

Presidentialism And, Or, and Versus Parliamentarism: The State of the Literature and an Agenda for Future Research

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1) Introduction

Much has been written over the last few years on the question of whether the difference between presidentialism and parliamentarism matters. This question is critical for issues such as the causes of democratic collapse, whether certain institutions were are more likely promote democratic consolidation, and whether regime type matters for policy output and governability.¹ Although Shugart and Carey (1992) emphasized both that the differences *between* as well as *within* regimes are important, what is striking about much subsequent research is the extent to which it questions, from a variety of perspectives, the importance of the single distinction between presidential and parliamentary forms of government. For example, Tsebelis (1995, 2000) suggests that it makes no sense to compare presidential and parliamentary governments independently of other “veto players” such as courts, parties, and bureaucracies.

We do not deny the importance of institutional variation within regimes, nor do we question the promise of research that explores how each type of government interacts with “smaller” variables. Investigating the interaction between governmental type and other variables should remain a central research objective. Our purpose in this paper, however, is to return to and reassert the importance of the critical distinction between parliamentary and presidential forms of government, as well as highlight how the differences generated by some “smaller” variables may in fact be a function of differences in “larger” variables in the first place.

To answer the question of “what differences ought we expect between presidential and parliamentary regimes?” we first need to define the differences between such regimes. Pure presidentialism differs in three ways from pure parliamentarism:

- 1) Separate *origin and survival* of executive and legislative branches;

¹ See e.g. Linz (1990, 1994), Shugart and Carey (1992), Mainwaring (1993), Stepan and Skach (1993), Sartori (1994), Jones (1995), Mainwaring and Shugart (1997), Power and Gasiorowski (1997); Weaver and Rockman (eds.) (1993), Carey and Shugart (1998), Przeworski *et al.* (2000), Haggard and McCubbins (eds.) (2001).

- 2) *Constitutionally-guaranteed executive authority* to execute the laws; and
- 3) Chief executive *control over the cabinet*.

This definition largely follows Shugart and Carey (1992). Separation of origin is defined by the process of executive selection: does it follow from a process of counting votes separately from the allocation of legislative seats (presidential) or does it follow from some process that depends on the allocation of legislative seats (not presidential)? Separation of survival is defined by the principle that ends governments: under presidentialism the terms of both the legislature and the executive are fixed and are not contingent on mutual confidence. As for constitutionally-guaranteed authority, at the simplest level this means that one branch makes the laws, the other implements them. If the legislature could implement the laws without the president, the system would be some sort of hybrid regime. However, no *particular* powers are implied here.

What we need is a parsimonious method to understand how these core institutions generate different consequences under each regime, as well as how adding “smaller” institutions might generate *additional* differences. This would allow us to reveal whether the core institutional differences are necessary and sufficient causes of differences in political output and when they are necessary but insufficient, and when we must add “non-core” variables to provide a necessary and sufficient explanation. We suggest that for both presidential and parliamentary systems, a good way to do so is to explore differences along two dimensions, in terms of *executives’ unilateral powers* and the *separation of purpose* between the executive and the legislature (Cox and McCubbins 2001; Shugart and Haggard 2001; Samuels and Shugart N.d.).

Executive unilateral power is defined as the relative imbalance between executive and legislature in terms of the allocation of unilateral veto, budget, decree, agenda, and other *formal* powers (constitutional or otherwise). If the executive can do literally nothing without at least implicit legislative support, it has no unilateral power. In contrast, if the executive independently

controls the legislative agenda, has a powerful veto, can impound budgetary funds at will, and can issue decrees that are difficult to revoke, it has substantial unilateral power.

Separation of purpose is the relative degree to which the executive and the majority in the legislature have similar political preferences and respond to and are accountable to the same pressures and demands. If both have the same preferences and respond to precisely the same set of actors and interests, then there is *unity* of purpose. If (for example) on the other hand voters hold the president responsible for national policy but demand that legislators do little more than provide pork to their district, we have substantial separation of purpose.

By definition presidentialism differs from parliamentarism in terms of executive unilateral power and separation of purpose because of separate origin and survival, constitutional authority to execute the laws, and cabinet control. However, this says little about either the potential variation within and across regimes, or the political consequences that flow from these differences. Veto, decree, and other powers, electoral cycles, bicameralism, etc. are simply not part of the definition of presidentialism; they may or may not be present, to greater or lesser degrees. Moreover, some degree of unilateral executive power and separation of purpose is possible under parliamentarism. For example, prime ministers in some parliamentary systems have decree powers (e.g. Italy); bicameralism may affect policy outcomes even if the upper chamber lacks confidence powers (e.g. Germany, Australia); or malapportionment or other institutional distortions of the votes-seat relationship might affect party configurations, especially in bicameral systems (e.g. Japan). Thus in this paper we address three hypotheses:

- H1: institutions promoting unilateral executive power and separation of purpose are *more likely* under presidentialism;
- H2: the core institutional differences between regime types are *necessary and sufficient* causes of differences in political output;

- H3: similar configurations of non-core institutions have a *greater impact* under presidentialism, thus generating additional differences in political output.

The first hypothesis should not be counterintuitive. For example, certain institutional configurations are far less likely under any parliamentary system - for example, mixed electoral cycles. Consequently, unilateral executive power as well as separation of purpose in the modal presidential system will be substantially greater than under the modal parliamentary system. The second and third hypotheses explore differences across regimes given potential variations in executive powers and separation of purpose. The second hypothesis suggests that important political consequences flow even from assuming the *least* possible differences in unilateral powers and separation of purpose between regimes.

The third hypothesis implies that otherwise equivalent “smaller” institutions will have greater political consequences *when added to* presidentialism than to parliamentarism. Take for example the effect of district magnitude, which affects parties’ vote shares. According to many scholars, higher fragmentation is more problematic for presidentialism than parliamentarism (Mainwaring 1993; Linz 1994; Jones 1995; Shugart 1995). This suggests that fragmentation has different effects in each regime, and thus that similar district magnitudes have different effects under each regime, all else equal. Coupling different institutions with each regime may thus induce different political consequences. This point illustrates our differences with some of the recent literature on “veto players,” which tends to treat regime type as on the same level of theoretical importance as other variables (e.g. Tsebelis 1995, 2000; Cox and McCubbins 2001). We disagree: the differences between regimes are fundamental and should be considered theoretically prior to the introduction of other variables.

In the next section we discuss H1, why some combinations of unilateral executive power and separation of purpose are more or less likely under each regime. In the sections that follow

we deduce what differences follow from the core elements of each regime and explore how combinations of variables entail a much broader and deeper set of differences across regimes.

2) H1: Unilateral Powers & Separation of Purpose: Variation Within and Across Regimes

To what extent are different combinations of institutions possible or likely under different regimes? This question is critical for our understanding of the effects of regime type, for if presidentialism is associated with certain “packages” of institutions, then the effects of these “non-core” institutions cannot be explored separately from regime type. For presidential systems, Shugart and Carey (1992) first revealed the variation in unilateral executive power, and Shugart and Haggard (2001) and Samuels and Shugart (N.d.) have further detailed the degree to which separation of purpose can vary. The question at hand is whether both are equally likely and have similar consequences in presidentialism and parliamentarism, all else equal.

