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*Thomas F. Remington, Andrei A. Yakovlev,  
Elena Ovchinnikova, Alexander Chasovsky*

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RUSSIA AND CHINA BEFORE AND  
AFTER 2012**

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*Thomas F. Remington<sup>1</sup>, Andrei A. Yakovlev<sup>2</sup>,  
Elena Ovchinnikova<sup>3</sup>, Alexander Chasovsky<sup>4</sup>*

## **CAREER TRAJECTORIES OF REGIONAL OFFICIALS: RUSSIA AND CHINA BEFORE AND AFTER 2012<sup>5</sup>**

Abstract: Authoritarian leaders rely on regional officials for both political support and the fulfillment of their policy objectives. Central leaders face trade-offs between using institutionalized rules for choosing regional officials such as regular rotation and performance incentives, and building a stable base of personal support from loyalists. This paper analyzes appointments of regional officials in Russia and China before and after 2012. We hypothesize that, as a consequence of the centralization and personalization of state power in both regimes over the past decade, Russia's system for appointing regional officials has become somewhat more regularized while in China under Xi it has become somewhat less regularized. Our analysis uses a comprehensive original set of biographical data on all top regional officials from 2002 through 2019 in China and from 2000 through 2019 in Russia. We discern clear differences between the pre- and post-2012 period for China and less marked differences for pre- and post-2012 Russia.

JEL Classification: P21, H83, P27

Keywords: bureaucracy under authoritarian government; regional officials; career mobility; Russia; China

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Political Science, Emory University, Atlanta, USA; International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development, National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia; e-mail: polstfr@emory.edu

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Industrial and Market Studies & International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development, National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia; e-mail: ayakovlev@hse.ru

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Industrial and Market Studies & International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development, National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia; e-mail: elena.d.ovchinnikova@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Industrial and Market Studies, National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia; e-mail: alexander.chasovsky@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction: New leaders, new rules?

Political and economic performance in authoritarian polities depends critically upon the ability of regional executives to fulfill policy objectives set by the central leaders. At the same time, top regime leaders rely on those same regional officials for political support. Communist regimes employ a highly-structured set of procedures—the nomenklatura system-- to groom, evaluate, and appoint officials to top positions in the bureaucracy. In other authoritarian systems, rules guiding appointments of regional officials are typically less formal. In all authoritarian systems, central leaders face trade-offs, however, between reliance on institutionalized rules for choosing regional leaders as opposed to allowing the top leader free rein to build a personal base of support. Some authoritarian systems may apply regularized rules such as age and term limits in recruiting officials. Alternatively, they may leave officials in place for long periods of time (a case in point is Brezhnev’s “stability of cadres” policy in the USSR, which contributed to the stagnation and collapse of the regime).

Communist regimes handle the selection of officials in a highly regularized fashion. Its mechanism is the “nomenklatura” system, where nomenklatura refers to a set of leading positions throughout the state and society—political officials of all kinds, economic managers, senior officers in the armed services and police, heads of media, educational, cultural organizations, and so on. There are corresponding lists of people who have been cleared to fill these positions. At every level of the bureaucratic hierarchy, there is a set of leadership positions filling which requires either appointment by, or at least approval by, the relevant organizational committee of the communist party. (On the nomenklatura system, see Harasymiw 1984; Rigby and Harasymiw 1983). In the Soviet and East European communist regimes, people who were appointed to nomenklatura positions were popularly regarded as forming a privileged stratum often called, collectively, “the nomenklatura” (Voslensky 1984). Party officials used the nomenklatura to develop extensive personal networks of clients, who in turn maintained their own clienteles. The nomenklatura system allowed personal as well as bureaucratic factions to flourish, and certainly did nothing to deter the accumulation of stasis and inertia under Brezhnev that resulted in the system’s fatal rigidity as the senior leadership remained entrenched in power without turnover.

Russia and China form a particularly useful pair of cases for comparison with respect to the operation of cadre management systems. Notwithstanding the immense differences between them, both regimes inherited the nomenklatura system although Russia has scrapped many elements of it after the end of communist party rule. Both are large—one the largest country in the world by territory, the other by population--so the central government faces extremely demanding span of control challenges. Both are highly centralized and have become more so over the past decade.

Therefore the divergence between them with respect to the formal rules governing the appointment of regional state officials affords us an opportunity to ask whether this divergence has mattered for observed patterns of career movements. Moreover—puzzlingly, given the common origins of the systems of appointments of regional officials—almost no studies exist comparing patterns of career movement in these two countries. The large literature on official careers in Chinese case makes almost no reference to the large literature on the Soviet parallels, focusing heavily instead on the question of the degree to which economic performance as opposed to factional affiliation influence career trajectories. The current literature on Russian regional officials’ appointments and dismissals makes no reference to the Chinese case.

The Soviet nomenklatura system had a direct bearing on the seeming stability and ultimate collapse of the Soviet regime. In its ideal form, the Soviet system balanced central control with accountability. In a process known as the “circular flow of power,” the party’s General Secretary, working through the Secretariat of the Central Committee, appointed regional party secretaries. These leaders (first secretaries of the oblast’ party committees in the Russian Republic and of the national republics making up the federal union) in turn controlled the selection of delegates to the CPSU party congresses every five years. These congresses in turn “elected” —that is, they ratified a slate proposed to them by the secretariat—the members of the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the General Secretary. Although this process was highly centralized, it also necessarily accommodated the political interests of the regional and republican power blocs comprising the party. In return for supporting the General Secretary in power, the party leaders who operated party organizations in their regions and republics had considerable discretion to build their own clienteles. The circular flow of power consequently provided a kind of reciprocal accountability between the regional party leaders (especially taken as a latent bloc of power) and the top party leader: he had to maintain their support, even as he also dominated the process by which they were chosen to their posts (see Zimmerman 2016). When Leonid Brezhnev pushed Nikita Khrushchev out of power in 1964, Brezhnev promised lower party officials that they could expect stable, predictable procedures for decision-making, based on collective leadership, as a reaction against Khrushchev’s arbitrary, impetuous, and personalistic leadership style, and that they would not be subjected to capricious removals from power by the top leader. However, as Brezhnev aged, his “stability of cadres” principle became a significant liability to the system’s survival. Local party officials’ upward career mobility was blocked, and the absence of leadership turnover meant the party became increasingly unable to respond meaningfully to deep-rooted policy problems such as secular decline in economic productivity. Brezhnev’s principle—“stability of cadres”—turned into the ultimately fatal stagnation and collapse of the regime (Roeder 1993).

For its part, China underwent an entirely different kind of systemic crisis in the 1960s and 1970s. If the Soviet problem was that stability turned into stagnation, in China, Mao Zedong himself rejected stability in favor of the violent chaos of the Cultural Revolution. Arbitrary arrests, demotions, and imprisonment of leading party officials became common. Deng Xiaoping himself was sent down to the countryside in 1969; then after his rehabilitation he was once again suspended from all his positions in 1976 as the “Gang of Four” continued Mao’s campaign against the restoration of institutional order. Xi Jinping’s father, Xi Zhongxun, a first generation revolutionary leader and senior party leader, was demoted in 1965, then jailed during the Cultural Revolution. China’s party leaders thoroughly understand the dangers of excessive and arbitrary treatment of party leaders, as well as the dangers of allowing regional leaders to remain in power too long. The breakdown of order within the party was a major reason party cadres supported Deng Xiaoping’s efforts to establish rules such as age and term limits, and to reject personalistic leadership in favor of collective leadership (Vogel 2011).

In 2012 both Russia and China underwent significant leadership changes. Vladimir Putin returned to the presidency after the four-year presidential term of his close comrade Dmitrii Medvedev. In November of the same year Xi Jinping was named CCP General Secretary at the 18th Party Congress. We conjecture, accordingly, that 2012 marked a point when the two regimes’ policies for managing regional official’s careers began to undergo a tendency toward convergence. In Russia, under presidents Yeltsin and Putin, the top leader freely overrode formal term limits for governors (this was the case both when governors were elected for nominal terms of office and when governors were appointed by the president). Some governors stayed in office for as long as 20 years and more while others served for extremely short times before being removed. Under Deng Xiaoping, China established much stricter rules for the length of terms of office and the ages at which officials must be removed. We describe these rules in greater detail below.

