

# KEEPING YOUR HEAD DOWN: PUBLIC PROFILES AND PROMOTION UNDER AUTOCRACY

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*Prepared for Seminar at Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center*

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*February 12, 2015*

# Leader in China and Vietnam

## China



Xi Jinping – Party General Secretary and President

## Vietnam



Nguyen Phu Trong – Party General Secretary



Truong Tan Sang – President



Nguyen Tan Dung – Prime Minister

***How did they get there??***

# Research Question

## What determines promotion in a single-party regime?

- Loyalty
  - Mahathir “stacking” institutions with cronies (Slater 2003)
  - Factions argument (Shih, Adolph, Liu 2012)
- Competence
  - Pinochet’s “Chicago Boys”, Suharto’s “Berkeley Mafia”
  - Asian Developmental State
  - China (Landry 2008, Li and Zhou 2005)
- Tradeoff
  - Cannot have one without the other (Egorov & Sonin 2011)
  - Competent officials will challenge regime leader

**BO XILAI**

- ✓ Strong Connections
  - ✓ Public Goods
  - ✓ GDP Growth
  - ✓ Not promoted
- ✓ Large Public Profile

**NGUYỄN BÁ THANH**

- ✓ Strong Connections
  - ✓ Good Governance
  - ✓ GDP Growth
  - ✓ Not Promoted
- ✓ Large Public Profile

# Theory – Public Profile

The size of a politician's **public profile**: *the degree to which a politician captivates public interest*

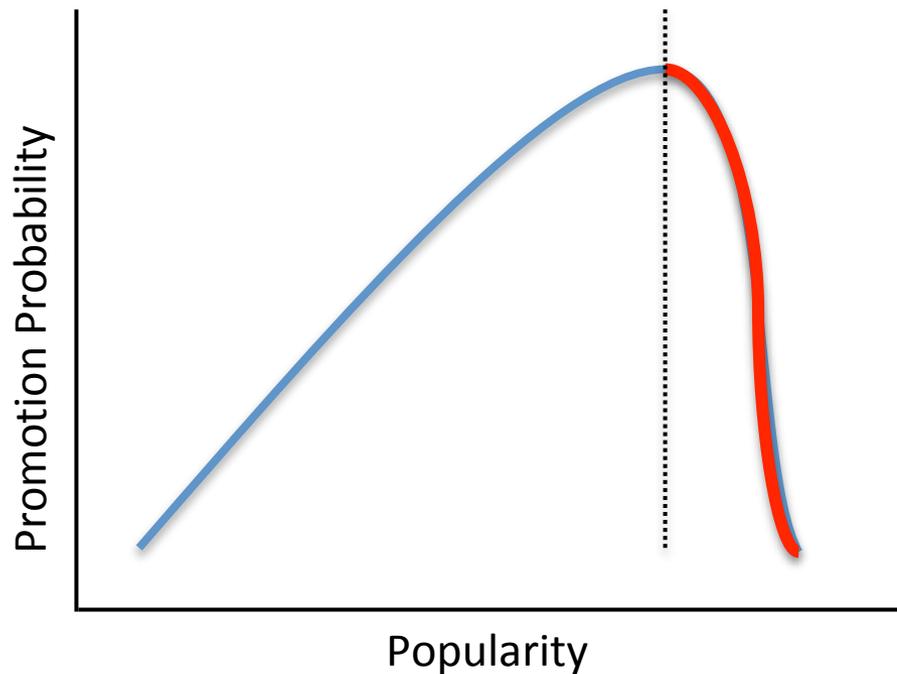
- Positive attribute in democracies
- ***What about autocracies?***

# Theory – Public Profile

- Single-party regimes desire popular support (Rustow 1985; Alagappa 1995; Nathan 2003; Thayer 2010).
  - elections, legislatures, public goods spending
  - High-profile contenders bolster regime support, implement policy
- Single-party regimes rely on top-down selection
  - Single party leaders desire personal influence
  - Promoting popular officials could jeopardize personal influence
- *Hypothesis: high-profile contenders penalized only at the extremes.*

# Prediction

- Single party regimes will not penalize high-profile contenders except in extreme cases



# So What?

- Omitted Variable
  - Correlated but distinct from competence
- Unpredictability
  - “Supreme Court Effect”      Hide true views until elected
- Authoritarian Legitimacy
  - Loyalty:      Rule by sycophants
  - Technocracy:      All technical, no political skill (Weber)
  - ***NO “RESPONSIBLE” POLITICIANS***

# Research Design

- Comparison of promotion in 2 single-party regimes
  - China (2012)
  - Vietnam (2011)
- Unit of analysis: Provincial Leaders
  - Comparable pre-promotion public profiles
  - Clear geographic, political, and economic boundaries

# Measurement: Promotions (DV)

## ***DV = Promotion in China***

Binary	Ordinal	Scenario
0	(-2)	<i>expulsion from party</i>
	(-1)	<i>loss of rank (demotion)</i>
	0	<i>no change in rank</i>
1	1	<i>partial promotion</i>
	2	<i>full promotion</i>