Unilateral executive powers include the veto, budget, decree, agenda, and other *formal* powers chief executives possess. Both the possible and the real variation within parliamentarism on this variable are far more limited than under presidentialism, and even when PMs have some unilateral powers, the same tools matter more under presidentialism. For example, although PMs have tremendous information advantages over parliament, any action such as budget impoundment must be weighed against the probability that the PM’s support base will rebel against such *ex post* deal-breaking. Similarly, although some PMs have decree powers, these have less impact than similar powers under presidentialism because the government must strategically avoid decrees that might cause a governing crisis.² A president who has decree powers has relatively more liberty than a PM because he doesn’t depend on the assembly to survive. Likewise, although PMs have tremendous informal agenda power, this matters

relatively less than formal agenda powers under presidentialism because presidents can use whatever powers they might have to pull policy toward their preferred point without fear of losing their jobs. In short, no matter how great, *unilateral executive powers can never overwhelm the unity of origin and survival under parliamentarism*. In contrast, unilateral executive powers can vary much more and have a greater impact under presidential systems because of the separation of survival.

Separation of purpose is the degree to which the executive and legislators have similar preferences and political incentives and respond to and are accountable to the same groups, pressures, and demands. Separation of purpose most obviously increases when the partisan composition of the executive and legislative differs. This occurs when the electorate that elected the executive does not correspond to the electorate that elected the legislative majority. However, institutions can generate incentives for substantial separation of purpose between the executive and legislative even under “unified” government. Such institutions include bicameralism, malapportionment, electoral cycles, staggered elections, electoral formulae, legislative rules, and ballot structure (Strøm 1990b; Carey and Shugart 1995; Shugart and Haggard 2001; Samuels and Shugart, N.d.). These institutions tend to separate the sources of legislators’ and executives’ incentives and make them responsive to different actors.

Some kinds of separation of purpose are impossible or nearly so under parliamentarism, and others are much less likely. Conversely, high separation of purpose is not only more likely under presidentialism but its impact is thus greater. For example, strong bicameralism is correlated with presidentialism (Tsebelis and Money 1997).³ Lijphart (1984, 104) suggested a

² For example, Della Salla and Kreppel (1998) note that Italian case is actually one of a relatively *weak* executive.

³ Members of upper chambers are more likely to be appointed than elected in parliamentary systems. More importantly, decision rules favor lower chambers in parliamentarism versus the originating or reviewing chamber in presidentialism, and presidential upper chambers are more likely to have a role in financial or budgetary legislation. See Tsebelis and Money (1997), chapter 2.

reason for this: strong bicameralism would make the formation and survival of parliamentary governments too complex. In addition, both lower- and upper-chamber malapportionment is substantially worse in presidential systems (Samuels and Snyder 2001). Strong bicameralism and high malapportionment have strong policy consequences in any regime - they make preference coordination across branches relatively more difficult, for example. Separate elections, staggered elections, and mixed electoral cycles are also far more common under presidentialism, making executive-legislative correspondence relatively less likely.

In sum, unilateral executive powers and separation of purpose are typically greater in presidential systems. Presidentialism is therefore more likely to be associated with certain “packages” of institutions than parliamentarism. Figure One illustrates the distribution of a number of presidential systems on these two variables, and adds in a few representative parliamentary systems (country coding details can be found in Samuels and Shugart, N.d.). The modal parliamentary system lies close to the lower left of the chart, while the modal presidential system lies a bit up and to the right of the modal parliamentary system. Moreover, the potential variation is far greater in presidential systems.

Figure One Here

Executive powers and separation of purpose are intimately linked. *No* country exhibits high unilateral executive powers without a good degree of separation of purpose - that is, the upper-left quadrant of Figure One is empty. Some presidential systems couple separation of purpose and relatively low executive power (e.g. the USA, Mexico), but the modal correlation is the higher the separation of purpose, the higher the executive’s unilateral powers. Samuels and Shugart (N.d.) posit that these are correlated because unilateral executive powers *compensate* for high separation of purpose, providing balance in systems where incentives for distance between the executive and legislative branches would otherwise be high. Thus unilateral executive

powers are also greater under presidentialism because separation of purpose tends to be greater under presidentialism. In the next sections we explore what political consequences follow from assuming a *minimum* of unilateral executive power and separation of purpose as well as how different combinations of executive power and separation of purpose have different consequences under each regime. Subsequently we explore how the more substantial differences in executive unilateral power and separation of purpose may exacerbate regime differences.

3) H2a: What Follows from Minimal Regime Differences?

The authors of the US constitution feared tyranny of the majority. They aimed to create a stable government, but one that did not move quickly to either enact or to change policy, so as to protect minority rights. They concluded that the best way to do so was to set “ambition against ambition” within a system of majority rule, by separating executive and legislative origin and survival. This basic constitutional structure has been the model for all subsequent presidential systems. The Madisonian conception of the separation of powers holds that tyranny is relatively less likely given the separation of survival because it places the executive and legislative branches in formally different institutional environments. This generates different behavioral incentives, making majority steamrolls at a minimum more difficult to coordinate. Even when there is substantial preference overlap between branches, separation of survival thus provides a safeguard against tyranny. In modern political science parlance, the structure of presidentialism is designed to be *less decisive* and *more resolute* (Cox and McCubbins 2001). That is, we expect policy change to be slower and less dramatic under presidentialism.

Yet separate survival is also an incentive for unilateralism: because the president cannot fall on a confidence vote, he can use the “bully pulpit” to attempt to pull policy towards his or her preferred position even more than a similarly-situated PM might. That is, presidents can

attempt to interfere in the legislative process (Cox and Morgenstern 2001; Magar 2001).

However, a president with no particular powers beyond separate survival cannot *move* policy, because the core definition of presidentialism does not necessarily provide presidents with either proactive or reactive legislative powers.⁴ This highlights the critical importance of the relationship between the president and the pivotal legislator. If a president has a strong majority, perhaps coordination is only be slightly more difficult than in a parliamentary system with a similar majority, and policy outcomes thus mostly the same. But on the other hand, such coordination is never guaranteed, and presidentialism has fixed terms. If a majority government breaks down under parliamentarism, it can be dissolved and a new executive can come to power with a new mandate; not so under presidentialism.

Moreover, what if there is a substantial difference between the position of the president and the pivotal legislator, a situation (e.g. of minority government) about twice as likely under presidentialism?⁵ Suppose that the legislative majority proposes a change in the status quo, but the president refuses to sign it into law (or vice versa). When this happens we have policy stability, “stalemate,” or “deadlock” (these are observationally equivalent), and the status quo stands because the president cannot be removed from office. Under parliamentarism, persistent deadlock is less likely because of the threat of removal - if the PM refuses to enact a bill parliament has passed, he is unlikely to last long as head of the government. If we get deadlock under parliamentarism - even (or especially?) under minority parliamentary government - the

⁴ A president with minimal powers could theoretically refuse to sign a bill into law, which is a *de facto* veto. However, depending on the spatial location of the proposal emanating from the legislature, this only allows the president to keep policy from moving *away* from his ideal point, not to move policy *toward* his ideal point. More importantly, executive control over *implementation* of the law is critical: “slippage” between statutory language and interpretation of such language is the basis for the huge literature on delegation to bureaucracies (see below).

