021
			(0.041)			(0.042)
Constant	0.202***	0.189***	−0.034	0.276***	0.264***	−0.080
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.148)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.149)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	778	779	769	778	779	769
R^2	0.026	0.046	0.109	0.020	0.034	0.109
Adjusted R^2	0.025	0.045	0.093	0.018	0.033	0.093

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A7: Alternate Explanatory Variable and Alternate Outcomes 2

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to CCP Politburo			Promoted to 3 Star General		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader (Military District Only)	0.130***		0.112***	0.145**		0.155**
	(0.044)		(0.041)	(0.063)		(0.063)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.023	−0.006		0.172***	0.224***
		(0.020)	(0.018)		(0.051)	(0.052)
College-Level Education			0.014*			0.127***
			(0.009)			(0.030)
Long March Participant			0.007			0.131*
			(0.049)			(0.070)
Political Commissar Experience			−0.010			0.075**
			(0.011)			(0.032)
Ethnic Minority			−0.002			0.057
			(0.007)			(0.133)
Princeling			−0.020**			−0.026
			(0.009)			(0.079)
Rural Birth			0.033**			0.072*
			(0.015)			(0.040)
Constant	0.008**	0.016***	0.107	0.224***	0.214***	−0.058
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.135)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.146)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	778	779	769	778	779	769
R^2	0.068	0.003	0.097	0.009	0.019	0.098
Adjusted R^2	0.067	0.002	0.080	0.008	0.017	0.081

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

C.4 Estimation Using Logistic Regression

Table A8: Logistic Regression, Main Table: Promotion to full general and to the CCP Central Military Commission

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to General			Promoted to CMC		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	0.946***		0.751***	1.793***		1.619***
	(0.208)		(0.246)	(0.291)		(0.385)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		1.543***	1.239***		1.515***	0.855*
		(0.223)	(0.281)		(0.300)	(0.450)
College-Level Education			0.879***			1.135**
			(0.218)			(0.443)
Long March Participant			0.375			1.717*
			(0.474)			(1.025)
Political Commissar Experience			0.667***			−0.273
			(0.194)			(0.374)
Ethnic Minority			0.784			1.273
			(0.589)			(0.864)
Princeling			0.083			−0.140
			(0.473)			(0.845)
Rural Birth			0.383			1.077***
			(0.234)			(0.379)
Constant	−1.277***	−1.284***	−1.136	−3.051***	−2.852***	−3.045***
	(0.096)	(0.093)	(0.820)	(0.190)	(0.169)	(1.150)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	764	779	755	764	779	755
Log Likelihood	−419.616	−423.659	−366.939	−182.641	−195.206	−141.371
Akaike Inf. Crit.	843.231	851.317	763.878	369.282	394.412	312.741

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A9: Logistic Regression, Alternate Table: Promotion to CCP Central Committee

	Dependent variable:					
	Central Committee Full Member			Central Committee Full or Alternate Member		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	0.715***		0.593**	0.562***		0.513**
	(0.220)		(0.248)	(0.208)		(0.239)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		1.279***	1.024***		1.085***	0.978***
		(0.224)	(0.288)		(0.219)	(0.274)
College-Level Education			0.992***			1.224***
			(0.236)			(0.213)
Long March Participant			−0.328			0.047
			(0.482)			(0.487)
Political Commissar Experience			0.379*			0.108
			(0.198)			(0.180)
Ethnic Minority			0.469			0.339
			(0.617)			(0.626)
Princeling			0.241			0.131
			(0.482)			(0.467)
Rural Birth			0.197			−0.152
			(0.251)			(0.239)
Constant	−1.470***	−1.458***	−2.711***	−1.029***	−1.025***	−2.807***
	(0.101)	(0.098)	(0.987)	(0.090)	(0.087)	(1.005)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	764	779	755	764	779	755
Log Likelihood	−385.712	−398.073	−350.281	−451.383	−461.313	−410.212
Akaike Inf. Crit.	775.424	800.147	730.562	906.765	926.625	850.424