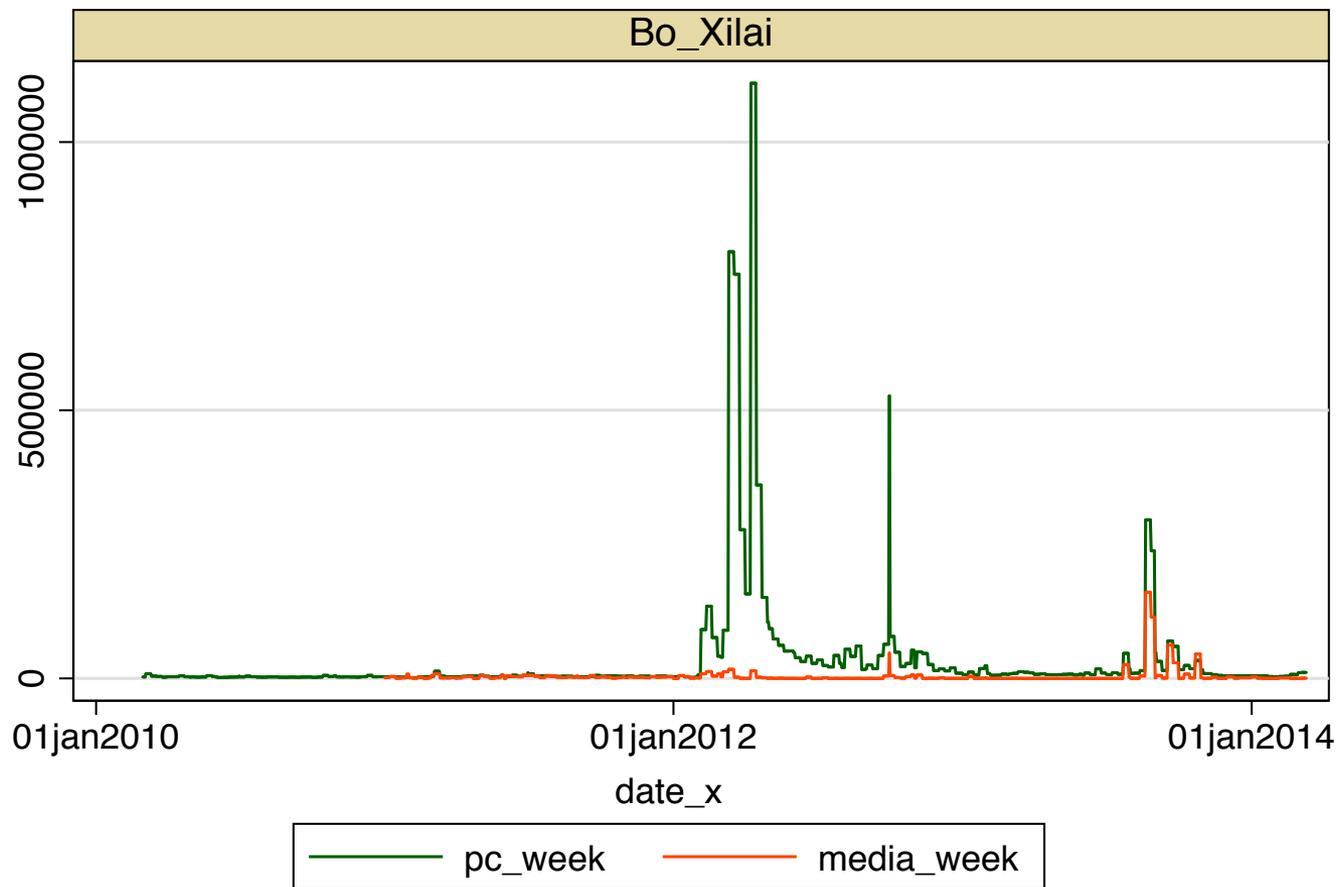
## ***DV = Promotion in Vietnam***

Binary	Ordinal	Scenario
0	-1	<i>loss of rank (demotion)</i>
	0	<i>no change in rank</i>
1	1	<i>central party position</i>
	2	<i>state cabinet position</i>

# Measurement: Public Profile (IV)

- China: Internet search volume on Baidu
  - Predicting flu outbreaks (Ginsberg et al. 2009)
  - Consumer behavior (Choi and Varian 2012).
  - Predict political success (Granka 2013; Weeks and Southwell 2010; Ripberger 2011)
- Vietnam: Media Presence