⁵ Cheibub, Przeworski and Saeigh (2002) found that minority governments occur in about 22% of all years under parliamentarism, and Cheibub (2002a) found that minority governments occur in about 40% of all years under presidentialism. These numbers correspond with previous research (e.g. Strøm 1990b, Shugart 1995). Moreover, even under “majority” presidential government there is a greater possibility that separation of purpose will encourage some preference divergence between the executive and the pivotal legislator.

government can change either with or without elections, and there is therefore a greater likelihood of a change in the policy status quo. At a minimum, therefore, the separation of survival makes presidentialism less *decisive* and more *resolute* than pure parliamentarism (Cox and McCubbins 2001, 26-7).

In terms of actual policy outputs, H2 suggests any one of the following hypotheses:

- 1) A presidential system is *less likely* to get from the status quo to a new policy at point P than a parliamentary system, all else equal;
- 2) If P is proposed, a presidential system will actually move *less far in policy space* from the SQ towards P than a parliamentary system, all else equal;
- 3) If P is proposed, the *time* getting from the SQ to P *will be greater* under a presidential system, all else equal;
- 4) If P is proposed, the *expense* (measured in side-payments, e.g.) of getting from the SQ to P *will be greater* under a presidential system, all else equal.

As the degree of preference divergence between the executive and the pivotal legislator increases, we hypothesize that presidential systems will become relatively more resolute and less decisive than parliamentary systems. In this regard we should note that Figure One holds the distribution of partisan preferences in the legislature constant. High executive powers are *not* designed to permit or promote executive tyranny or tyranny of the majority: high unilateral powers compensate for high separation of purpose, making the system relatively more decisive and less resolute than it otherwise would be (Samuels and Shugart N.d.).⁶ When a president

⁶ Thus high unilateral powers do not make Argentina into England: under unified government in both systems, differences in governance might not be due to regime type but to other factors (e.g. federalism). But when the executive faces legislative opposition, in Argentina we may see policy stability or deadlock *for the duration of the president's term*. In Argentina at least this seems to be associated with constitutional crisis (e.g. Alfonsín in 1989 and de la Rúa in 2001). However, in the UK such a situation of divided government is unlikely in the first place and more importantly ought not to persist for long, because new elections can be called (the last "hung parliament" occurred there in 1974). A similar dynamic can occur under any minority parliamentary government: if

faces legislative opposition, high executive powers do not make a presidential system parliamentary because vetoes can be overridden, decrees quashed, agenda overturned, and even constitutional authority stripped, but survival remains separate. Under such conditions a president might adopt a conciliatory stance, but the outcome might also be conflictual. This is what Linz and others have highlighted: parliamentarism is relatively less problematic because not only are minority governments relatively less frequent but also because minority PMs can be removed if they attempt unilateral government or if deadlock emerges. Presidentialism allows for greater *potential* executive-legislative conflict, because of fixed terms and greater separation of purpose.

Little research has investigated the difference in decisiveness and/or resoluteness between regimes, but Cheibub, Przeworski and Saeigh (N.d., Table 3) provide some initial support for our hypotheses. They show that under similar levels of legislative support, parliamentary executives always approve their proposals with a higher probability than presidents. As we hypothesized, the difference in success rates is relatively small under supermajority conditions (89.6% versus 82.6% of all proposals) and single-party majority governments (89.5% versus 77.4%). Nevertheless, these differences indicate that the core distinctions between regimes are sufficient to generate some variation in resoluteness and/or decisiveness. Moreover, again as hypothesized, the difference in legislative success rates across regimes increases substantially under majority coalition government (76.0% versus 47.5%), minority coalition government (81.7% versus 52.5%), and single-party minority government (81.3% versus 65.2%).⁷ The greater *variation* in presidential success rates as support levels change also supports our hypothesis that separation of purpose has a greater impact under presidentialism.

stalemate/deadlock occurs, the government can change or elections are called. A similar change in the executive only happens through painful crises under presidentialism.

⁷ Overall, 82.8% of executive proposals are approved under parliamentarism versus 64.1% under presidentialism.

The data that Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh report are highly aggregated and necessarily assume a great deal, for example that presidents' and PMs' *proposal* strategies are similar under different support conditions, and we do not know anything about the similarity or difference in the *content* of the proposals the authors analyzed. Nevertheless, their results indicate that differences in executive legislative success rates exist and are at times substantial. This preliminary support for our hypotheses suggests the need for more detailed empirical tests, controlling for the degree of separation of purpose, executive unilateral powers, and most importantly the extent of preference divergence between executive and the pivotal legislator. We expect that as executive unilateral powers increase, resoluteness declines and decisiveness increases. Conversely, as separation of purpose increases, decisiveness declines and resoluteness increases. Finally, as the extent of preference divergence increases, decisiveness declines and resoluteness increases.⁸

In sum, H2 suggests that the core institutions of presidentialism increase policy resoluteness and decrease policy decisiveness, even assuming preference overlap between branches. Given H1 we also know that separation of purpose and executive unilateral power vary more under presidentialism, and we also know that that preference divergence between the executive and the pivotal legislator are more frequent under presidentialism. Under either regime, as the distance between the ideal points of the executive and pivotal legislator increases, moving from the status quo ought to become relatively more difficult. We suspect that such difficulties will be greater under presidentialism. Our specific hypotheses about decisiveness

⁸ This argument obviously relates to the American politics literature on divided government, which most scholars agree “matters” (e.g. Cox and Kernell 1991; Fiorina 1992), although some disagree (e.g. Mayhew 1991). Divided government is not the same as deadlock, and “success rates” may not be the best (and are certainly not the only) dependent variable for comparing legislative dynamics under majority and divided government, but it seems logical to suppose that under unified government a president will accomplish more, accomplish it faster, and at less expense. The data that Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh (N.d., Table 3) report tend to support this. See Epstein and O’Halloran (1999) and Magar (2001) on the different ways in which divided government “matters.”

and resoluteness require further theoretical specification and empirical testing; we expect that the most important reason to factor promoting resoluteness and decisiveness is the greater tendency for preference divergence between the executive and legislative branches under presidentialism.

4) H2b: What Follows from Presidential Cabinet Authority?

The third element of the core definition of presidentialism, authority over the cabinet, also generates important political consequences. Most importantly, presidential power to appoint and dismiss ministers means that the cabinet survives independently of legislative support. This has wide-ranging effects and is potentially more important than other unilateral powers, because the legislature has no formal authority to override presidents' decisions to appoint or dismiss ministers, no matter how great the divergence between branches.⁹ In contrast, the legislature can always annul a presidential decision to use agenda, veto, or decree powers, provided it can muster the necessary majorities to overcome these measures (Amorim Neto, 1998).

Independent cabinet survival matters for governance because cabinets have two purposes: 1) to build legislative support to *pass* legislation; and 2) to control the executive-branch bureaucracy that *implements* legislation. Both goals are wholly dependent on the legislature under parliamentarism, but presidents' authority to nominate ministers independently of the legislature implies that under presidentialism the composition of the cabinet could be *more or less* related to the president's legislative coalition. Moreover, presidents can control the bureaucracy *without* legislative support. This is a potentially critical difference given the importance of executive-branch bureaucracies around the world for policy implementation.