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A14

Table A10: Logistic Regression, Alternate Table: Promotion to Politburo and Three-Star General (Shanjiang)

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to CCP Politburo			Promoted to 3-Star General		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	2.133***		1.808***	0.492**		0.693***
	(0.539)		(0.519)	(0.221)		(0.245)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.916	−0.012		0.838***	1.095***
		(0.599)	(0.733)		(0.227)	(0.309)
College-Level Education			1.106			0.937***
			(0.793)			(0.221)
Long March Participant			1.388**			1.070*
			(0.602)			(0.608)
Political Commissar Experience			−0.396			0.343*
			(0.635)			(0.192)
Ethnic Minority			−13.981***			0.391
			(0.511)			(0.697)
Princeling						−0.139
						(0.456)
Rural Birth						0.472*
						(0.249)
Constant	−4.663***	−4.105***	−5.526***	−1.323***	−1.302***	−3.338***
	(0.411)	(0.304)	(0.826)	(0.097)	(0.094)	(0.963)
Birth cohort fixed effects			✓			✓
Observations	764	779	764	764	779	755
Log Likelihood	−66.130	−73.079	−61.259	−405.060	−419.269	−368.241
Akaike Inf. Crit.	136.259	150.158	136.519	814.120	842.539	766.481

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A15

C.5 Subset Analysis: Post-Deng Officers Only

Table A11: Post-Deng Officers Only: Promotion to full general-level position and to the CCP Central Military Commission

	Dependent variable:					
	Promoted to General			Promoted to CMC		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Career Tie to Paramount Leader	0.169***		0.125**	0.129***		0.100***
	(0.055)		(0.055)	(0.041)		(0.038)
Combat Experience, Post-1949		0.349***	0.245***		0.117**	0.058
		(0.066)	(0.072)		(0.047)	(0.043)
College-Level Education			0.133***			0.039***
			(0.031)			(0.015)
Long March Participant			0.459***			0.429**
			(0.159)			(0.214)
Political Commissar Experience			0.110***			−0.017
			(0.034)			(0.017)
Ethnic Minority			0.022			0.017
			(0.131)			(0.069)
Princeling			−0.014			0.007
			(0.078)			(0.044)
Rural Birth			0.088*			0.055*
			(0.048)			(0.031)
Constant	0.203***	0.207***	0.040	0.034***	0.042***	−0.0005
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.024)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.011)
Observations	648	663	648	648	663	648
R^2	0.019	0.057	0.114	0.040	0.024	0.110
Adjusted R^2	0.017	0.056	0.103	0.038	0.022	0.099

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

D Panel Analysis: Robustness Tests

D.1 Connection to CMC Chairman and Promotion

Table A12: Promotion to general, time-varying measure of career tie to CMC Chairman.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Career Tie to Current CMC Chairman	0.098***	0.098***	0.082***	0.087**
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.037)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Threat X Controls		✓	✓	✓
Year FE X Birth decade FE			✓	
Year FE X Birth year FE				✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,743	4,743	4,743
R^2	0.219	0.220	0.270	0.463
Adjusted R^2	0.071	0.073	0.100	0.192

Note: *p$<$0.1; **p$<$0.05; ***p$<$0.01

D.2 Alternative Measures of Explanatory Variables

Table A13: Promotion during periods of domestic threat. Alternate measure of threat including 1978 transition to Deng.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Career Tie to Current CMC Chairman	0.056*	0.058*	0.028	0.026
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.044)
Period of Domestic Threat	−1.286***	−1.285	−0.541	−1.702***
(Includes Deng Transition)	(0.089)	(2.795)	(2.817)	(0.134)
Career Tie to Chairman	0.101***	0.101***	0.113***	0.111***
X Domestic Threat (Includes Deng Transition)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.036)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Threat X Controls		✓	✓	✓
Year FE X Birth decade FE			✓	
Year FE X Birth year FE				✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,743	4,743	4,743
R^2	0.222	0.228	0.276	0.467
Adjusted R^2	0.075	0.080	0.106	0.196