At the point of the leadership change in both countries in 2012, both countries had been experiencing rising political and economic pressures. In part, these resulted from the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 which brought about a sharp fall (nearly 9% in 2009) in GDP in Russia and forced China to respond with a major surge of state-led infrastructure spending to maintain liquidity. In Russia, GDP growth took until 2014-2015 to recover. In China, the government’s infusion of state resources into financial institutions and state industrial enterprises maintained economic growth rates but also revealed the degree to which the economy depended on exports, investment and state infrastructure spending to keep incomes rising.

Moreover, both countries faced political tensions at the leadership level. In China, these resulted in the postponement of the 18th Party Congress by several weeks. Observers connected this unexplained delay to the severe factional in-fighting associated with the Bo Xilai affair. Evidently

Xi Jinping needed to consolidate his support within the party before the congress could be convened (Dotson 2012). In Russia, unexpectedly large-scale public protests over election falsification in the 2011-2012 election cycle revealed widespread discontent in many major cities (Reuter and Szakonyi 2013; Dollbaum 2017). In 2013-14, the Ukrainian crisis, followed by the annexation of Crimea, was used by Putin to mobilize patriotic sentiment as a means of raising popular support for the regime. However, falling real income growth, accelerated by the drop in world oil prices (spot prices for Brent oil fell from around \$100 per barrel in summer 2014 to \$51 in January 2015), severely strained state finances. Coupled with Western economic sanctions over Crimea, these pushed Russia into economic crisis again. In China, by the beginning of the 2010's, economic growth had begun to slow and the exhaustion of the model of export-, investment- and infra-structure-led economic growth had become increasingly evident to Chinese policy-makers (Naughton 2018). Xi responded by demanding that government officials reduce the emphasis given to GDP growth for its own sake and increase the value-added from scientific and technological modernization.

We believe that these pressures help explain the similar trends toward centralization and personalization of power in the two regimes that became particularly pronounced after 2012. In both cases they reflect a modification of the previous norms governing regional officials' careers. Centralization refers to two processes: first, the concentration of state power at the central level at the expense of the power of regional governments, and second, a weakening of the autonomy of other centers of power in the economy and society. Both regimes have increasingly come to rely on state-owned enterprises to serve as "national champions" and engines of growth. Both also have tightened fiscal control and reduced fiscal autonomy of regional governments. Personalization refers to the tendency to limit power-sharing and collective forms of decision-making and to establish the top leader personally as the sole source of authority in the state.

We hypothesize that the centralization and personalization of power in the two regimes have resulted in a certain convergence between them with regard to the practices governing the appointments of regional officials. In both countries the top leaders adopted policies that allowed them to remove and replace top regional officials more rapidly as well as to a tendency to appoint outsiders to these positions, that is, officials who were not tied to the region and therefore more dependent on the center.

To test this hypothesis, we collected biographical data on all officials who served as regional chief executives from 2000 through the end of 2019 in Russia and from 2002 through the end of 2019 in China, including all individuals who served as party secretaries as well as those serving as governors. For each individual we calculate age at appointment, length of time in office, and type of subsequent career step. In certain respects, the paper builds on our earlier research on this subject

(Rochlitz et al. 2015) by incorporating movements since 2012. Below we provide details on the variables used.

## 2. Previous literature

The question of how authoritarian regimes manage appointments of regional officials, evaluate performance, and provide incentives to influence the behavior of regional officials has been studied extensively in the context of individual countries, but comparative studies are rare. A substantial literature has developed examining the determinants of career patterns among Chinese officials. Much of the literature has addressed the question of the degree to which political connections—such as membership in a factional network—as opposed to success in managing economic policy facilitates career movement (Zhang 2014; Nathan and Gilley 2003; Zeng 2013; Landry et al. 2015; Ma et al. 2015; Xi et al. 2015; Shih et al. 2012; Chen et al. 2005; Jia et al. 2015; Li and Zhou 2005; Choi 2012; Manion 1985; Shih et al. 2010). We do not review that literature here. There is a smaller literature on the determinants of gubernatorial appointments in Russia (Reuter and Buckley 2019; Buckley et al. 2014; Reuter and Robertson 2012). Almost no studies compare Russia and China with respect to the factors influencing the career movements of regional officials despite the fact that both regimes have adapted modified versions of the Soviet system for managing appointments. One exception is Rochlitz et al. 2015. This paper seeks to build on that study in the light of the coming to power of Xi Jinping in 2012 and Vladimir Putin’s return to the presidency in 2012.

Russia and China offer starkly contrasting cases of the management of regional officials. At least during the 30-year era of “reform and opening up,” China’s central government pressed its regional executives—governors and party secretaries as well as officials at lower administrative levels --to maximize economic growth (Maskin et al. 2000; Chen et al. 2005; Li and Zhou 2005; Landry et al. 2018). For officials at higher levels, promotion was also affected by factional ties as well as education and revenue collection (Jia, Kudamatsua and Seim 2013; Shih, Adolph and Liu 2012; Landry, Lü and Duan 2018). In contrast, studies of Russia have emphasized the importance of regional officials’ political loyalty to President Putin and the Putin regime as the dominant factor influencing an official’s career opportunities, as indicated by the official’s success to maximizing electoral support for the president and the United Russia party (Reuter and Robertson 2012; Reisinger and Morasky 2013).

Rochlitz et al. (2015) analyzed the career trajectories of all officials who had served as regional executives in Russia and China between 1999 and 2012: 205 individuals who had served as governors in Russia, and 201 governors and party secretaries in China. Rochlitz et al. (2015) mapped

their career paths onto a series of performance indicators that the literature had indicated as being important criteria for evaluation used by the center. Rochlitz et al. (2015) found that in Russia, regional executives had lower turnover, were sometimes removed but almost never promoted to a higher position (such as a federal minister), were not rewarded for good economic results but were sometimes removed for poor political (electoral) outcomes. In contrast to China, there were few incentives for achieving good economic results or engaging in policy experimentation intended to bring favorable attention to their leadership. In China, by contrast, regional executives were regularly moved, sometime promoted and sometimes retired, had more prior executive experience, and were constrained by strictly observed age and term limits.

Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency in 2012 after a four-year term as prime minister occurred at a relatively tumultuous moment in Russia. The elections to the Duma in December 2011 had been accompanied by exceptionally large-scale protest against electoral fraud and against Putin's return to the presidency. The December wave of protest was followed by further protests in early 2012. Putin's approval ratings began to slide as the economy shrank, from a high point of 86% in April 2008 to 61% in December 2011. Approval continued to decline until spring 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea, bringing a strong rebound in his approval. Moreover, real incomes were falling as a result of lower oil prices, Western economic sanctions over the annexation of Crimea, and the weakness of domestic sources of growth.

In the face of these political and economic pressures, President Putin intensified political repression of real and perceived opponents following his inauguration in 2012 and increased the degree to which the regime was based on his personal power and patronage (Baturo and Elkin 2016, 2014). The personalization of power was neatly captured by Vyacheslav Volodin's aperçu that "if there's no Putin there's no Russia." In March 2020, Putin pushed through constitutional amendments that would allow him to seek yet another two terms as president when his current term ends in 2024, potentially allowing him to continue in power through 2036. To give the change a semblance of popular legitimacy, he called for a nationwide vote to approve the changes. This vote—formally not treated as a referendum—was delayed by the coronavirus pandemic, but was finally held over a seven-day period culminating June 1, 2020. The authorities mounted an intense campaign of efforts to ensure high turnout and strong support for the amendments. Following the vote, the electoral commission reported that almost 68% of eligible voters participated and over 77% approved the amendments. If Putin chooses to avail himself of the option of serving a fifth term as president, he would be 72 years at its beginning.