# Search Index and Media Coverage

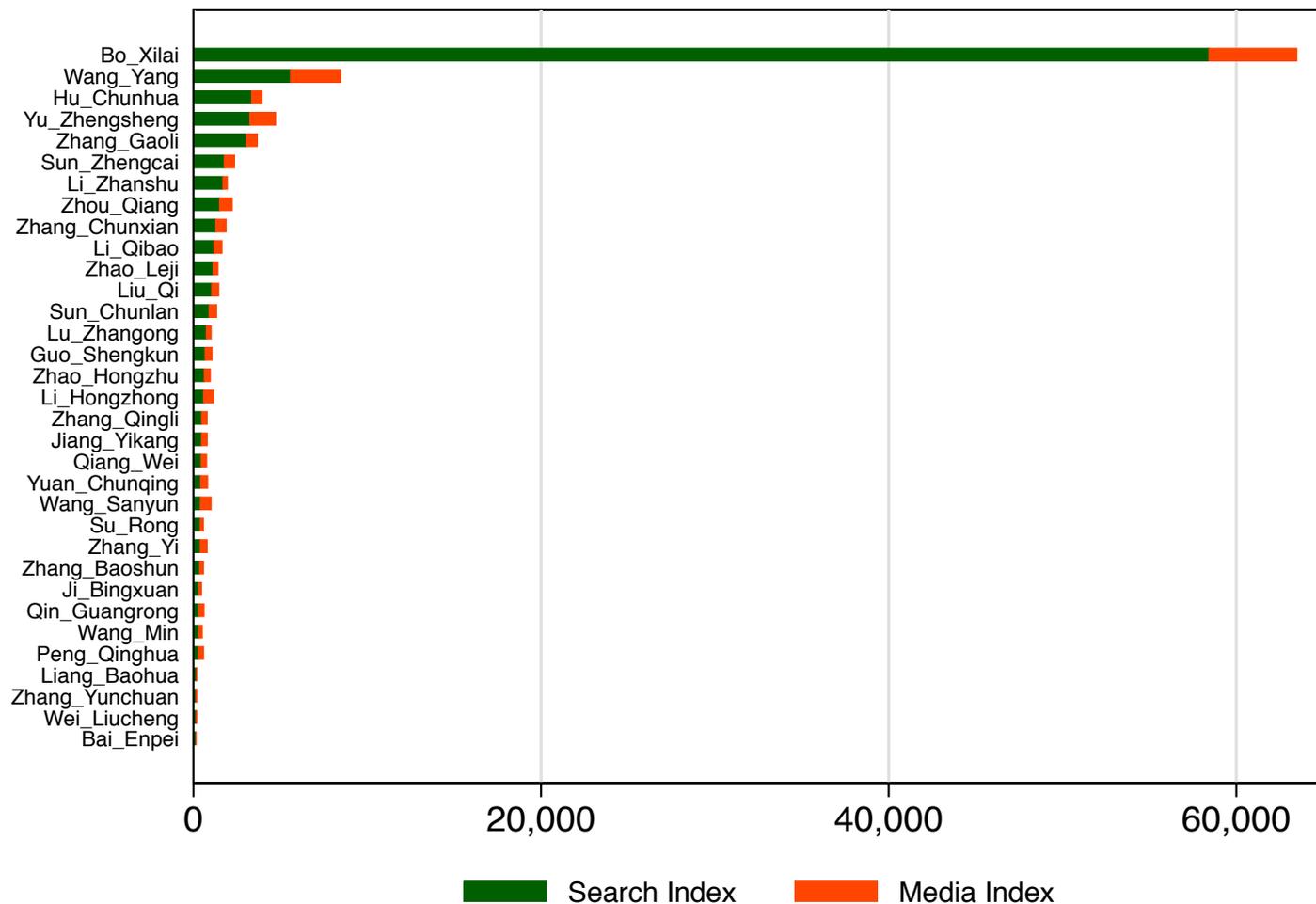


Graphs by leader

# Measurement: Public Profile (IV)

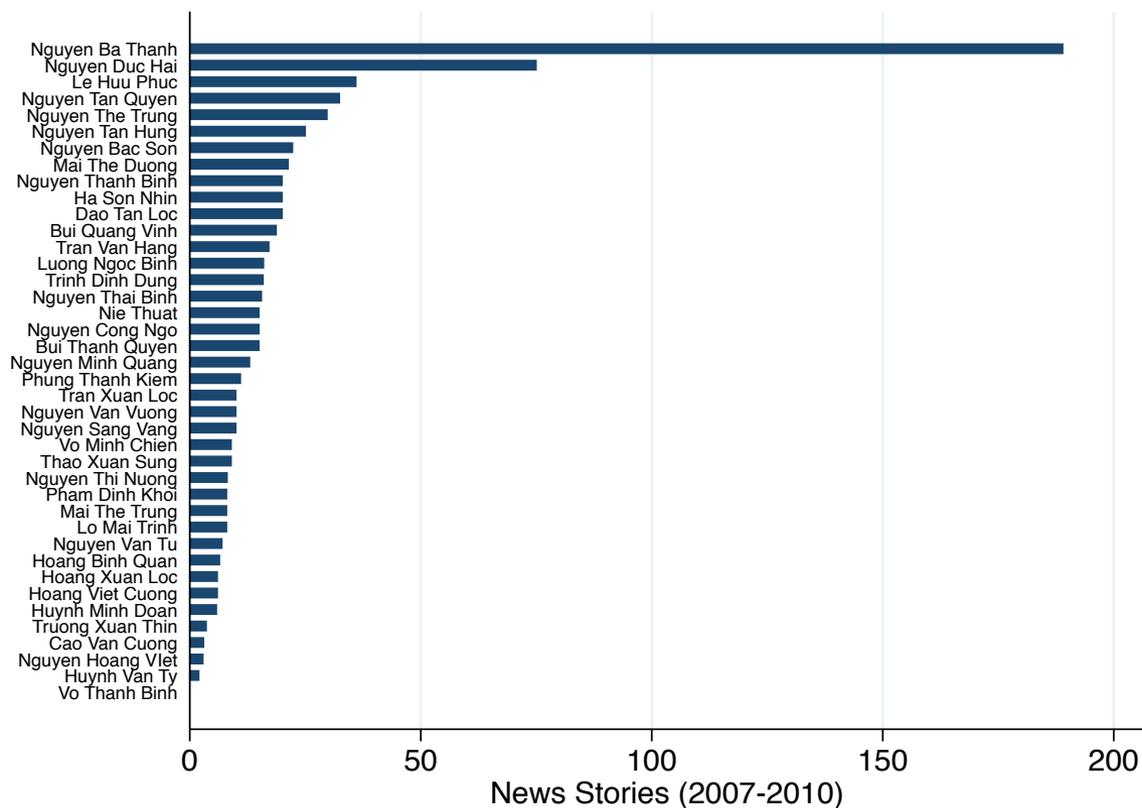
- **China: Internet search volume on Baidu**
  - Predicting flu outbreaks (Ginsberg et al. 2009)
  - Consumer behavior (Choi and Varian 2012).
  - Predict political success (Granka 2013; Weeks and Southwell 2010; Ripberger 2011)
- **Vietnam: Media Presence**
  - Proxy for name recognition (Burden 2002; Iyengar and McGrady 2007)
  - Highly correlated with search indexes

# Search Index – China



average (1/1/2011 - 1/1/2012)

# News Index – Vietnam



# Control Variables

- **Performance** (Competence)
  - Relative GDP improvement
  - Business Surveys
- **Factions** (Loyalty)
  - We rely on expert coding of factional alliances for:
    - Jiang Faction (also known as the Shanghai Clique)
    - Hu Faction (better known as the CCYL crew)
    - Xi Faction (Shanxi gang?, descriptive purposes only)
- **Model:**
  - Probit for binary dependent variable; OLS and ordered logit for ordinal dependent variable
  - Public profile measured as a squared term