Second, under presidentialism the relationship between the chief executive and cabinet ministers is far more hierarchical than under parliamentarism, more than one of *primus inter*

pares (Sartori 1994, 84). Third, under presidentialism the *formateur* of any coalition is always the president, and by extension his party. In parliamentarism the *formateur* is always the largest party, but under presidentialism the president's party may not be the largest. Fourth, under presidentialism there are no *formal* mechanisms that can guarantee cabinet coalition agreements, such as the censure motion under parliamentarism.¹⁰

In a single-party governments all of these factors should have important political consequences differentiating presidential from parliamentary systems. However, when no party has a majority the differences should be starker. For example, the president's position as *formateur* suggests that coalition dynamics may differ in multiparty situations across regimes, depending on the size of the president's party relative to the other parties. More importantly, cabinet independence, the formal separation of powers, and presidents' varying unilateral powers suggest that the expected "office" and "policy" payoffs (Strøm 1990a) to a party's participation in government can differ substantially across regimes (Samuels 2002). For example, hierarchy means that president always has the last word in policymaking, whereas under parliamentarism the PM may have to concede *de facto* control over certain ministries to his or her cabinet partners (Laver and Shepsle 1996). Presidential control therefore means that parties considering whether to join a cabinet have greater cause to worry that they will be unable to translate participation into real policy influence. That is, parties have a lower expected utility for participation in a multiparty coalition under presidentialism than under parliamentarism. This argument further suggests that coalitions will be more costly to maintain and less stable under presidentialism.

⁹ There are some exceptions to this rule (e.g. censure rules in Colombia and Peru, confirmation rules in the US, Philippines, and South Korea). However, critically, none of these rules affect the *survival* of the executive.

¹⁰ These differences suggest that the standard formal models of coalition entry and exit designed for parliamentary systems (e.g. Austin-Smith and Banks 1988) require substantial modification for presidential systems.

The question remains as to whether these theoretical differences have real political consequences. Although research on coalitions under presidentialism is relatively scarce,¹¹ differences of opinion have already emerged. On the one hand, Cheibub and Limongi (2002, 18) suggest that “it is not true that incentives for coalition formation are any different in presidential than in parliamentary democracies. It is not true either that presidential regimes with highly fractionalized party systems will make the task of coalition formation even more daunting.” Similarly, Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh (2001, 5) argue that there should be no difference in the frequency of portfolio coalitions between presidential and parliamentary systems and that “the connection between coalitions and legislative effectiveness is at best dubious.”

On the other hand, Altman (2001), Amorim Neto (1998, 2001, 2002) and Amorim Neto and Tafner (2002) demonstrate that presidential cabinet autonomy makes a world of difference for executive-legislative relations. Altman’s (2001) comparative study found that the core elements of presidentialism make coalitions less stable and the consistency of coalition support for the executive more variable. Specifically, separate survival and the existence of fixed terms affect the likelihood of coalition formation and maintenance: as the president’s term advances, the likelihood of coalition formation decreases and the likelihood of coalition collapse increases (93). Thus, unlike parliamentary cabinets, presidential coalitions “tend to form and dissolve in synchronization with the electoral calendar corresponding to the president’s term of office” (115). This differentiates the dynamics of coalition government in presidential and parliamentary regimes and perhaps partly accounts for the substantially greater frequency of minority government under presidentialism noted above.

¹¹ On cabinet coalitions in presidential systems, in addition to Amorim Neto and Altman (see below), see Hartlyn (1988), Deheza (1997), Thibaut (1998), and Lanzaro (ed.) (2001). On legislative coalitions, see for example Ames (1995; 2001), Morgenstern (1996, N.d.), Carey (2000), and Figueiredo and Limongi (2000). On the impact of the vote of confidence on legislative party cohesion, see Diermeyer and Feddersen (1998).

Amorim Neto's research, which is less concerned with *whether* coalitions will form or not but rather with *what kind* of cabinet coalitions form, is arguably more important for the question of differences following from presidential cabinet control. Amorim Neto suggests that presidents' autonomy to appoint and dismiss ministers without regard to survival in office implies that presidents have greater leeway to recruit different *types* of ministers than PMs, and thus construct different types of cabinets, *regardless of whether the cabinet is single-party or a coalition*. Prime ministers almost exclusively appoint completely *partisan* cabinets: they select members of parliament to their cabinets because cabinets depend on parliamentary confidence for survival. In contrast, cabinet partisanship is more variable under presidentialism because the president does not depend on legislative support for survival. This affords a president the opportunity to appoint personal cronies or non-partisans if he feels they are more qualified to achieve his particular goals. The data systematized by Amorim Neto (1998, 29) bear this out: in 17 European democracies from 1960-93, only in France (12.8%) and Finland (5.6%) (notably, the two countries with relatively strong presidents) were more than 3% of all cabinet ministers nonpartisans. In ten of these countries not a single cabinet minister over the entire period was nonpartisan, and the overall average of nonpartisan ministers was 1.6%. In contrast, the average percentage of nonpartisans in 57 Latin American cabinets in 10 countries was 25.8% (calculated from Amorim Neto 1998, 67). This is not a controlled comparison, but the stark difference certainly supports the notion that partisanship is much more variable in presidential cabinets.

The second element of the argument also follows from presidential cabinet authority and presidential leeway. Under parliamentarism, because governments depend on constant support from all parties in the coalition, PMs have strong incentives to distribute cabinet portfolios proportionally to the legislative weight of each party, what Amorim Neto (1998) calls a

coalescent cabinet.¹² Coalescence declines when cabinet portfolios are not proportionally distributed. In parliamentary cabinets coalescence approaches 1.0 (Browne and Franklin 1973; Warwick and Druckman 2001) because proportional partisan support in the cabinet is a prerequisite for accomplishing anything in parliament (Amorim Neto 1998, 27). However, cabinet coalescence tends to vary a great deal in presidential systems: Amorim Neto (1998, 67) found that average coalescence in Latin American cabinets was 0.71, with a low of .07 and a high of 1.0.

The reason for this variation follows from separate survival and from the empirical observation that the more limited range of unilateral executive powers in parliamentary systems means that PMs tend to rely on the normal legislative process to accomplish their agenda relatively more so than presidents, many of whom have a wider array of policy-making strategies available to them - they can mix decrees and legislative initiatives, for example, or they have exclusive budgetary control that does not depend on legislative input. Presidents who possess decree or other powers have relatively fewer incentives to equate cabinet composition with achieving their policy goals, and in any case they do not fear being tossed from office by a party that threatens to leave the cabinet. The composition of the cabinet thus reflects a presidents' mix of policy-making strategies. When presidents opt to pursue statutory implementation of their agenda, they need legislative support and thus are likely to appoint highly partisan, coalescent cabinets. In contrast, presidents who choose to rely on their constitutional prerogatives to downplay their dependence on statutes and the legislative branch will tend to appoint less partisan and less coalescent cabinets (Amorim Neto 1998, ch. 3).

The critical question is obviously what shapes presidential governing strategy. Two variables are critical: the degree of unilateral executive powers and the size of the president's

¹² Coalescence is operationalized the same as Rose's (1984) disproportionality between vote and seat shares.

party. The greater the president's unilateral powers and the smaller the president's party, the more incentives the president has to use unilateral powers instead of working through the normal legislative process. In contrast, the weaker the president and the larger the president's party, the more incentives the president has to make policy through standard legislative procedures.