Xi Jinping will be even younger – 69 – at the point when his second term as General Secretary ends in 2022. Xi has given strong indications that he intends to retain power well past that date. In March 2018, the National People's Congress eliminated the constitutional clause limiting the

president and vice-president to two five-year terms. This move was widely interpreted as a signal that Xi intended to stay on as general secretary beyond two terms, in view of the fact that general secretaries usually also simultaneously hold the position of state president. A senior party official commented at the same time that the former rule, qishang baxia (“seven up, eight down,” meaning that a senior official could move up at age 67, but age 68 should bring retirement) was no longer operative. He called it a “popular saying” that “isn’t trustworthy.”<sup>7</sup> There were other indications as well that Xi intended to scrap the former constraints on a general secretary’s power. Whether this change will also affect the career patterns for regional officials remains to be seen.

Like Putin, Xi has consolidated personal power very quickly since 2012. After being elected general secretary at the 18th Party Congress in November 2012, Xi soon began to assume a number of positions of policy leadership in defense and security, economic policy-making, and party management. He took over leadership of many working small groups that had traditionally been occupied by the prime minister. At the same time he undertook a massive campaign to purge the party of corruption which has continued since. Although many of the targets of the campaign were people associated with rival factions, the campaign left almost no sector untouched. Moreover, Xi tightened centralization and ideological control within the party and significantly reduced the degree of policy autonomy exercised by provincial and lower governments (Heilmann 2018). Among the many symbolic indicators of the personalization of power are the fact that he placed his own signature ideological contribution—“Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”—into the party’s constitution, and the increasing use of the term “People’s Leader” (renmin lingxiu) for Xi by the PLA and the Ministry of State Security. In the symbol-rich environment of Chinese rhetoric, this plebiscitarian title directly signifies a lessening of the institutional authority of the party and of the other members of the senior leadership. It is clear that Xi has amassed greater personal power than any leader since Mao Zedong at the expense of the post-Deng principle of collective leadership.

Xi’s willingness to abandon the strong norm of rotation for the top leader raises the question of whether he would also relax restrictions on age and term limits for lower-level leaders. These rules were established by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1980s. Deng established new conventions about leadership turnover: the top party leader and lower-ranking party and government leaders should serve no more than two terms; senior leaders should retire by age 68; provincial-level party secretaries face the same age restrictions; governors should not serve past age 65. Regional party and government officials also faced an “up or out” rule. Once they finished two terms in the same post, regional officials were not to be appointed to a new position at the same level. Of course they could

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<sup>7</sup> <https://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2016/11/01/for-chinas-leaders-age-cap-is-but-a-moving-number/>

be moved to an honorific position, such as a post in a committee of the National People's Congress or the People's Political Consultative Conference if they had not fallen from grace (Li 2012; 党政领导干部退休年龄规定 2006).

Consequently, given that Xi Jinping appears to have eliminated term limits for himself, in this paper we investigate the degree to which these rules have been relaxed for those he appoints to leading regional positions. As Libman and Rochlitz observe, if Xi eliminates term limits for central-level officials, he may thereby weaken incentives for good performance by regional officials, since they will see their opportunities for upward mobility constricted (Libman and Rochlitz 2019, pp. 68-9).

This paper accordingly compares the post-2012 patterns of career management with the pre-2012 patterns in the two countries. We examine the data on appointments and career changes for regional officials, both party secretaries and governors, testing whether age and term-related rules continue to guide career movement. We have several expectations. For each country, we expect to observe a certain amount of house-cleaning in 2012, as presidents Xi and Putin used their appointment powers to build a base of support among regional leaders. Beyond that, however, we examine whether the average ages at the time of appointment, the duration of service in office, rates of turnover, the share of “outsiders” (that is, officials who lacked previous work experience in the region), and patterns of promotion, demotion, retirement, and so on, following a replacement. If we are right, and the two regimes have converged somewhat in their career management systems for regional officials, we would expect to observe more frequent turnover of officials in both systems, a younger average age of newly appointed officials, and a higher number of outsiders appointed to leadership posts.

### **3. Research design**

We have attempted to apply the same coding rules for career movements to the two countries as much as possible. However, the institutional differences between them require making some adjustments to the coding scheme. In particular, China has retained the dualistic structure of governors and party secretaries in which governors bear principal authority for managing economic and social policy whereas party secretaries—much like the Soviet “prefects”—oversee all aspects of state power and ensure the fulfillment of the center's top political priorities (cf Hough 1969). For that reason, we use a code category for governors reflecting the fact that the appointment of a governor of a Chinese province-level unit to the position of party secretary in the same or different region is a clear promotion. For Russia, there is no such promotion available for a regional governor; the only available upward move for a governor is an appointment to a high-ranking central level post. We are also constrained by data availability, which differs somewhat between the two countries.

### *a. China*

For China, we have collected biographical data on all top regional officials who occupied the positions of a province CPC secretary, a province governor, chair of the regional government in an autonomous region or mayor of a municipality of central subordination in the period from 2002 to 2019. Our overall dataset contains data on 208 persons who occupied these positions in 22 provinces, 5 autonomous regions and 4 municipalities under the direct administration of central government.

In the Chinese bureaucratic system, two officials—a party secretary and a governor—are regional leaders, but the party secretary has a higher status. Therefore, transfer from the position of a governor to the position of a party secretary has traditionally been viewed as a promotion. However, these positions have different functions and different performance criteria, and the literature has already described differences in career trajectories of governors and party secretaries. Therefore we divided our sample into two sub-samples including 161 observations for governors and 117 observations for party secretaries, and conducted further analysis of those two sub-samples. It is noteworthy that more than half (70 individuals) of party secretaries previously held the post of governor.

The following biographical data were collected for each official: year of birth; year of first appointment to the position of a governor or party secretary; year in which an individual received a subsequent promotion to a higher-ranking position at the regional level; and year of final departure from the position of governor or party secretary of a province. These data were used to calculate each official's age of appointment to and removal from each senior position at the regional level and the tenure of each regional office. In addition, we gathered information about the place of birth and previous places of work, about positions to which the officials were transferred after their service at the regional level, and about the termination of a career (ie whether it was due to natural causes (death) or because of a criminal investigation of a corruption-related case).

The use of these data helped identify “outsiders” (officials who had no connections with the region to which they were appointed) and the types of career movements. In contrast to previous studies, we did not restrict our research to a simple distinction between promotions and demotions, but rather employed a more detailed classification. In particular, we separated appointments at the regional level, including first appointment, transfer to another region and promotions at the regional level (for governors), transfers to central government positions, including promotions and transfers without promotion, and appointments to final positions in an official's political career, including appointments to positions of high prestige but without any real executive responsibilities (“honorific retirements”), retirement, dismissal, demotion, and criminal prosecution for corruption. Death while in office was classified into a separate category. In addition, those officials who remained in their positions in any given year were identified.

The type of transfer was established on the basis of comparing the next position held by a regional official to his previous position. The category of “regional promotion” was used for governors in any case when a governor was appointed as party secretary in the same or different region.

Appointment to a senior position at the central level (e.g., ministries, leading small groups, etc.) was coded as a promotion. Appointment to a less important position at the central level while retaining CPC Central Committee membership was categorized as “transfer to the center without promotion.” CPC CC membership is one of the key markers of high political status for officials transferred to the center. For example, an official appointed deputy chair of a committee in the National People’s Congress who retained membership in the CPC CC at a regular Party Congress was considered “transferred to the center.” On the other hand, we classified appointments to posts in the National People’s Congress or the People’s Political Consultative Conference, for example as chairs of standing committees, as honorific retirements.

Officials who were officially dismissed are categorized as dismissed officials. Officials who left their positions in connection with corruption-related scandals were placed into a separate category. However, officials who were accused of corruption after they left the region were not so coded since there was no evidence the corruption charges were related to the departure.

An official was considered retired if after his resignation there was no information indicating that he was assigned to another position. Those who were appointed to a lower-ranking position were regarded as demoted. During the period under survey, three officials died while discharging their official functions in a region. Their career data were used for establishing the average age of appointment but were not taken into account for calculating the tenure and analyzing career movements.

Further analysis was conducted as follows. Two basic periods were identified: the rule of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao (2003-2012) and the rule of Xi Jinping (2013–). We ended the data collection with the end of 2019. The comparison of career paths of senior regional officials in those two periods makes possible an evaluation of the changes in China’s cadre management system after 2012.