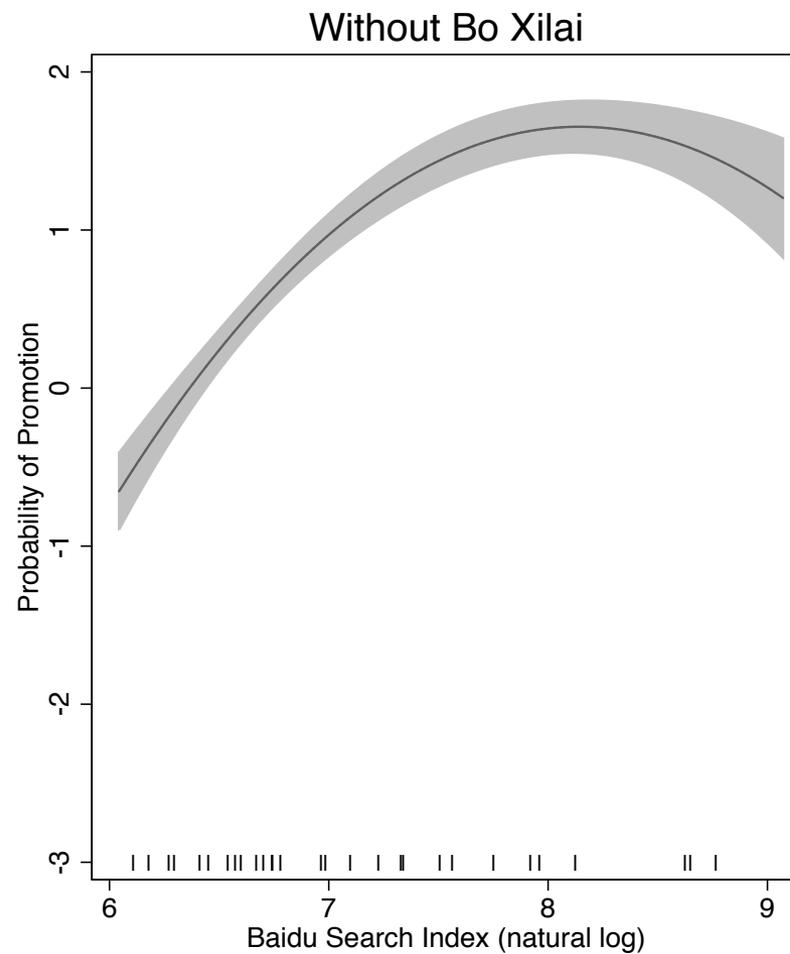
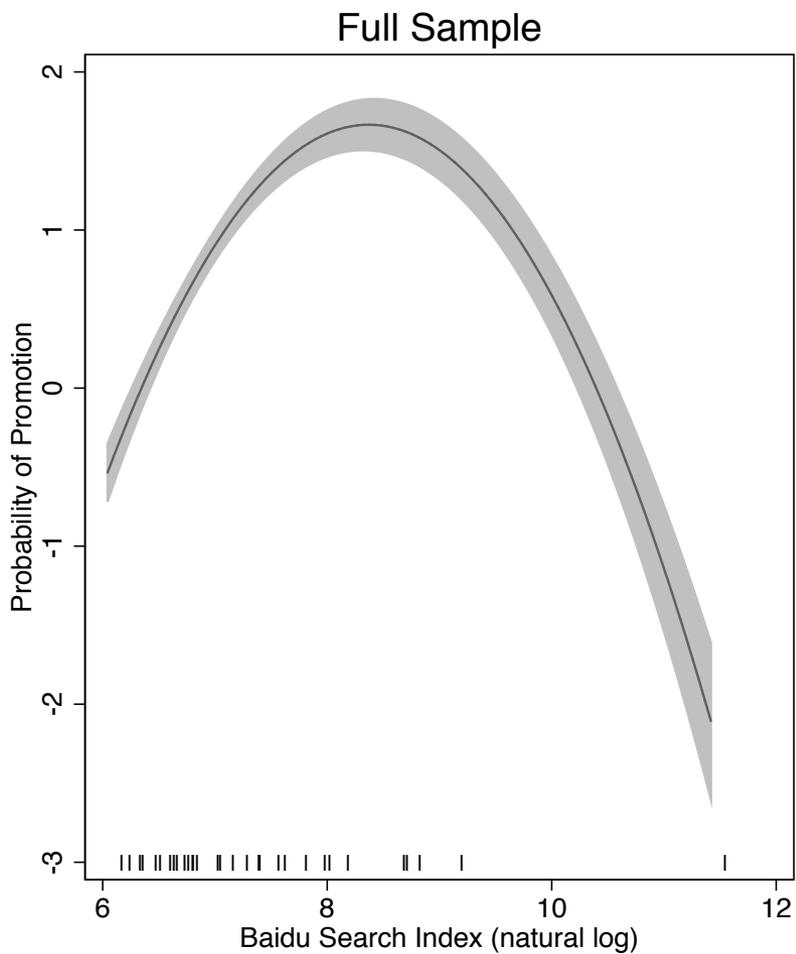
# Results - China

<i>Dependent Variable:</i> <i>Promotion</i>	Probit		OLS		(9) Without Bo*
	(1) Base	(4) Full	(5) Base*	(8) Full*	
Index (natural log)	25.48*** (9.043)	41.89* (21.79)	6.800*** (0.918)	7.168*** (1.095)	10.03*** (3.189)
Index <sup>2</sup> (natural log)	-1.613*** (0.588)	-2.652* (1.399)	-0.406*** (0.0552)	-0.430*** (0.0658)	-0.625*** (0.215)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Constant	-98.74*** (34.36)	-178.1* (108.0)	-26.80*** (3.722)	-29.20*** (9.590)	-43.81** (18.07)
Observations	31	31	31	31	30
R-Squared	0.515	0.624	0.662	0.715	0.648