Although there is nothing *inherent* about presidentialism that results in "unilateral" governance style, nor is "unilateral" governance necessarily an outcome even when a president has substantial powers, these two variables are fundamentally related to general trends in different "styles" of governance between the modal presidential and parliamentary system (Amorim Neto 1998; see also Cox and Morgenstern 2001).

Yet we are concerned not mainly with style, but with substance. Presidential party size and presidential powers not only determine cabinet coalescence; cabinet coalescence is directly related to important "output" variables. First, there is a strong relationship between cabinet coalescence and the discipline of the president's legislative coalition (Amorim Neto 2002). It follows that cabinet composition - not simply whether the cabinet is single-party or multiparty, but the degree of cabinet coalescence - also affects the likelihood of presidential legislative success (Amorim Neto 1998). Moreover, Amorim Neto and Tafner (2002) confirmed the existence of an inverse relationship between cabinet coalescence and number of original decrees Brazilian presidents have issued since 1988.

Amorim Neto's research reveals how presidential cabinet authority reverberates throughout the political system. His work provides a critical insight: in presidentialism the *size* of the coalition or the *number* of coalition members are not the most important variables. This might seem counterintuitive to those who have been weaned on the literature that seeks to predict the size and number of members of parliamentary coalitions, and also for those who use either size of coalitions or number of "veto players" as predictors of variation in policy output. In

presidentialism, the *type* of cabinet (indicated by the degree of partisanship and the level of coalescence of the cabinet) is more important, because both are ultimately related to governance style and success. This finding places renewed importance on the determinants of the size of president's party because of its relationship to presidential governance.

Presidential cabinet autonomy generates substantial and important differences between regimes. Even under conditions of single-party majority governments, presidents' separate survival gives them leeway to appoint different types of cabinets than PMs. In multiparty settings, we expect the differences between presidentialism and parliamentarism to be exacerbated because of the hierarchical relationship between presidents and coalition partners, the president's position as *formateur* regardless of his party's size, differences in expected "policy" and "office" benefits to a party's participation in government, and because of the absence of formal coalition-maintenance mechanisms. These variables have real and important consequences for politics.

Future research should explore these differences more fully. For example, existing empirical work has barely begun to directly compare presidential and parliamentary coalitions. We hypothesize that coalitions are more likely, stable and cohesive under parliamentarism. Questions that demand attention include whether any differences in coalition dynamics are due to separation of purpose (e.g. electoral cycles or different electoral rules for presidents and assemblies, which shape the composition of the legislature and thus coalition possibilities), differences in unilateral executive powers (which may entail different payoffs to coalition entry and exit, affecting both their likelihood and stability), or because coalitions are simply more complex to negotiate and more costly to maintain under presidentialism.

A second line of investigation could extend Amorim Neto's work theoretically and empirically. First, the question of why and when presidents deviate from proportional portfolio

distribution merits further theoretical exploration. Second, the hypotheses about the impact of cabinet coalescence on government performance should be tested in a wider range of cases and areas. For example, is coalescence more important for legislative cohesion and legislative output than the size of a coalition or the number of its members?

Third, does bicameralism have a different impact for presidential and parliamentary cabinets, given that strong bicameralism is more associated with presidentialism? Several scholars (e.g. Hammond and Miller 1987; Tsebelis and Money 1997; Heller 1997, 2001) have shown that bicameralism shapes policy outcomes. Starting from this insight, Druckman and Thies (N.d.) reveal that parliamentary cabinets with upper chamber majorities last substantially longer than those without. Given the association of strong bicameralism with presidentialism, we suppose this ought to be even more true in presidential systems. The literature on parliamentary coalitions often assumes that all parliaments are unicameral mainly because only lower houses have direct authority over governmental origin and survival (Italy is an exception). Under bicameral presidentialism neither chamber has authority over government origin or survival, but both are more likely to impact policy. If a president lacks a majority in one or both chambers, this should impact cabinet dynamics, which in turn ought to affect the policy process. Studies of coalition government simply cannot ignore upper chambers in presidential systems.

In sum, Cheibub and Limongi's claim that "government coalitions are more frequent under parliamentarism, but the difference is one of degree, not of kind" (2002, 4) is incorrect. The difference is *both* in terms of degree and of kind: majority governments are both more common under parliamentarism and cabinet dynamics generally are quite distinct between regimes. Amorim Neto's findings also contradict Cheibub and Limongi's conclusion that "the connection between coalitions and legislative effectiveness is at best dubious" (2002, 5). The connection between cabinet coalitions and legislative effectiveness is critical. When a coalescent

cabinet is formed, the president is likely to accomplish relatively more of his agenda with relatively less executive-legislative conflict (e.g. Fernando Henrique Cardoso). When the cabinet is not coalescent, the opposite is more likely (e.g. Fernando Collor). Given that minority governments are more likely under presidentialism, the connections between presidential party size, presidential governing strategy, and governance demand further investigation. Research should focus on the *way* cabinets and coalitions are pieced together, rather than their size or the number of participants, as potential explanations for variations in governance under presidentialism.

5) H2c and H3a: Regime Collapse: Why is Presidentialism More Fragile?

Scholars have repeatedly found that presidentialism is more fragile than parliamentarism, regardless of other factors. This means that the separation of powers is a *sufficient* explanation for relatively higher regime fragility. Some scholars (e.g. Mainwaring, 1993; Jones, 1995) have also argued that multiparty situations are more problematic under presidentialism because separation of survival discourages minority presidents from moderating their stance or seeking new coalition partners. Thus although minority governments are frequent under parliamentarism, parliamentarism is more flexible because the PM depends on the legislature to survive. In short, although minority government is not a necessary or sufficient explanation, it tends to further increase the probability of presidential collapse.

The biggest obstacle facing research on this question is identifying what conditions lead to crises as opposed to mere muddling through. For example, “deadlock” would seem relatively straightforward to measure: it occurs when an agenda-setter cannot obtain the votes to pass the agenda and/or override a veto. Empirically, this situation can emerge under a variety of conditions: a president can stake his reputation on a constitutional reform effort yet fail to get the

required 2/3 majority, for example. However, while some of the variables that contribute to deadlock are numerical and easily measured, others are not. For example, ideological polarization contributes to the likelihood of coalitions, and may thus be important in determining whether we see deadlock and thus regime collapse. However, we know of no attempt to measure polarization cross-nationally and over time across a large enough set of cases to test this proposition. In any case, Amorim Neto suggests that simply counting the distribution of legislative seats is insufficient to measure government coalitions' "strength" under presidentialism. Deadlock is not simply a question of counting seats.

In a prominent recent work, Przeworski *et al.* (2000) (hereafter referred to as PACL for the authors' initials) reconfirmed that presidentialism is more fragile than parliamentarism. However, PACL - along with Cheibub and Limongi (2002), Cheibub (2002a, 2002b), and Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh (2001) - have reinvigorated the debate about the sources of presidentialism's relative fragility by questioning the conventional view of the connection between variation in presidential legislative support and regime fragility. In what follows we assess the state of this debate. We conclude that methodological and empirical problems, in particular regarding the measurement of deadlock, impede definitive answers. In our view, while the conventional view still wins points on theoretical plausibility, the question remains open.