The temporal periods are defined this way because the positions of a party secretary and a province governor are high-ranking positions, the appointment to which involves a lengthy procedure of approvals by central party bodies. In this connection we assumed that the relatively small number of appointments in regions at the end of 2012 that occurred after Xi Jinping was elected CPC General Secretary were prepared in the period when Hu Jintao was still general secretary, whereas Xi Jinping’s appointees are those who became party secretaries or province governors in 2013 or later. Similarly, we assigned the appointments of late 2002 (when Hu Jintao was elected CPC General Secretary at the 16th Party Congress) to the previous administration of Jiang Zemin.

Crucial features of the Chinese cadre management system include age restrictions for various types of positions and tenure restrictions. Therefore we examine the age of regional officials at the moment of their appointment and during their further career movements. Based on our analysis of each group of officials for each year, then averaged over each leadership period, we calculated:

- average age at the time of the first appointment and subsequent moves;
- average tenure of each regional-level position for those appointed to it during the given time period;
- average shares of those who were first appointed to a position of the given category, those who remained in their position, and those who were transferred to other positions in the given year;
- average share of officials who had no connections with the region to which they were appointed.

Based on these figures, we compared the level of stability vs. turnover of cadres among the senior regional bureaucracy under Xi Jinping with that in Hu and Wen period. We consider changes in the age of appointment to and dismissal from positions; average tenure of office; frequency of personnel renewal and rotation; and changes in patterns of subsequent career trajectories of governors and party secretaries. We also used as a benchmark the same indicators for the group of governors and party secretaries who occupied their positions at the end of 2002 and thus were Jiang Zemin's appointees. We also analyze for each of the two main leadership periods the career trajectories of officials appointed under the previous and current General Secretaries. We have also separately examined the group of party secretaries and governors who were in office at the end of 2019, and used it as the basis for calculating the average tenure, in order to verify that our calculations for the transferred officials during the Xi Jinping period are not biased by right-censoring. Additionally, we also separately considered the effects of temporary delays between removals of officials and the appointment of their replacements.

#### ***b. Russia***

For Russia we have gathered biographical data for 304 governors who served in this position in the period from January 2000 through December 2019. Three periods were identified within this time span. The period from January 2000 to April 2008 covers the first and second terms of Vladimir Putin as president. The period from May 2008 to April 2012 is the time of Dmitry Medvedev's presidency. The period from May 2012 to December 2019 covers the third and fourth presidential terms of Vladimir Putin.

The following data were gathered for each governor: year of birth, year of appointment, year of completion of the term in office, as well as information on the place of birth, place of first higher education, previous work experience and activity after completion of the term in office. Based on this information and applying the same approach was used during the collection and analysis of data

on China, we have calculated the age of appointment, age of dismissal and tenure in respect of Russian governors for each year and for the periods under study, and the share of “outsider” governors who have no ties to the region. In addition, we employed a typology of career movements of governors equivalent to the classification used for the PRC. This comprised the following categories: promotion, appointment as governor in a different region, movement to the federal center to a position of equivalent level, appointment to honorific positions without real executive powers (“honorific retirements”), demotion, end of career without visible problems, dismissal with problems, dismissal due to criminal prosecution.

Appointment to senior positions in the federal government (ministerial post or higher) or the presidential administration (department head or higher) or the State Duma and the Federation Council (deputy chair or higher) was considered a promotion. Honorific pension means an appointment to a post equivalent to the position of a Federation Council member adjusted for the age of the transferred governor. The category of demotion included governors appointed to less prestigious public positions after resignation. Such a position could be an assistant or deputy presidential envoy in a federal district, assistant to the head of the presidential administration, or a deputy minister. Governors who retired upon the expiration of their terms of office and engaged in business or public activities were coded as officials who completed their bureaucratic careers without problems. If a governor’s resignation was accompanied by conflicts at the regional or federal level, including criminal investigations against his or her subordinates, or if a governor was fired due to “loss of confidence” but without a criminal case being initiated against him or her personally, such cases were assigned the category of “dismissals with problems.” All criminal cases against governors were placed into a separate category, even if the cases were initiated after resignation. Another category included governors who left their position for natural causes (death) or who stayed in their position for less than one year. Data on this group of governors were taken into account during analysis of new appointments but were not included in the calculation of average tenure or age.

Consistent with these procedures, we compiled a dataset of 310 observations for 304 governors. Governors Tolokonksy, Khloponin, and Merkuskin are counted twice because they occupied the posts of governors of two different regions during the period from 2000 to 2019. For the same reason, governor Kozhemyako was counted four times. The total number of transfers during the entire period was 225, and 222 were new appointments. We also standardized all data by taking into account the change in the number of regions due to consolidation of several regions in the 2000s and accession of Crimea and Sevastopol in 2014. The final figures are: 89 regions in 2000–2005, 88—in 2006, 86—in 2007, 83—in 2008–2013, and 85—since 2014.

For each year from 2000 through 2019 we calculated:

- The absolute number of newly appointed and transferred governors and those who stayed in place

- Normalized appointment and transfer rates for each category

- Average age and tenure of governors

- The share of outsiders among newly appointed governors and governors who stayed in place.

These data were then aggregated for the three selected periods (January 2000 – April 2008, May 2008 – April 2012, May 2012 – December 2019).

The governors were divided into four cohorts: those who were appointed during Yeltsin’s rule and continued service after January 2000, those who were elected or appointed during Putin’s first two presidential terms, Medvedev’s appointees, and those appointed or elected during Putin’s third and fourth presidencies. For each cohort, we calculated:

- The number of transferred governors in each cohort

- The average age and tenure of the transferred governors

- The average age of governors who stayed in place at the beginning of each period

- The average age of transferred governors at the time of their appointment

Additionally, we analyzed the age distribution of the newly appointed governors at the time of their appointment.

Note that we treat both elected and appointed governors as if they were appointed. Given the extensive controls that the Kremlin exercises over the selection and removal of governors, whether there is an election or not tends to be a formality. Although the regime restored the system of gubernatorial elections in 2012 (from 2004 through 2011, governors were appointed), it also preserved the president’s right to remove and replace a sitting governor on any of a set of vaguely enumerated grounds (see DeBardeleben and Zherebtsov 2014). A governor who is elected against the wishes of the Kremlin can readily be dismissed on the grounds that the president has lost confidence in him or in connection with criminal charges developed for the occasion. A case in point is Sergei Furgal, elected governor of Khabarovsk region in 2018. Furgal won by a wide margin, defeating a candidate from United Russia. However, a few weeks after Khabarovsk’s voters gave an insufficiently robust level of support to the constitutional amendments vote in June 2020, President Putin dismissed Furgal owing to “loss of confidence” and the procuracy charged him with organizing contract murders dating back to the early 2000s. Putin then appointed a successor (triggering large-scale, protracted popular protest in the region). Therefore, although gubernatorial elections were restored in 2012, the president demonstrated that he could overturn their results at will.

## 4. Main Results

We summarize our results as follows:

### 4.1 China

- Governors were rotated frequently. An average of 26.6% of new people are appointed governors every year. Moreover, the rate of new appointments rose from the early period (2003-2012) to the latter period (2012-2019) from 24.2% to 26.7% ( $p = 0.000$ ).

- At the same time, the share of governors who stayed in their positions also grew slightly: from 61.3% in 2003–2012 to 70% in 2013–2019 ( $p = 0.000$ ).

- However, this effect was caused by lengthy delays in appointments of new governors to replace the retired ones during the first period (especially in 2003–2004 and in 2007–2008—see Table 4.1.A1. in the Annex). At the end of 2003 and 2004 there were no sitting governors in 7 and 6 provinces, respectively, and in 2007 and 2008—in 8 and 9 provinces. After Xi Jinping came to power, delays in appointing governors decreased: during that period not more than two provinces had no sitting governors at the year’s end.

- Governors experience appointment to the position of the province party secretary at a relatively high rate, particularly under Xi Jinping. The share of such personnel rotations rose from 10.3% in 2003–2012 to 15.2% in 2013–2019 ( $p = 0.000$ ).