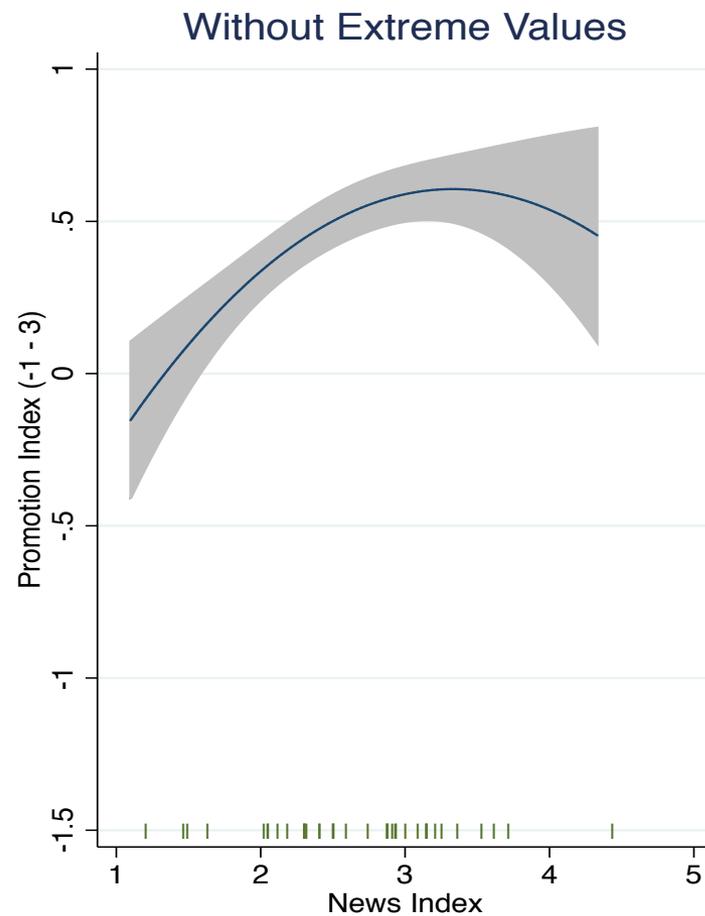
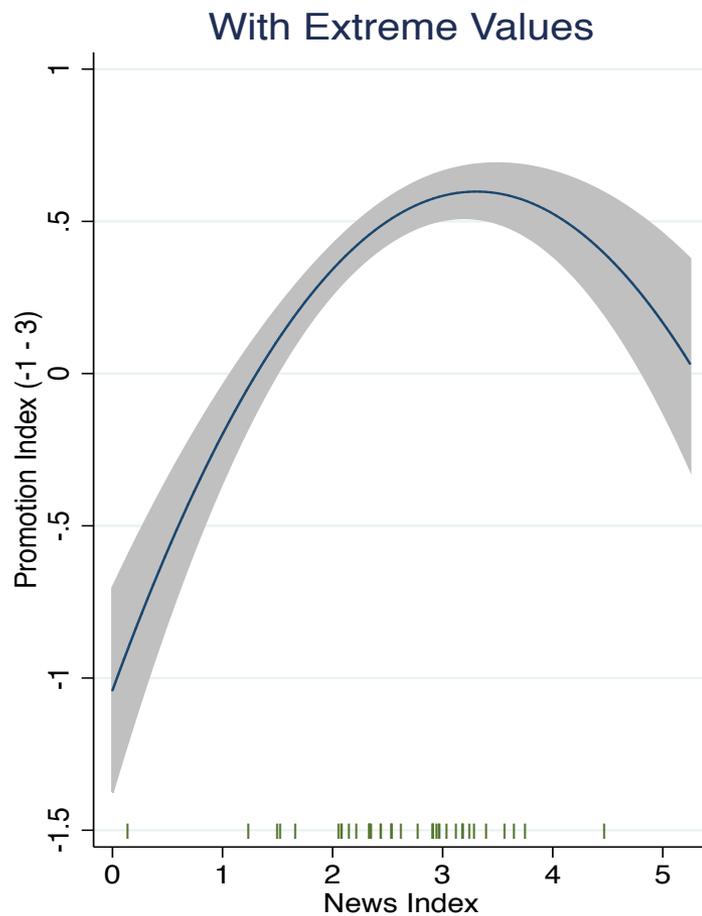
# Results – Vietnam

<i>Dependent Variable</i> <i>Promotion</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Probit (Base)	Probit (Growth)	Probit (Assertive)	OLS Index (Base)	OLS Index (Growth)	OLS Index (Assertive)	OLS Index (Without Extremes)
News Index	43.33 (31.04)	54.64 (42.22)	36.86 (32.52)	0.991*** (0.208)	1.050*** (0.279)	0.943*** (0.234)	0.958 (0.803)
News Index (squared)	-7.544 (5.462)	-9.575 (7.443)	-6.192 (5.622)	-0.150*** (0.0324)	-0.157*** (0.0448)	-0.146*** (0.0391)	-0.143 (0.159)
Provincial GDP		-0.601 (0.485)	-0.344 (0.287)		-0.116 (0.169)	-0.181 (0.186)	-0.186 (0.185)
Performance (rank)		0.0186 (0.0356)			0.0115 (0.0104)		
Assertive Leader			10.05** (4.770)			2.102 (1.489)	2.120 (1.494)
Constant	-62.48 (43.99)	-73.42 (58.65)	-73.51 (47.93)	-1.041*** (0.262)	-0.377 (1.787)	-3.824 (2.943)	-67.04 (52.78)
Observations	40	40	40	40	40	40	38
r2_p	0.339	0.392	0.529	0.160	0.195	0.235	0.149
chi2	10.22	11.83	15.95				
ll	-9.960	-9.156	-7.096	-40.95	-40.09	-39.08	-38.07

# Predicted Effects – China



# Predicted Effects – Vietnam



# Objections:

- Limited Sample Size: Only two party congresses?
  - Vo Nguyen Giap
  - Election of Le Duan in 1960
  - Series of non-influential party secretaries
- Where is the cut-off?
  - Relative scale: If no one overshadows others, linear relationship may persist
- Isn't Xi Jinping "charismatic"?
  - It wasn't always so...

# Two side of Xi Jinping: The “Supreme Court Effect”



- **Post-Election:**

- “Since becoming military chief and general secretary of the Communist Party in November 2012 and president in March 2013, Mr Xi has been sending a clear message that the country is not just ruled by a faceless party—it is ruled by a man.” (*Economist*, September 20, 2014 “The power of Xi Jinping”)

- **Pre-Election:**

- “When he was first announced as China’s next leader-in-waiting, he was already vice-president, but people still joked: “Who is Xi Jinping? He is Peng Liyuan’s husband.”