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A14: Promotion during periods of foreign threat. Alternate measure of threat including Vietnam conflict.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Period of Foreign Threat	-1.251^{***}	-1.190	-0.500	-1.679^{***}
(Includes Vietnam)	(0.089)	(3.177)	(3.219)	(0.136)
Foreign Threat (Includes Vietnam)	0.032	0.065^{**}	0.088^{***}	0.077^{**}
X Combat Experience	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.030)	(0.034)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foreign Threat X Controls		✓	✓	✓
Year FE X Birth decade FE			✓	
Year FE X Birth year FE				✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,743	4,743	4,743
R^2	0.214	0.232	0.279	0.468
Adjusted R^2	0.066	0.084	0.110	0.198

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Standard errors clustered by individual.

Table A15: Promotion during periods of domestic threat. Alternate measure of ties, excluding Military Region.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Career Tie to Current CMC Chairman	0.024	0.026	−0.043	−0.068
(MD Measure)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.059)
Period of Domestic Threat	1.011***	−0.072	−0.099	0.147***
	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.069)	(0.052)
Career Tie to Chairman (MD Measure)	0.143***	0.141***	0.192***	0.222***
X Domestic Threat	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.065)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Threat X Controls		✓	✓	✓
Year FE X Birth decade FE			✓	
Year FE X Birth year FE				✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,743	4,743	4,743
R^2	0.219	0.224	0.276	0.467
Adjusted R^2	0.071	0.075	0.105	0.196

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A20

Table A16: Alternative Explanatory Variable: Exclusion of individual years counted as a year of domestic threat. For legibility, domestic threat coefficients are not shown.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
				Dependent variable:				
				Promoted to Central military Commission				
Career Tie to Current CMC Chair	0.060* (0.033)	0.062* (0.033)	0.060* (0.033)	0.061* (0.034)	0.060* (0.031)	0.056* (0.032)	0.060* (0.032)	0.068** (0.033)
Domestic Threat (Excluding 1990) X Career Tie	0.116*** (0.037)							
Domestic Threat (Excluding 1991) X Career Tie		0.107*** (0.037)						
Domestic Threat (Excluding 1992) X Career Tie			0.111*** (0.039)					
Domestic Threat (Excluding 1993) X Career Tie				0.105*** (0.041)				
Domestic Threat (Excluding 2012) X Career Tie					0.134*** (0.035)			
Domestic Threat (Excluding 2013) X Career Tie						0.130*** (0.035)		
Domestic Threat (Excluding 2014) X Career Tie							0.115*** (0.036)	
Domestic Threat (Excluding 2015) X Career Tie								0.089** (0.039)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786
R^2	0.222	0.222	0.222	0.221	0.223	0.223	0.222	0.221
Adjusted R^2	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.073	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.073

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A17: Alternative Explanatory Variable: Exclusion of individual years counted as a year of foreign threat. For legibility, foreign threat coefficients are not shown.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to Central military Commission			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Foreign Threat (Excluding 2000)	0.624***			
	(0.053)			
Foreign Threat (Excluding 2001)		0.625***		
		(0.053)		
Foreign Threat (Excluding 2002)			0.586***	
			(0.053)	
Foreign Threat (Including 2003)				0.621***
				(0.053)
Combat Exp X Foreign Threat (Excluding 2000)	0.063			
	(0.040)			
Combat Exp X Foreign Threat (Excluding 2001)		0.056		
		(0.040)		
Combat Exp X Foreign Threat (Excluding 2002)			0.079*	
			(0.042)	
Combat Exp X Foreign Threat (Including 2003)				0.074**
				(0.036)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786
R^2	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215
Adjusted R^2	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

E   Promotion Patterns by Paramount Leader

Table A18: Cross-Sectional Measure of Promotion to General by CMC Chairman, Restricted to Generals Eligible For Promotion During Each Chairmans' Term.