- “Honorific retirement” (appointment to a position of high prestige without real executive powers) was relatively frequent during the periods studied. However this type of move fell from 7.7% during Hu Jintao’s period to a mere 3.2% under Xi Jinping ( $p = 0.000$ ).

- The third most frequent outcome is transfer to the center with promotion to a higher-ranking position. This pattern became slightly more common under Xi Jinping (4.1% vs. 3.5% but this difference is not significant).

- A small number governors are appointed to positions to the center at the same rank (7 persons during 16 years, or 1.4% on average) or same-rank appointments in a different region (5 persons, or 1% on average).

- Other outcomes for governors (resignation, retirement, demotion, accusation of corruption) were rare.

The age data for governors (Table 4.1.2) shows that the average age of those governors who “stayed in place” was practically identical in both periods—approximately 56 years old. However, the average age of newly appointed governors grew by more than 1.5 years in the second period (from 55.7 to 57.3 years old – the difference is significant at the 0.00 level despite the relatively small difference in means.) We return to this point below.

The average age of governors who were promoted regionally during the period of Xi Jinping's rule has also increased (by 2.3 years,  $p= 0.01$ ). The same concerns transfers to equivalent central-level positions (but this difference is not significant). The only important category where the average age of governors decreased was promotion to central positions (this was observed in the cases of 9 officials). Under these circumstances, the fact that we found a greater than one year decrease in the average age of governors transferred to honorific positions without real executive powers ('honorific retirement') was surprising. Moreover, the average age of those sent into honorific retirement under Xi Jinping (56.7 years old) was lower than the average age of newly appointed governors. It appears that Xi is moving governors out to pasture earlier in their careers than had been the case in the past.

With respect to party secretaries, we can summarize the main findings as follows:

- Overall, we found lower frequency of turnover among party secretaries than among governors—16.9% per year on average. This of course is partly due to the fact that there are simply fewer opportunities for further promotion as party secretaries advance in the hierarchy. Nevertheless, it is notable that turnover rose during the period of Xi's rule to 17.1% as compared with 15.5% during the Hu-Wen period (however this difference is not significant).

- The share of party secretaries who stayed in place at the end of each year was higher than for governors (75.4% on average during 16 years) and decreased slightly from the Hu to the Xi period: from 76.8% in 2003–2012 to 73.1% in 2013–2019 (approximately the same as the share of newly appointed officials). (However, these differences are not statistically significant.) It is also noteworthy that there were no more significant delays in appointment of new party secretaries in place of dismissed ones under Xi such delays were practically eliminated. In particular, after 2012 there has not been a single instance of absence of a sitting party secretary in a province at year's end. We return to this point below.

- The most frequent type of personnel transfers of party secretaries in both periods was "honorific retirement" (9.3% during 16 years on average). However, the frequency of such transfers has increased under Xi: 9.7% on average vs. 8.1% in 2003–2012 ( $p= 0.000$ ).

- The second most frequent type of movement of party secretaries is appointment to a similar position in another region. The share of such 'lateral movements' has grown slightly: from 6.1% in the first period to 6.9% in the second period (but this difference is not significant).

- At the same time, the share of party secretaries' transfers to higher-ranking positions in the center has decreased materially. Under Xi, it was only 2.8% annually on average vs. 5.5% in the period of Hu Jintao's rule ( $p= 0.000$ ).

- Another change typical of Xi's rule is a noticeable share of party secretaries who simply retired (5 persons, or 2.7% annually on average during the period under survey - versus 0% under Hu Jintao's rule;  $p= 0.001$ ).

- After 2012, removal from the position in connection with investigation for corruption (often followed by criminal prosecution and sentencing to long prison terms) has become a frequent outcome for party secretaries. During 6 years under Xi Jinping the political careers of 4 high-ranking regional party functionaries ended this way (compared to only two cases during previous decade under Hu Jintao).

- Transfers of party secretaries to equivalent positions at the central level have become very rare: only one person since 2013 vs. 3 persons during 2003–2012.

- Dismissals were rare (1 case in Hu Jintao’s period and no cases under Xi). Likewise there have been no instances of demotion.

- Appointments are not evenly distributed across time. (See Tables 4.1.A2. in the Annex). Most promotions and lateral movements have occurred in the years when CPC congresses were held. However, under Xi this process started earlier and covered two years: 2016 and 2017.

Analysis of the age characteristics of party secretaries (Table 4.1.4) shows that the average age of all significant categories of appointment (ie those who stayed in place, those who were promoted to a position in the center or transferred to an equivalent position in a different region, and newly appointed party secretaries) has risen under Xi: from 1.5 years for promotions (t test is not significant) to the center to 5 years for lateral movements ( $p=0.000$ ) and more than 3 years for new appointees ( $p=0.000$ ). The exceptions are ‘honorific retirements’ (where the average age fell by 0.6 years, as a result of which ‘honorific retirees’ were younger than the average for ‘new appointees’), and transfers to the center without promotion (only 1 case in the second period). In the period of Hu Jintao’s rule, party secretaries transferred to other regions were considerably younger than those who stayed in place, whereas in the subsequent period the average age for both groups became equal.

However, although appointed party secretaries under Xi have tended to be older than those under Hu and Wen, they stay in office for shorter spells. The average tenure of new governors and party secretaries in the period of Xi’s rule has decreased significantly as compared to the period of Hu Jintao’s rule (see Table 4.1.5) and note that there is practically no difference between Hu Jintao’s and Jiang Zemin’s appointees as far as this criterion is concerned. The difference in average tenure of Hu Jintao-era party secretaries and those appointed after Xi took power fell from slightly over 4 years to 2.12 years, a difference that is significant at the 0.0001 level. In addition, the numbers of governors who had no prior ties to the region—ie “outsiders”— have risen significantly under Xi’s rule (see Table 4.1.7). The share of such governors under Hu Jintao (including those appointed during Jiang Zemin’s rule) was less than 30%, but rose to 45.61% under Xi. For party secretaries, however, this proportion fell. Under Xi, only 22% of new party secretaries had no previous experience of work in the region whereas the rate 43.73% under Hu. This shift can be attributed to the change in the criteria for appointing party secretaries. Whereas during the Hu-Wen period, 31 out of 48 appointed

party secretaries (or 65%) had previous experience of work as a governor, under Xi, 33 out of 37 appointed party secretaries (approximately 90%) had previous experience of work as a governor ( $p=0.000$ ). Therefore Xi tended to send outsiders to regions to serve as governor, then relied overwhelmingly on those individuals to take regional party secretary positions. Moreover, in many instances the governors were promoted to party secretary in the same regions where they had previously served, which increased the share of new party secretaries with previous experience of work in the given region.

Summing up our findings, we can highlight several points. In both periods governors (a lower-ranking category) were characterized by a higher share of promotions or transfers to the center and a small share of movements leading to the end of the professional career (“honorific retirements” or dismissals) as compared to party secretaries. Under Hu Jintao, on average, 15.2% of governors and 6.8% of party secretaries were annually promoted or transferred to the center, and 8.4% of governors and 9.0% of party secretaries ended their careers. However, in the period of Xi’s rule these differences have become more pronounced. Since 2013, 20.2% of governors and only 3.2% of party secretaries were promoted or transferred to the center. At the same time, only 5.1% of governors vs. 13.8% of party secretaries ended their careers. It should also be mentioned that only one of the 5 cases of removal from position in connection with accusation of corruption in 2013–2019 concerned an official appointed under Xi Jinping, while all the others were first appointed under Hu Jintao. We note the paradoxical finding that fact that the age of career termination (including “honorific retirement”) under Xi fell both for governors and for party secretaries, while the age of new appointees rose for both groups.

Presumably, these shifts reflect the process of personnel replacement—with Xi Jinping sending into retirement those officials appointed before he came to power, even if they had not reached the normal retirement age, and replacing them with others, presumably more personally loyal. Moreover, as work experience as a governor before appointment to the position of a party secretary is typical of the Chinese bureaucratic system, this process proceeds through the appointment of new governors and ousting party secretaries into retirement. An indirect illustration of this assumption is the fact of 20 out of 33 governors who became party secretaries under Xi Jinping were appointed governors in 2013 or later.