Let us concentrate on PACL's argument about the relationship between legislative fractionalization and presidential collapse. First, PACL (134) show that the *absence of a majority party* in the lower house is associated with presidential collapse. This confirms existing research that established the association between minority government and presidential collapse (e.g. Jones 1995). However, by breaking down the data on "no minority party" and "majority party," PACL argue that there is no relationship between the *size of the largest party* and collapse (PACL, 134). Here they apparently mean to suggest that the relationship between

percentage of seats of the largest party and the probability of presidential collapse is N-shaped. We replicate PACL's findings in Chart 1 (see Table 2.21 in PACL, p. 135).¹³

Chart 1 Here

Despite this N-shaped relationship, in the next paragraph PACL claim only that “presidential democracies appear particularly vulnerable in situations when the largest legislative party controls more than one-third but less than one-half of seats, a situation we term ‘deadlock’...presidential democracies are much less likely to survive under the conditions of such moderate fractionalization” (134). By implication PACL are suggesting that situations where the largest party has *less* than one-third of the seats are not so bad.

This claim is confusing because it contradicts the conclusion in the previous paragraph that the size of the largest party has “no impact” on regime survival (the N-shaped relationship). More importantly, there is no reason to believe there should be *any* relationship between the size of the *largest* party and regime collapse, if we do not know the allegiance of the largest and the other parties. Is the largest party the president's, or an opposition party? Is there a coalition? In the absence of contextual information about parties' relationship to the president, any posited relationship between the size of the largest party and collapse could be spurious. And in any case, situations where the *largest* party controls more than one-third but less than one-half of the seats are certainly not by definition “deadlock” situations. For all we know, situations like these could entail strong presidential support, if the largest party is allied with the president and in a coalition. This division of the cases is meaningless in the absence of contextual information.

When the president's party lacks a majority, what may be critical is whether a coalition forms and/or the degree to which it sticks together. PACL's finding that minority government is associated with presidential fragility reconfirms existing research, but “minority government” is

¹³ We used PACL's data, downloaded from Cheibub's website, <http://pantheon.yale.edu/~jac236>.

a fairly blunt variable and scholars should seek to understand when minority government is more or less problematic, given that most minority presidents do not get overthrown. PACL's attempt to refine the debate by relating the size of the *largest party* to presidential fragility is unhelpful because that variable is context-free and begs the question of whether governance is a function of the size of the president's party and the relationship of the president to the other parties.

PACL then address a third existing hypothesis: the likelihood of collapse is correlated with legislative *fractionalization*, measured with the effective number of legislative parties (ENP). There are several problems with this argument. The first is methodological: the reliance on ENP in the posited relationship between fractionalization and regime collapse. As is well-known (e.g. Taagepera and Shugart 1989), many combinations of fractionalization can result in similar levels of ENP. Table 1 illustrates the problem.

Table 1 Here

A legislature with ENP between 3 and 4 (the worst situation, according to PACL) may contain one relatively large party and two or more smaller parties, or three equally-sized parties, etc.. The "effective" number of parties thus tells us far less than the *actual* size of the president's party and the other parties. Moreover, ENP, like the presence or absence of a majority party or the size of the largest party, is context-free and tells us nothing about parties' political allegiances. The different scenarios in Table 1 may entail different coalitional possibilities (and thus governance outcomes) depending on which party is the president's and whether the other parties support the president.

For example, suppose that there are 3 parties with 30% of the seats and one party with 10%, so that ENP equals 3.57. The smallest party is on the left, then the president's party, and then the other two parties. The president makes a deal with the party to his left, but the other parties remain in opposition. The problem with any argument linking ENP to collapse is that it

remains unclear why this situation is any worse than the following: the president's party has 40% of the seats and the other party, which refuses to deal with the president, has 60% of the seats. ENP here is 1.92. Perhaps these are equally problematic situations, but we cannot tell by using ENP. Other variables are needed, such as the size of the president's party, the size of the other parties, and the willingness of all parties to enter and remain in a coalition.

Given the widespread use of ENP, some might remain convinced of its utility. If so, PACL still do not make a convincing case for their argument because their conclusion depends entirely on how they present the data.¹⁴ PACL grouped cases (reproduced in Chart 2 above) by 0-2 ENP, 2-3 ENP, 3-4 ENP, etc. and then displayed the probability of regime collapse for each group. When the cases are thus grouped, PACL reveal the “∩-shaped” relationship between the probability of collapse and ENP. However, PACL's argument is spurious because the criterion for lumping cases together is arbitrary and grouping the data differently generates a different conclusion. At issue is the reliability of any grouping criterion for drawing inferences about the posited relationship between X and Y. The fundamental problem is the *frequency* of different values of ENP in each group: PACL did not control for the probability that a given ENP will occur. Any alleged correlation between ENP and regime collapse requires such a control.

Before regrouping PACL's data to reveal how one can obtain results that contradict their argument, we note another problem. 40 of the 102 presidential cases where ENP>4 in PACL's dataset are from Switzerland.¹⁵ This case is misclassified: Switzerland is not presidential because it does not conform to the first defining principle of presidentialism, separation of origin *and* survival. Parliament formally elects the Swiss executive council - that is, *origin is not*

¹⁴ For reference purposes, consult Table 2.21, page 135 in PACL.

¹⁵ There are slight differences in the number of cases reported in PACL's book and the dataset obtained from Cheibub's website. We use the numbers from the dataset.

separate, although survival is.¹⁶ Moreover, Switzerland’s collegial executive eliminates the “winner take all” aspect of presidentialism and maximizes preference overlap between the two branches. The resulting grand coalitions neutralize any impact of party fragmentation. Thus, even if one disagrees that Switzerland is not presidential, we have good reason to “control for collegial executives” when exploring the relationship between ENP and regime stability. Uruguay also had a collegial executive from 1951 to 1966 in PACL’s dataset, so we can therefore exclude those cases as well.

Whether one includes or excludes these the Swiss and Uruguayan cases, grouping the data as PACL do is misleading because the groups do not contain equal numbers of cases. In Chart 3 we control for the frequency of ENP by splitting PACL’s data into quartiles. Doing so generates a very different conclusion about the relationship between ENP and presidential collapse: here we see a positive relationship between ENP and presidential fragility.

Chart 3 Here

If one objects to excluding cases with collegial executives, PACL’s claim still fails to hold up: Chart 4 shows that with all cases included the probability of regime collapse still leaps from the 2nd to the 3rd quartile and then stays at the same level.

Chart 4 Here

One could of course group the data into terciles, quintiles, or whatever. The best thing to do in this situation is to plot the predicted probabilities of collapse for each reading of ENP, without any grouping. Chart 5 does that for both presidential and parliamentary regimes.¹⁷

¹⁶ Scholars such as Shugart and Carey, Jones, and Mainwaring never include Switzerland as a pure presidential case, and PACL themselves exclude Switzerland and Uruguay when counting “change in political rulers” within a regime, using the collegial executive as the rationale for the difficulty encountered (51n). Elsewhere, Przeworski and Cheibub (1999, 224) exclude Switzerland and Uruguay from presidential cases because of the collegial executive.

¹⁷ The simply involves running a bivariate logit regression of ENP on whether the regime collapses or not in each year, saving the predicted probabilities at each observation, and then plotting the relationship.