	Dependent variable:							
	Promoted to General (Deng)		Promoted to General (Jiang)		Promoted to General (Hu)		Promoted to General (Xi)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Career Tie to Deng Xiaoping	0.203*** (0.040)	0.185*** (0.043)						
Career Tie to Jiang Zemin			0.034 (0.112)	0.061 (0.110)				
Career Tie to Hu Jintao					0.090 (0.251)	−0.062 (0.238)		
Career Tie to Xi Jinping							0.266*** (0.097)	0.265*** (0.097)
Constant	0.024 (0.018)	−0.228** (0.092)	0.232*** (0.025)	−0.226 (0.323)	0.244*** (0.031)	−0.161 (0.413)	0.119*** (0.025)	−0.155 (0.140)
Observations	209	207	312	308	200	200	190	187
R^2	0.110	0.198	0.0003	0.141	0.001	0.166	0.038	0.162
Adjusted R^2	0.105	0.144	−0.003	0.100	−0.004	0.122	0.033	0.114

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A19: Cross-Sectional Measure of Promotion to CMC by CMC Chairman, Restricted to Generals Eligible For Promotion During Each Chairmans' Term.

	Dependent variable:							
	Promoted to CMC (Deng)		Promoted to CMC (Jiang)		Promoted to CMC (Hu)		Promoted to CMC (Xi)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Career Tie to Deng Xiaoping	0.480*** (0.043)	0.075** (0.030)						
Career Tie to Jiang Zemin			0.019 (0.057)	0.029 (0.054)				
Career Tie to Hu Jintao					−0.046 (0.149)	−0.098 (0.140)		
Career Tie to Xi Jinping							0.351*** (0.063)	0.288*** (0.059)
Constant	0.020* (0.010)	0.558*** (0.048)	0.047*** (0.012)	−0.145 (0.157)	0.046*** (0.016)	0.991*** (0.197)	0.034** (0.016)	0.373*** (0.085)
Control variables		✓		✓		✓		✓
Observations	325	321	311	307	177	177	189	186
R^2	0.274	0.806	0.0004	0.204	0.001	0.194	0.144	0.329
Adjusted R^2	0.272	0.797	−0.003	0.166	−0.005	0.146	0.139	0.291

Note: $^*p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.01$

A25

Table A20: Promotion to general, time-varying measure of career tie to CMC Chairman.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Career Tie to Deng Xiaoping	0.140***	0.144***	0.032	−0.136*
	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.074)
Career Tie to Jiang Zemin	−0.041	−0.042	0.020	0.214**
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.066)	(0.097)
Career Tie to Hu Jintao	0.099	0.097	0.090	−0.073
	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.082)	(0.104)
Career Tie to Xi Jinping	0.177***	0.177***	0.171***	0.156***
	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.050)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Threat X Controls		✓	✓	✓
Year FE X Birth decade FE			✓	
Year FE X Birth year FE				✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,743	4,743	4,743
R^2	0.223	0.225	0.272	0.467
Adjusted R^2	0.076	0.077	0.102	0.198

Note: *p$<$0.1; **p$<$0.05; ***p$<$0.01

F Competence-Loyalty Trade-off

Table A21: The Competence-Loyalty Tradeoff: Generals with more education and connection to sitting CMC Chairman less likely to be promoted.

	Dependent variable:			
	Promoted to General (Mean: 0.295)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Career Tie to Current CMC Chairman	0.500***	0.243***	0.114***	0.106***
	(0.095)	(0.047)	(0.029)	(0.034)
Career Tie X Education (Continuous Variable)	−0.229***			
	(0.054)			
Career Tie X College Degree		−0.200***		
		(0.058)		
Career Tie X Graduate Degree			−0.588***	
			(0.202)	
Career Tie X Combat Experience				−0.032
				(0.063)
Individual fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clusters	720	720	720	720
Observations	4,786	4,786	4,786	4,786
R^2	0.226	0.224	0.224	0.219
Adjusted R^2	0.080	0.076	0.077	0.071

Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01