Another important point concerns the higher average age of newly appointed governors and especially party secretaries. Our data are insufficient to identify the reasons for this phenomenon with any precision, but we can speculate that Xi Jinping tends to appoint to key regional positions people with whom he has some personal connection. And such people are more likely to be found among those who are closer to his own age.

At the same time, this trend (along with the decision to lift restrictions from Xi Jinping's own tenure of the post of CPC General Secretary) signifies an overt deviation from the rules and traditions that have formed in the Chinese bureaucratic system since Deng Xiaoping's time. Regular rotation of personnel and compliance with the limitations on tenure in public service provided certain incentives for the lower echelons of the bureaucratic machinery. But practical implementation of these opportunities at the top echelons of the bureaucratic hierarchy requires regular opening of vacancies—which becomes doubtful in a situation of ageing of the regional administrative leadership corps and the abandonment of the former limits on the length of terms in office that have become manifest since 2013. Were Xi Jinping to restore a Brezhnev-style system, where the top leadership ages in place and blocks career mobility channels for younger officials, the result may be dissatisfaction among party cadres and stagnation in the economy and society.

## **4.2 Russia**

For Russia, we found the following main trends (see Tables 4.2.1-4.2.6):

- On average, newly appointed governors were 48–49 years old (younger than in China) and average age hardly changed at all from the pre-2012 to post-2012 period. We also continue to observe a wide variation in age among newly appointed governors in all periods: from 31 to 65 years old for governors who assumed their positions before 2000, and from 30 to 69 years old for the third period. This wide distribution of ages decreased slightly during Dmitry Medvedev's presidency, but this did not affect the median or mean. The difference in means is not statistically significant.

- The share of governors staying in their position every year is considerably higher than in China. This measure has fallen only very slightly over time (from 89% in the first period to 86% in the third period), whereas the average annual share of newly appointed governors has grown (from 10% in the first period to almost 15% in the third period).

- The chances of promotion for Russian governors are very low (0.3% in the first period and less than 2% in the second and third periods) with a similar probability of demotion (while retaining a place within the bureaucratic staff, albeit in a less important position): 1.0%, 1.5% and 1.8%, respectively, for the same periods.

- The possibility of a transfer to other regions is almost nonexistent. There was only 1 such case in the first period and 3 cases in the third period, accounting altogether for a 0.5% probability of such transfers of sitting governors.

- High probability of a career end after serving as a governor. The sum total of the options 'honorific retirement,' 'resignation without problems,' 'resignation with problems' and 'arrest' was 7.6% in the first period, 8.3% in the second period, and 8.4% in the third period. At the same time, the share of officials who left their positions with problems or who were arrested is growing (from 1.6% in the first period to 2.7% in the third period).

On the whole, there are only two indicators for which significant differences were observed between the periods. First is the share of ‘outsiders,’ ie appointed governors who had no ties with the region at the moment of their appointment (see Table 4.2.3). During Vladimir Putin’s first two presidencies their annual average share among sitting governors was less than 7%. However, it was much higher among newly appointed governors: 29% in the first period and 33% in the second period (Medvedev’s presidency). But in the third period (despite the nominal return to the system of elected governors) this percentage for ‘new appointees’ rose to 53% and exceeded 34% on average for sitting governors. And this difference to the time period 2000-2008 is statistically significant ( $p=0.0017$ ).

The second point concerns average tenure (see Table 4.2.5). It should be emphasized that formally in Russia, governor’s tenure is restricted to two terms; however, in practice, this rule is regularly circumvented. A particularly notable example is the case of Evgenii Savchenko, who served for 27 years as governor of Belgorod region. Appointed under President Yeltsin, he remained in office until September 2020. Another five governors appointed during the first two presidential terms of Vladimir Putin were also still in place as of the end of 2019 (when our data collection ended). Despite these unusual cases, however, average tenure is becoming shorter. The mean tenure of governors appointed under Yeltsin and who were still in office as of 2000 exceeded 11 years. In the first two terms of Putin it fell to less than 7 years ( $p=0.000$ ), and for Medvedev’s appointees (including the actual tenure of officials who continued working at the end of 2019) it was approximately 5 years ( $p=0.0023$ ). In the third period the average tenure decreased even more. If we count only the governors who were appointed in May 2012 and were moved before the end of 2019, their average tenure was merely 3.5 years ( $p=0.0511$ ). Moreover, the tenure of sitting governors from this cohort was even lower at the end of 2019—2 years. We believe that these changes can be attributed to the vigorous renewal of the governors’ corps in 2017–2018, when regional leaders were replaced in 20 regions in both years.

## **5. Discussion of Results and Conclusion**

We compare two countries and two periods in each country. For the most part, the cross-national differences identified in our previous research still hold. Specifically, Russian governors still get their first appointment at a younger age (48–49 years old vs. 56–60 years old in China), stay in place longer and for the most part are not moved from region to region. In contrast to China, promotions of governors are quite rare in Russia; consequently, their principal incentive is to keep their position. By contrast, cadre mobility, including promotion opportunities, is much higher in China. Since the mid-2000s regional leaders have stayed in place for more than 10 years. Despite to the higher average age of the regional leaders, the age variation at the time of their appointment in

China is much lower than in Russia. This is further evidence of the higher overall institutionalization of the cadre management system in the PRC.

At the same time, several changes in these patterns have become more visible during the past few years in both countries. These include the higher frequency of personnel rotation after Xi Jinping came to power and a significant reduction of officials' average tenure in the same position (from approximately 4 years under Hu Jintao to slightly over 2 years under Xi). Personnel renewals under Xi generally take the form of appointments of new governors among whom the share of 'outsiders'—officials without any ties to the region—has risen considerably, with a simultaneous decrease in the opportunities for older officials (in particular, party secretaries) to be moved to the center, and a higher probability of their dismissal, including getting fired in connection with accusations of corruption. These tendencies support our hypothesis about tightening centralization in the Chinese governance system, in that senior party officials with established power bases have fewer opportunities to attain higher-level postings.

We believe that the tendency toward personalization of the appointments system in China is manifested in the higher age of new appointees—by 1.5 years for governors and 4 years for new party secretaries—along with a younger average age of retirement of incumbent officials. As a result, in 2013–2019 newly appointed governors and party secretaries were, on average, older than those who were removed. This paradox can be attributed to Xi Jinping's practice of appointing to senior positions in regions people whom he personally knew and who were presumably more personally loyal. And it is easier for him to find such people among those who are closer to his own age.

This approach gives Xi Jinping tighter personal control of the party and government and logically complements the lifting of restrictions from his tenure as PRC President and CPC general secretary. But at the same time these changes may undermine long-term performance incentives for party and government officials, because the higher age of senior officials results in a lack of vacancies and fewer opportunities for career movements of lower- and mid-rank officials within the bureaucratic hierarchy.

Interestingly, similar tendencies are observed in Russia: growing shares of "outsider" governors and falling average tenures of governors. Both trends make governors more dependent on the Kremlin. But, in contrast to China, there was no clear breakpoint in these practices. They have been steadily intensifying since early 2000s. The period of Dmitry Medvedev's presidency showed no major departure from the general trend.

We laid out three hypotheses about tendencies common to both countries: first, that there would be more frequent turnover of regional officials following 2012; second, that there would be a rejuvenation of the regional corps of officials; and third, that there would be a higher percentage of outsiders brought in to manage the regions.

Our first hypothesis is supported by the data. Length of time in office has fallen between periods in both countries (newly appointed Chinese party secretaries' average tenure fell from 4 years to just over 2; Russian governors' average tenure fell steadily across the periods, from 6.5 years for those appointed during Putin's first two terms, to 4.5 for Medvedev's appointees, to 3.5 years after 2012. Consequently, we observe a significant increase in overall turnover.

Our second hypothesis was that the newly appointed officials would tend to be younger than those they replaced. In neither country was this hypothesis supported. We found essentially no change in average age at appointment in Russia, and higher ages in China both for governors and party secretaries. For Russia, age appears not to be a significant criterion for appointment. In China, Xi evidently regards experience as a crucial means to judge both administrative competence and political loyalty.