Chart 5 Here

Chart 5 confirms the relationship Chart 3 implies. In short, there are better and worse ways to report and display data: when alleging a correlation between X and Y, one must control for the number of cases at each value of X. Doing so undermines PACL's claim about the lack of relationship between ENP and regime collapse and tends to support the conventional view. In any case, our concern is less with the issue of how to display data than with the validity of the indicator used, however displayed. PACL's argument relies on indicators that are too blunt, are context-free, or that generate ambiguous theoretical implications.¹⁸ Given these problems, and given the nature of the relationship revealed in Chart 5, PACL's dismissal of the conventional wisdom that relates fractionalization with problematic presidential governance is unconvincing.

These problems also cast doubt on the argument in Cheibub (2000a; 2002b), Cheibub and Limongi (2002), and Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh (2001) that the combination of presidentialism and multipartism is *not* more problematic than multiparty parliamentarism, because these papers rely on similar data and arguments. For example, Cheibub (2002a, 3) argues that "minority presidents, minority governments, and deadlock do not affect the survival of presidential democracies," yet (for example) his argument confusingly contradicts PACL's (134) conclusion about minority government, relies on a restricted notion of deadlock, and employs a similar argument about ENP as in PACL.

Given our qualms about ENP, we believe Chart 5 implies a need to further explore the hypothesis that posits a relationship between the size and consistency of the president's support coalition and presidential governability, not a summary dismissal of that hypothesis. Chart 5 tends to support two existing arguments. First, that presidentialism is more fragile than

¹⁸ One could also question PACL's case selection and/or coding system. For example, they choose to code Peru's democracy as collapsing in 1989 (p. 100). Such choices make a difference when there are only 24 cases of

parliamentarism regardless of the level of party-system fractionalization. That is, something about presidentialism is a *sufficient* explanation for difference in breakdown probabilities.

Second, although the relationship between ENP and parliamentary breakdown is stable, as ENP increases presidentialism appears to become less stable. Consequently multipartism may not be *necessary* to account for differences between presidentialism and parliamentarism in terms of regime stability, but it may *exacerbate* differences in survival rates.

Two questions follow from Chart 5: why is presidentialism less stable under *all* distributions of partisan support for the executive, and why does presidentialism appear to become more fragile as fractionalization increases? For the first question, Linz (1990, 1994) and others have suggested that fixed terms, dual democratic legitimacies and the “plebiscitary” nature of presidential elections imply a greater likelihood that gridlock can turn into a government crisis, which can in turn become a regime crisis, *regardless of the distribution of partisan preferences*. Echoing Shugart and Carey (1992), Cheibub (2002a) has also suggested that prohibiting reelection contributes to presidentialism’s fragility because it gives incumbents incentives to overthrow the system. Mainwaring (1993), Jones (1995) and others have articulated answers to the second question, that in addition to the problems Linz highlighted, multipartism makes inter-branch negotiation more difficult and accentuates existing problems.

How could research proceed on these questions? Linz’s answers to the first question remain empirically untested. Careful research designs should attempt to isolate the “presidential” causes of breakdown while holding fractionalization constant. Cheibub’s hypothesis should also be further explored, although so few countries have allowed reelection until recently that there may not be enough variation for reliable tests, impeding confirmation.

presidential collapse: Peru had an ENP of 2.31 in 1989, but ENP was 4.01 when Fujimori actually shut the legislature in 1992.

As for the second question, scholars should abandon the use of ENP for research on presidential governance. Instead, we should explore the relationship between the *size of the president's party and/or coalition, the coalescence of the president's cabinet, ideological polarization* (or some combination of these variables) and governance. Chart 6 provides preliminary support for one of these suggestions, plotting the predicted probability of presidential collapse in a given year against the size of the president's party.¹⁹

Chart 6 Here

Not surprisingly, given that one expects a negative correlation between ENP and the size of the president's party, Chart 6 reveals that presidential collapse is three times more likely at the lowest level of president support, where the probability is .09, than at the highest level of support, where the probability is .03 (at the median value the probability is .05). We have suggested that there may be an interaction effect between presidential party size and cabinet dynamics and/or polarization, so this correlation by no means resolves the question, but like Chart 5 it is highly suggestive.

Research should continue to explore the link between the institutional factors that shape parties' vote shares and the institutional and non-institutional factors that shape governability. For example, electoral rules affect parties' vote shares, but institutions are context-free and cannot tell us much about actual coalitional possibilities. Amorim Neto's findings suggest that governance in presidential systems is not simply a function of the "size" of the party system or of the president's legislative coalition. The core element of presidentialism - separation of survival - generates a far wider range of *styles* of governance, which in turn has tremendous implications for the *substance* of governance. This is especially the case when the president lacks a legislative majority. Research on the question of presidential regime performance and survival

¹⁹ We gathered data on the size of the president's party to match the entries in PACL's dataset.

should thus turn away from a focus on partisan fragmentation *per se* and focus on the potential interactive effects between presidential party size and location in policy space, cabinet coalescence, ideological polarization, and presidential support.

In this section we explored recent debates about whether presidentialism is a sufficient cause of relatively greater regime fragility, as well as arguments about how other institutions not necessary to the definition of presidentialism tend to heighten the probability of presidential regime collapse. The evidence we reviewed tends to support the view that presidentialism and multipartism are indeed a “difficult combination.” Nevertheless, the links between presidentialism, multipartism, and governance remain underdetermined, and there is room for substantial empirical and theoretical research.

6) H3b: Separation of Purpose and the Electoral Link between Presidents and Assemblies

Given our arguments in the previous sections, in this section we explore the extent to which separation of purpose affects the level and consistency of presidents’ legislative support. Under parliamentarism separation of purpose is generally low, and PMs’ fates are tightly linked to the fates of their parties because of the unity of survival. With separate origin and survival this linkage has already been cut to some degree, and as separation of purpose increases the linkage between the executive and legislators tends to decrease further. One of the clearest manifestations of separation of purpose is the common variation between presidential and presidential party vote shares. Presidents who win 55% of the vote while their party wins 25% may believe that they respond to a very different electorate than legislators from their own party. If presidential party size (and the size of other parties) is important for presidential governance, then it is imperative that we understand how separation of purpose accounts for this variation.

Substantial separation of purpose is not a given in presidential systems. If ballots are fused, then the electoral fate of the president and members of the president's party are highly linked. In such a system voters might focus even *more* on the national tenor of elections than in a UK-style system, where voters choose an MP based upon which party they expect that MP will support in the executive. With fused ballots under presidentialism, voters might reasonably think they are *directly* choosing the executive and care relatively less about the legislative results.

However, fused ballots are empirically rare under presidentialism (Jones 2001). When ballots are not fused, separation of purpose increases: voters cast one ballot for the executive and another for the assembly, often at different times. Voters can reason differently about each choice, and they may be able to cast votes for politicians from different parties for each branch. This creates the opportunity for presidential and legislative vote totals for the same party to vary substantially, and in terms of politicians' behavior it means that candidates for the legislature and the presidency can campaign and win votes more or less independently of each other. It also means that the fates of legislators within a given party are less linked to each other because their success or failure is relatively less linked to voters' perceptions of the party's national profile.