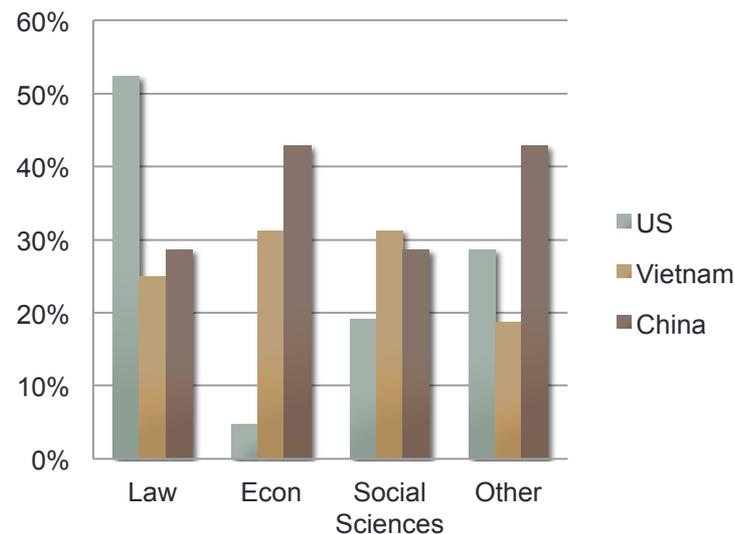
# Implications of Argument

- Weber critiqued rule by technocracy
  - Technocrats are poor politicians because they cannot mobilize support ***even for worthy causes***
  - *“To take a stand, to be passionate... is in the politician’s element, and above all the element of a political leader.”* (Politics as a Vocation)
- Observable Implication:
  - For this reason, he argued, lawyers are naturally destined to become politicians

# Implications of Argument

- Last three US presidents:
  - Clinton: lawyer
  - Bush: CEO
  - Obama: lawyer
- Last three China secretaries
  - Jiang: engineer
  - Hu: engineer
  - Xi: engineer/social science
- Last three Vietnam secretaries
  - Phieu: military
  - Manh: forestry
  - Trong: political theorist

**Leadership Education Backgrounds**



# Implications of Argument

- Vietnam's upcoming Party Congress (2016)
  - Key figure: Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
  - Question: Will he take role of General Secretary?
  - Pro: Experienced, strong alliances
  - Cons: Tainted by corruption scandals. Too large a profile to maintain collective leadership?
- Other potential figures
  - Nguyen Xuan Phuc – Deputy Prime Minister
  - Nguyen Sinh Hung – National Assembly Chairman
- No way of knowing whether this is “pro-China” or “pro-US” tilt



# Questions Comments

Happy to discuss

- Implications of Paper
- Vietnamese leadership politics

# Contributions & Extensions

- Introduce a new variable
  - A political contender's public profile matters, even under autocracy.
  - Helps reconcile some contradictions in the literature
- Extensions
  - If public profile is a strong determinant of promotion, why would any contender risk mismanaging it?
    - Charisma
    - Strategy
    - Hubris



# Discussion - Charisma

- If one's public profile is strong determinant of promotion, why would any candidate risk mismanaging it?
- **Charisma**
  - Charisma is inherent quality in born leaders (Weber, 1968)
    - This might explain small profiles
      - Hu Jintao, was bland and couldn't do much about it

# Discussion – Strategy

- But the charisma does not explain high profile candidates. It does not explain Bo Xilai.
- **Strategy**
  - Bo's large profile was both his liability as well as his insurance.
  - Towards the end he may have calculated his profile as large enough to challenge the existing leadership.

*“I was mentally prepared for the fact that attacking organized crime and expunging evil would affect some people's interests...”*

*(March 2012)*



# Implications of Argument

- Loyalty vs. Competence - both possible.
  - If contender does not pose a credible threat to the regime.
- A high-profile contender poses such a threat.
  - The capacity to mobilize a large public following.
- Competent leaders with high-profiles signal 1 of 2 things
  - They are incapable of acquiring a large public following
  - They prefer to forgo doing so to signal loyalty
- NYT description of Hu Jintao: ***“brilliant and bland”***