Our third hypothesis—that more outsiders would be brought in both in Russia and China—was supported by the data for two of three categories of officials. For Russia, the average number of outsiders among newly appointed governors in 2000-2008 was just under 30%, but rose to nearly 50% after 2012 (See Table 4.2.3). For China, the number of outsider governors rose from about 30% in 2003-2012 to about 46% in 2013-2019. Meantime the share of outsiders among party secretaries fell in half, from 44% to 22%. This we explained by observing the increase in the pattern of appointing governors as party secretaries in the same regions where they had served as governors.

We believe that the data are consistent with the thesis that both leaders have used cadre management policies as a mechanism for consolidating personal power. The greater reliance on outsiders undercuts opportunities for local notables to maintain their own local power bases, and the higher frequency of turnover gives newly appointed officials fewer opportunities to build new ones. We also see clear evidence that both leaders have sought to clean house and staff key regional leadership positions with people who owe their advancement to the top leader. Consistent with this line of reasoning is the fact that the age at which people are moved into honorific retirement has actually decreased in China, as well as the fact that in China there are no longer observable intervals between the removal of one official and the appointment of a replacement.

Major differences remain between the two countries, however. We see no evidence that Russia has returned to the practice—common under the nomenklatura system—of grooming regional officials for higher office by moving them from one region to another. In the Soviet era, this practice enabled the central party staff to monitor performance and allowed officials to accumulate experience. Russia continues to show no regular pattern of rotation across regions. Moreover, the age at appointment continues to reflect a wide range of variation, and length of time in office remains highly variable as well—albeit shorter in recent years. Most importantly, the observation that for Russian governors, there are almost no upward channels for mobility remains true; instead, governors are

much more likely to be dismissed or demoted than promoted. In China, there appears to be a strong “up or out” rule for governors. More of them are promoted under Xi Jinping than in the past. However, for party secretaries, we see fewer opportunities for upward mobility. Perhaps Xi is concerned about giving party secretaries not directly tied to him the ability to wield power at the center.

In this paper we have not tested for the hypothesis that career mobility is related to performance by regional officials in managing economic and social policy. As we noted above, numerous empirical studies on China have shown that promotion opportunities have been higher for regional leaders who achieved economic growth and higher investment rates. In Russia, on the contrary, economic and social performance of relevant regions had no effect on governors’ careers. The key factor for remaining in office in Russia has been demonstration of loyalty to the center by delivering the required election results (Reuter and Robertson 2012). The Furgal case is further evidence in support of this point.

The greater level of centralization and personalization in the cadre management system in China could well lead to the weakening of performance incentives for regional cadres. This would represent a further similarity to Russia. We plan to test this hypothesis in future research.

## Tables

### China:

#### Legend:

**New:** Newly appointed in given year

**Stayed in place:** Remained in same position

**Lateral move:** Appointment to another position at same rank (appointment as party secretary or governor in another region)

**Regional promotion:** Appointed to a higher-ranking position at the regional level (as party secretary) – only for regional governors

**Promotion:** Appointed to a higher-ranking position at the central level

**Move to center:** Appointment to a position at the central level without promotion

**Honorary pension:** Appointed to a position with honorific status

**Fired:** Dismissed from position

**Corruption:** Removed in connection with investigation for corruption

**Pensioned:** Removed from position without disgrace and without appointment to a new position

**Demoted:** transferred to a lower ranking position

**Died:** died in office

**Table 4.1.1. Share of career movements of governors, by periods**

(in percentage points)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013– 2019
New	0.129	0.242	0.267
Stayed In Place	0.581	0.613	0.700
Lateral Move	0.032	0.010	0.009
Regional Promo	0.032	0.103	0.152
Promotion	–	0.035	0.041
Move To Center	0.065	0.013	0.014
Honorable Pension	0.129	0.077	0.032
Fired	0.032	0.003	–
Corruption	–	–	0.009
Pensioned	–	–	0.009
Demoted	–	0.003	–
Died	–	–	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations

**Table 4.1.2. Average age at appointment for governors, by periods**  
(in years of age)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013–2019
New	57	55.5	57.3
Stayed In Place	55.1	55.9	56.1
<u>Lateral Move</u>	57	53.7	53.0
<u>Regional Promo</u>	47	54.9	57.6
<u>Promotion</u>	–	55.2	53.0
<u>Move To Center</u>	56	52.8	56.0
<u>Honorable Pension</u>	57	57.8	56.7
<u>Fired</u>	62	54.0	–
<u>Corruption</u>	–	–	54.0
<u>Pensioned</u>	–	–	59.5
<u>Demoted</u>	–	59.0	–
<u>Died</u>	–	–	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations

**Table 4.1.3. Share of career movement types, party secretaries, by period**  
(in percentage points)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013–2019
New	0.323	0.155	0.171
Stayed In Place	0.613	0.768	0.760
Lateral Move	0.065	0.061	0.069
Regional Promo	x	x	x
Promotion	0.161	0.055	0.028
Move To Center	0.097	0.013	0.005
Honorable Pension	0.065	0.081	0.097
Fired	–	0.003	–
Corruption	–	0.006	0.018
Pensioned	–	–	0.023
Demoted	–	–	–
Died	–	0.006	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations; ‘x’ if category is not applicable for the group

**Table 4.1.4. Average age of appointment, party secretaries, by period**  
(in years of age)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013– 2019
New	55.1	56.9	60.1
Stayed In Place	55.33	55.1	57.7
<u>Lateral Move</u>	55	52.4	57.6
<u>Regional Promo</u>	x	x	x
<u>Promotion</u>	56.7	52.9	54.8
<u>Move To Center</u>	55	54.8	53.0
<u>Honorable Pension</u>	59	58.8	58.2
<u>Fired</u>	–	53.0	–
<u>Corruption</u>	–	57.0	55.5
<u>Pensioned</u>	–	–	58.2
<u>Demoted</u>	–	–	–
<u>Died</u>	–	56	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations; ‘x’ if category is not applicable for the group

**Table 4.1.5. Average tenure of governors, by period**  
(in years)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013– 2019
New	1.75	<u>3.75</u>	2.15
Stayed In Place	5.06	5.13	4.15
Lateral Move	3	1.67	1.50
Regional Promo	2	2.91	2.61
Promotion	–	2.55	4.78
Move To Center	3.5	3.00	3.33
Honorable Pension	2.75	5.17	4.57
Fired	7	1.00	–
Corruption	–	–	3.50
Pensioned	–	–	3.00
Demoted	–	5.00	–
Died	–	–	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations

**Table 4.1.6. Average tenure of party secretaries, by period**  
(in years)

Career movements	2002	2003–2012	2013– 2019
New	4.7	4.08	2.12
Stayed In Place	6.11	5.22	4.37
Lateral Move	2.5	3.89	3.00
Regional Promo	x	x	x
Promotion	4.4	3.94	3.17
Move To Center	3.67	2.50	4.00
Honorable Pension	3.5	5.32	4.48
Fired	–	2.00	–
Corruption	–	4.50	2.50
Pensioned	–	–	3.80
Demoted	–	–	–
Died	–	7	–

Notes: ‘–’ if no observations; ‘x’ if category is not applicable for the group

**Table 4.1.7. Shares of governors and party secretaries who had no ties to the region, by period** (in percentage points)

	2002	2003–2012	2013– 2019
	All officials in this year	Newly appointed	Newly appointed
Governors	0.25	0.29	0.46
Party Secretaries	0.55	0.54	0.48

### T-tests for ages of appointment, tenure of officials, and share of moves, by periods

#### Test 1. Comparing average age of appointment to first office, governors, by cohort, newly appointed governors

Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	75	55.7	0.4	3.45	55.90 – 56.49	
B	58	57.3	0.4	3.05	56.5 – 58.1	
Combined	133	56.4	0.292	3.36	55.82 – 56.97	
Difference		-1.6	0.574		-2.74 – -0.46	
t = -2.788						

Pr( |T| > |t| ) = 0.0061

Notes: Cohort A: appointed 2003-2012; Cohort B: appointed 2013- 2019

**Test 2. Comparing average age of appointment to first office, party secretaries, by cohort, newly appointed party secretaries**

Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	37	60.1	0.357	2.17	59.41 – 60.86	
B	48	56.9	0.644	4.46	55.62 – 58.21	
Combined	85	58.31	0.430	3.96	57.46 – 59.17	
Difference		3.21	0.736		1.75 – 4.69	
t = 4.3692						

Pr( |T| > |t| ) = 0.0000

Notes: Cohort A: appointed 2003-2012; Cohort B: appointed 2013- 2019

**Test 3. Average age of all governors who “stayed in place,” by cohort**

Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	190	55.9	0.7	0.97	55.76 – 56.04	
B	152	56.1	0.075	0.92	55.95 – 56.25	
Combined	342	55.98	0.052	0.952	55.89 – 56.09	
Difference		-0.2	0.10		-0.402 - 0.002	
t = -1.95						

Pr( |T| > |t| ) = 0.052

Notes: Cohort A: appointed 2003-2012; Cohort B: appointed 2013- 2019

**Test 4. Average tenure in office, by period of appointment (Governors who were moved out of the region)** Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	78	3.64	.225	1.99	3.19 – 4.09	
B	29	2.15	0.182	0.98	1.8 – 2.56	
Combined	107	3.24	0.183	1.89	2.87 – 3.6	
Difference		1.49	0.29		0.91 – 2.06	
t = 5.1444						

Pr( |T| > |t| ) = 0.0000

Notes: Cohort A: appointed 2003-2012; Cohort B: appointed 2013- 2019

**Test 5. Average tenure in office, by period of appointment (party secretaries who were moved out of the region)** Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	48	4.08	0.233	1.62	3.61 – 4.55	
B	17	2.12	0.226	0.93	1.64 – 2.60	
Combined	65	3.57	0.21	1.70	3.14 – 4.00	
Difference		1.96	0.325		0.97 – 2.69	
t = 6.033						

Pr( |T| > |t| ) = 0.0000

Notes: Cohort A: appointed 2003-2012; Cohort B: appointed 2013- 2019

## Russia:

**Table 4.2.1. Average age at appointment, by period**  
(in percentage points)

	Putin 1st and 2d Presidency	Medvedev Presidency	Putin 3d and 4th Presidency
New	48.24	48.22	48.72
Stayed in Place	53.93	54.13	53.42

**Table 4.2.2. Share of career movement types of governors, by period:**  
(in percentage points)

Career movements	Putin 1st and 2d Presidency	Medvedev Presidency	Putin 3d and 4th Presidency
New	0.099	0.127	0.143
Stayed In Place	0.889	0.873	0.861
Promoted	0.004	0.019	0.015
Appointed Governor In Another Region	0.001	-	0.004
Moved to Center Without Promotion	0.003	0.006	0.009
Honorary Pension	0.014	0.039	0.030
Demoted	0.010	0.015	0.018
Left Without Problems	0.046	0.021	0.027
Left With Problems	0.015	0.020	0.018
Fired Rough	0.001	0.003	0.011
Died	0.011	0.003	0.002
Less Than A Year in Office	-	-	0.006

Notes: ‘-’ if no observations

**Table 4.2.3. “Outsiders,” by period, as share of all governors**  
(in percentage points)

	Putin 1st and 2d Presidency	Medvedev Presidency	Putin 3d and 4th Presidency
As Share of Newly Appointed Governors	0.29	0.33	0.53
As Share of Governors Who Stayed in Place	0.07	0.23	0.36

**Table 4.2.4.****T-test comparing share of outsiders among newly appointed governors, Putin 1 and 2 (2000-2008) and Putin 3 and 4 (2012-2019)**

Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% conf. interval
A	75	0.293	0.053	0.458	0.188- 0.399
B	96	0.531	0.051	0.501	0.43 - 0.633
Combined	171	0.427	0.038	0.496	0.352 - 0.501
Difference		-0.238	0.075		-0.385 - (-0.091)
t = -3.195					

Pr( |T| &gt; |t| ) = 0.0017

Notes: Group A: Percent outsiders among newly appointed governors, Putin 1 and 2; Group B: Percent outsiders among newly appointed governors, Putin 3 and 4

**T-test comparing share of outsiders among newly appointed governors, Medvedev (May 2008 to April 2012) and Putin 3 and 4 (2012-2019)**

Two-sided t test with unequal variances (in points and years of age)

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% conf. interval
A	51	0.333	0.067	0.476	0.199- 0.467
B	96	0.531	0.051	0.501	0.430 - 0.633
Combined	147	0.463	0.041	0.500	0.381 - 0.544
Difference		-.0198	0.085		-0.367 - 0.029
t = -2.3169					

Pr( |T| &gt; |t| ) = 0.0219

Notes: Group A: Percent outsiders among newly appointed governors, Medvedev; Group B: Percent outsiders among newly appointed governors, Putin 3 and 4

**Table 4.2.5. Average tenure of governors, by period (in years)**

	Yeltsin Presidency (Served in 2000)	Putin 1st and 2nd Presidency	Medvedev Presidency	Putin 3d and 4th Presidency
Number of Observations (1)	88	75	51	96
Age at The Year of Appointment (2)	48.4	48.2	48.2	48.7
Moved (3)	81	67	33	25
Tenure (4)	11.1	6.5	4.5	3.4
Stayed In Place Till 2019 (5)	1	5	18	66
Tenure at The End Of 2019 (6)	25	12.6	6.67	2.58
Sum Of (3) And (5)	82	72	51	91
Tenure For (3) And (5)	11.27	6.94	5.24	2.81
Died	6	3	0	1
Less Than 1 Year in Office	0	0	0	4

**Table 4.2.6:****T-test comparing difference of means of tenure (in years), governors  
(in points and years of age)**

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	81	11.1	0.585	5.27	9.93 – 12.26	
B	67	6.52	0.419	3.43	5.68 – 7.36	
Combined	148	9.23	0.416	5.06	8.2 – 9.85	
Difference		-4.58	0.748		-6.05 – -3.1	
t = -6.11						

Pr( |T| &gt; |t| ) = 0.0000

Notes: Group A: Average tenure of governors appointed under Yeltsin and serving as of 2000;  
Group B: Average tenure of governors appointed under Putin 1 and 2 (2000 – 2008)

**T-test comparing difference of means of tenure (in years), governors  
(in points and years of age)**

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	67	6.52	0.420	3.43	5.69 – 7.36	
B	33	4.45	0.404	2.32	3.63 – 5.28	
Combined	100	5.84	0.325	3.25	5.20 – 6.48	
Difference		2.068	0.662		0.76 – 3.38	
t = 3.1247						

Pr( |T| &gt; |t| ) = 0.0023

Notes: Group A: Average tenure of governors appointed under Putin 1 and 2 (2000 – 2008); Group B: Average tenure of governors appointed under Medvedev (May 2008 to April 2012)

**T-test comparing difference of means of tenure (in years), governors  
(in points and years of age)**

Cohort	No. obs.	Mean age	std. error	std. dev.	95% interval	conf.
A	33	4.45	0.404	2.32	3.63 – 5.28	
B	25	3.44	0.239	1.19	2.95 – 3.93	
Combined	58	4.02	0.259	1.97	3.50 – 4.54	
Difference		1.02	0.509		-0.01 – 2.03	
t = 1.99						

Pr( |T| &gt; |t| ) = 0.0511

Notes: Group A: Average tenure of governors appointed under Medvedev (May 2008 to April 2012);  
Group B: Average tenure of governors appointed under Putin 3 and 4 (May 2012 – December 2019)

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## **Contact details and disclaimer:**

Thomas F. Remington

National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow, Russia). International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development. Leading Research Fellow; Department of Political Science, Emory University (Atlanta, USA). Professor Emeritus.

E-mail: polstfr@emory.edu

Andrei A. Yakovlev

National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow, Russia). Institute for Industrial and Market Studies. Director.

E-mail: ayakovlev@hse.ru

Elena D. Ovchinnikova

National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow, Russia). International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development. Research Assistant.

E-mail: elena.d.ovchinnikova@gmail.com

Alexander V. Chasovsky

National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow, Russia). Institute for Industrial and Market Studies. Research Assistant.

E-mail: alexander.chasovsky@gmail.com

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