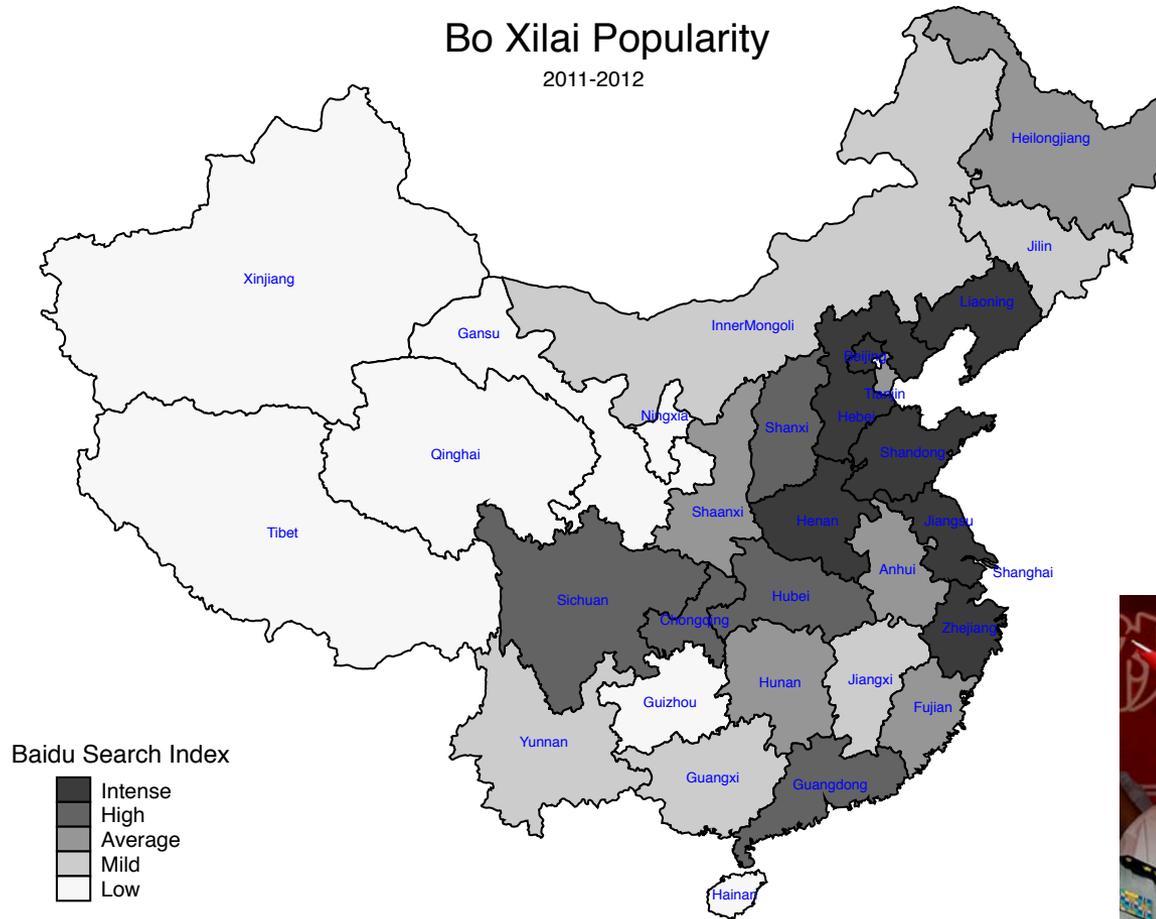
# Discussion – Hubris

- But the charisma does not explain high profile candidates. It does not explain Bo Xilai.
- **Hubris**
- Be it not for hubris, authoritarian contenders can manage their profiles, at least until they get the top spot.
- Charismatic candidates can tone down
  - Wang Yang
    - 2010 Father of the Guangdong Model
    - 2014 Minister
- Charismatic candidates can bide their time
  - Xi Jinping (*Xi Dada*)
    - 2010 “**relatively unknown, compromise candidate**”
    - 2014 “**public adulation at levels not seen since 1970s**”

# Party personality

- “For most Chinese, the Politburo [is] a distant body, bloated with power, **but devoid of character and personality.**” (McGregor, 2010)
- “Today’s CCP leaders are more or less **interchangeable—cautious, colorless organization men of late middle age without any special talents or followings.**” (Shirk, 2007: 46)

# Bo's cross-provincial reach



# Results – China

<i>Dependent Variable:</i> <i>Promotion</i>	Probit				OLS				
	(1) Base	(2) Performance	(3) Factions	(4) Full	(5) Base*	(6) Performance*	(7) Factions*	(8) Full*	(9) Without Bo*
Index (natural log)	25.48*** (9.043)	35.64*** (13.66)	42.28** (16.71)	41.89* (21.79)	6.800*** (0.918)	6.827*** (0.941)	6.985*** (0.963)	7.168*** (1.095)	10.03*** (3.189)
Index^2 (natural log)	-1.613*** (0.588)	-2.249*** (0.873)	-2.680** (1.070)	-2.652* (1.399)	-0.406*** (0.0552)	-0.407*** (0.0564)	-0.418*** (0.0579)	-0.430*** (0.0658)	-0.625*** (0.215)
Performance (rank)		0.0813 (0.0557)	0.0738 (0.0619)	0.0970 (0.0922)		0.00311 (0.0134)	-0.00330 (0.0155)	-0.00692 (0.0181)	-0.0113 (0.0187)
CCYL Faction			1.294 (1.385)	0.825 (1.513)			0.371 (0.424)	0.310 (0.458)	0.425 (0.475)
Jiang Faction			0.766 (1.192)	0.371 (1.623)			0.466 (0.409)	0.484 (0.464)	0.500 (0.465)
Internet Pop (natural log)				-1.657 (3.383)				-0.118 (0.844)	-0.412 (0.900)
GDP (natural log)				1.346 (3.308)				-0.0415 (0.792)	0.255 (0.852)
Business Climate				1.535 (6.474)				1.074 (1.896)	1.852 (2.067)
Government Obstacles				2.391 (6.431)				0.251 (1.775)	-0.0437 (1.805)
Constant	-98.74*** (34.36)	-139.9*** (53.26)	-165.9** (65.19)	-178.1* (108.0)	-26.80*** (3.722)	-26.98*** (3.866)	-27.80*** (3.985)	-29.20*** (9.590)	-43.81** (18.07)
Observations	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	30
R-Squared	0.515	0.581	0.603	0.624	0.662	0.663	0.680	0.715	0.648
Chi-Squared	22.13	24.94	25.91	26.80					
Log-Likelihood	-10.41	-8.999	-8.518	-8.073	-28.02	-27.99	-27.20	-25.38	-24.39

Note: The sample includes all provincial leaders prior to the November 2012 Chinese Communist Party Congress. Model 1 includes only the Index measure and the squared value of that Index. Model 2 includes a measure of Performance based on the GDP growth improvement under the candidate. Model 3 includes a measure of Factions, with the reference category including unaffiliated candidates as well as those candidates believed to be loyal newly appointed regime leader Xi Jinping. Model 4 includes additional controls including, internet population, GDP, and alternative measures of competence, Climate and Business Obstacles, derived from survey data. \*Models 5-8 employ an ordinal measure of promotion ranging from (-2) representing expulsion to (2) representing full promotion and are estimated using ordinary least squares regression. Model 9 replicates the fully specified Model 8 but without the inclusion of Bo Xilai in the sample. Standard errors in parentheses (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ )

# China Contender Stats

Leader	Tenure Begin	Admin Province	Promoted	Previous Position	Current Position	Search Index	News Index	Performance Rank	Faction	
Bo Xilai	薄熙来	2007	Chongqing	Expelled	PB	.	90970.9	4957.8	22	Jiang
Wang Yang	汪洋	2007	Guangdong	no	PB	PB	8700.9	2747.3	18	CCYL
Hu Chunhua	胡春华	2009	Inner Mongolia	Full	CC	PBSC	6001.5	554.9	20	CCYL
Yu Zhengsheng	俞正声	2007	Shanghai	Full	PB	PBSC	5217.3	1448.2	14	Jiang
Zhang Gaoli	张高丽	2007	Tianjin	Full	PB	PBSC	5347.6	588.3	29	Jiang
Li Zhanshu	栗战书	2010	Guizhou	Full	CC	PB	3165.8	369.1	26	Xi
Zhou Qiang	周强	2010	Hunan	Partial	CC	CC/SPC	2577.2	761.2	5	CCYL
Sun Zhengcai	孙政才	2009	Jilin	Full	CC	PB	2686.8	580.2	30	Jiang
Zhang Chunxian	张春贤	2010	Xinjiang	Full	CC	PB	2178.3	559.7	1	Jiang
Liu Qibao	刘奇葆	2007	Sichuan	Full	CC	PB	1804.9	454.2	10	CCYL
Zhao Leji	赵乐际	2007	Shaanxi	Full	CC	PB	1706.2	269.0	25	Xi
Liu Qi	刘淇	2002	Beijing	Retired	PB	retired	1443.0	405.6	24	Jiang
Lu Zhangong	卢展工	2009	Henan	no	CC	CC	1288.6	289.0	31	?
Sun Chunlan	孙春兰	2009	Fujian	Full	CC	PB	1428.4	439.2	27	CCYL
Li Hongzhong	李鸿忠	2010	Hubei	Partial	acc	CC	992.2	609.0	3	Jiang
Guo Shengkun	郭声琨	2007	Guangxi	Partial	acc	CC	1134.4	411.2	7	Jiang
Zhang Qingli	张庆黎	2011	Hebei	no	CC	CC	738.9	316.3	15	CCYL
Wang Sanyun	王三运	2011	Gansu	Partial	acc	CC	793.9	631.4	8	CCYL
Zhao Hongzhu	赵洪祝	2010	Zhejiang	no	CC	CC	824.3	342.4	4	Jiang
Yuan Chunqing	袁纯清	2010	Shanxi	no	CC	CC	648.6	440.1	2	CCYL
Su Rong	苏荣	2007	Jiangxi	Demoted	CC	CPPCC	670.7	190.0	23	?
Jiang Yikang	江泽民	2007	Shandong	no	CC	CC	688.5	353.9	19	Jiang
Qiang Wei	强卫	2007	Qinghai	no	CC	CC	762.7	314.7	13	CCYL
Zhang Baoshun	张宝顺	2010	Anhui	no	CC	CC	570.4	244.8	6	CCYL
Zhang Yi	张毅	2010	Ningxia	no	CC	CC	593.6	363.9	11	CCYL
Qin Guangrong	秦光荣	2011	Yunnan	no	CC	CC	507.6	289.4	9	CCYL
Chen Quanguo	陈全国	2011	Tibet	Partial	acc	CC	1012.4	22.5	21	CCYL
Wang Min	王珉	2009	Liaoning	no	CC	CC	495.5	199.0	28	Jiang
Wei Liucheng	卫留成	2007	Hainan	Retired	CC	retired	421.4	16.4	17	Jiang
Ji Bingxuan	吉炳轩	2008	Heilongjiang	no	CC	CC	452.1	154.5	12	CCYL
Luo Zhijun	罗志军	2010	Jiangsu	Partial	acc	CC	795.2	9.6	16	Jiang

# Vietnam Contender Stats

Leader	Province	Promotion	News Index (number of stories)	Growth Differential (Rank)	Assertive Leader (rank) **
Nguyen Ba Thanh	Da Nang	None*	189	19	9
Nguyen Duc Hai	Quang Nam	None	75	37	5
Le Huu Phuoc	Quang Tri	None	36	13	38
Nguyen Tan Quyen	Can Tho	Party	32	1	33
Nguyen The Trung	Nghe An	Party	30	27	20
Nguyen Tan Hung	Binh Phuonc	None	25	6	12
Nguyen Bac Son	Thai Nguyen	Minister	22	31	28
Mai The Duong	Bac Can	Party	21	30	32
Ha Son Ninh	Gia Lai	None	20	23	16
Nguyen Thanh Binh	Ha Tinh	None	20	14	27
Dao Tan Loc	Phu Yen	None	20	4	35
Bui Quang Vinh	Lao Cai	Minister	19	10	6
Tran Van Hung	Nghe An	Party	17	33	34
Luong Ngoc Binh	Quang Binh	None	16	17	31
Trinh Dinh Dung	Vinh Phuc	Minister	16	38	1
Nguyen Thai Binh	Tra Vinh	Minister	15	20	4
Nie Thuat	Dak Lak	None	15	8	23
Bui Thanh Quyen	Hai Duong	None	15	28	14
Nguyen Cong Ngo	Bac Ninh	None	15	29	8
Nguyen Minh Quang	Lai Chau	Minister	13	3	18
Phung Thanh Kim	Lang Son	None	11	24	37
Nguyen Sang Vang	Tuyen Quang	None	10	31	11
Tran Xuan Loc	Ha Nam	None	10	9	24
Nguyen Van Vuong	Thai Nguyen	None	10	12	25
Thao Xuan Sung	Son La	None	9	16	21
Vo Minh Chien	Soc Trang	None	9	2	7
Nguyen Thi Nuong	Cao Bang	Party	8	25	40
Mai The Trung	Binh Duong	None	8	26	3
Pham Dinh Khoi	Quang Ngai	None	8	18	30
Lo Mai Trinh	Dien Bien	None	8	5	19
Nguyen Van Tu	Khanh Hoa	None	7	34	29
Hoang Binh Quan	Tuyen Quang	Party	6	15	36
Hoang Viet Cuong	Hoa Binh	None	6	11	17
Hoang Xuan Loc	Yen Bai	None	6	39	15
Huynh Minh Doan	Dong Thap	None	6	7	10
Truong Xuan Thin	Ninh Thuan	None	4	21	22
Cao Van Cuong	Hung Yen	None	3	36	39
Nguyen Hoang Viet	An Giang	Party	3	35	2
Huynh Van Ty	Binh Thuan	None	2	22	26
Vo Thanh Binh	Ca Mau	Censured	0	40	13