Separation of purpose affects both the size and consistency of presidents' legislative support: high separation of purpose means that the size of the president's party could vary *within* a term and also that a president's legislative contingent has stronger incentives to "abandon ship" when sailing gets rough or as the term nears its end. Scholars have identified several institutions that contribute to separation of purpose, but comparativists have largely not built on Shugart and Carey's (1992), Shugart's (1995), Jones (1995), and Mainwaring and Shugart's (1997) research on how separation of purpose affects the electoral link between presidents and assemblies.

Comparativists should build on this research as well the American politics literature that suggests that three elements of separation of purpose affect presidential legislative success: the

electoral cycle, presidential “coattail effects,” and ballot structure (see e.g. Campbell 1997; Burden and Kimball 1998). For example, presidents usually lose legislative support at midterm elections. That is, electoral cycles create a different dynamic than under parliamentarism: presidents may face different legislative majorities during their term, and may thus have to adjust their goals accordingly. Similarly, the literature on presidential “coattails” suggests that the degree to which presidents can affect the *electoral* success of their copartisans during both on- and off-year elections has a tremendous effect on their subsequent *policy* success.

Shugart (1995) and Jones (1995) have made the most important contributions to how separation of purpose affects presidential support. They demonstrated a strong link between the electoral cycle, increased legislative fragmentation, and decreased presidential support. However, little additional research exists on these lines. Relying on ENP, Jones (1997) and Samuels (2000a) have explored how federalism weakens presidents’ linkage to legislators from their parties in Argentina and Brazil, and Samuels (2000b) has employed methods not subject to the particular criticism about ENP to explore the same subject. Amorim Neto (2002) and Amorim Neto and Santos (2001) have also confirmed that the electoral cycle is related to presidential support on roll-calls in Brazil. These single-country studies point to the importance of separation of purpose as a critical determinant of variation in presidential party size and consistency of support. Future research should explore how institutions shape the extent and consistency of presidential support, thus indirectly shaping presidential regime performance.²⁰

7) H3c: Institutions and Public Policy

Do the core differences between presidentialism and parliamentarism generate differences in the policy process? Although some scholars emphasize the importance of regime

type, others advocate approaches based on interests rather than institutions. Still other scholars downplay the distinction between regimes and suggest that the debate between presidentialism and parliamentarism is pitched at too high a level to yield meaningful insights about political outcomes. For these scholars the complex variation within each regime means that generalizations about differences between regime types are either impossible or must be highly qualified. We side with those who suggest that even the minimal definition of presidentialism is sufficient to produce non-trivial variation in policy-making. Three examples follow.

First, separate survival means that policy making in presidential systems should be more public and transparent than in parliamentary systems. For example, Persson *et al.* (1997) have argued that the separation of powers, by constitutionally engendering conflicts of interest between branches of government, encourages greater information revelation to voters. Regardless of which branch is the agenda-setter, separate origin and survival opens the possibility of significant policy differences between the branches. Although inter-branch negotiation no doubt occurs before proposals are formally submitted, the back and forth between the branches in presidential systems (and, in bicameral systems, between the chambers) tends to produce information about the policy preferences of different actors. In the modal parliamentary system, the policy dialogue between the legislative and executive branches is much less detailed and informative. Important debates and compromises over the substance of policy occur within the executive branch and prior to submission to the assembly. For this reason, according to Pierson and Weaver (1993), proposals that lack sufficient support within governing coalitions “never see the light of day” in parliamentary systems, whereas their introduction more commonly leads to legislative failures in presidential systems.

²⁰ Jones and Samuels are currently engaged in a project to measure presidential coattails cross-nationally.

Executive unilateral authority might be a way to circumvent the legislature and thus reduce the available policy information. Similarly, minority parliamentary governments might encourage information-production in those systems, as members of the executive would be forced to consult with legislators more often than under majority government. However, presidential systems still ought to produce more policy information. Even in cases where executive authority is high, the tug-of-war between the branches still works to generate publicity about actors' policy positions. An example comes from Argentina, where Menem's declining authority over Peronist back-benchers as his second term advanced resulted in increasingly bold legislative efforts to alter the budget, typically to benefit the provinces (Eaton 2002). Although the legislature did not override many of the vetoes Menem issued in response to these modifications, the friction between the branches nevertheless produced information about actors' stands on policy and about the fragility of Menem's support within his own party. Peronist legislators used the policy process to register their displeasure with Menem precisely because they could do so without risking early elections. Thus separate survival raises the visibility of the policy process. In contrast, parliamentarism, even under minority government, shifts policy disputes to less visible locations, because MPs must take into account the potential that a public spat will lead to an unanticipated early election, with unforeseen consequences.

Given the costs voters face to acquire information about politicians' actions, the observation that presidential systems generate more policy-relevant information is significant. The quality of information about policy plays a critical role in theories that seek to explain how voters hold representatives accountable (see below). And arguably, this hypothesis about the differential production of information is even more important in the world's many new democracies, where information about policy tends to be particularly hard to come by.

A second policy difference is related to our discussion of “resoluteness” and “decisiveness”: separate origin and survival ensures that interest groups will have at least two different institutional entry points in presidential systems (Vogel 1993). The greater number of access points in turn suggests that demand-side pressures may have relatively greater success at influencing the policy process in presidential systems, thereby increasing the cost of moving policy from the status quo. Much of this depends on how the legislature is organized and the internal rules that govern legislative business, which vary significantly. For example, in many Latin American systems the executive branch is much more active in organizing legislative action than is common in the US (Cox and Morgenstern 2001). For pressure groups, this should decrease the relative attractiveness of courting legislators.

Nevertheless, despite variation within both presidential and parliamentary regimes, the unity of survival in parliamentary systems limits how responsive legislators can be to lobbies. In contrast, in all presidential systems, separate survival allows legislators to more aggressively court interest groups without risking the fall of the government and losing their jobs. Even in systems where presidents have high powers, the simple right to review legislation in combination with separate survival can lead legislators to demand substantive modifications in response to interest group and other pressures (Eaton 2002). As suggested in our earlier analysis of “resoluteness,” a greater number of entry points for interest groups in presidentialism suggests that the costs to building legislative support for policy-making may be more costly in presidential systems, under both unified and divided government (however, see Persson and Tabellini 1999). Using a similar logic, scholars have also suggested that corruption may be greater in presidential systems (see e.g. Gerring and Thacker 2001; Kunicova and Rose-Ackerman 2001; Kunicova 2001). This in turn suggests an unexplored answer to the issue of democratic breakdown: holding everything else constant (including fragmentation and polarization), perhaps the

separation of powers increases the *costs* in terms of side-payments of maintaining support for the incumbent government and thus the existing regime.

A third contrast in the policy process follows from our discussion of the fundamental differences in cabinet dynamics between presidentialism and parliamentarism. Cabinets serve two purposes: building legislative support to *pass* legislation, and managing the bureaucracy to *implement* legislation. Our concern here is with the latter dynamic. Although little research has addressed this topic (Moe 1990; Moe and Caldwell 1994; Palmer 1995; Siavelis 2000; Huber and McCarty 2001), presidential cabinet control suggests substantial differences in modes of bureaucratic management, even when the preferences of the executive and legislative branches overlap. For example, Huber and Shipan (N.d., 9) argue that when faced with similar policy issues, politicians in different bargaining environments will design bureaucratic control mechanisms differently. Cabinet autonomy is one such difference in bargaining environment. As noted above, differences in bargaining environments affect the quality and the type of information available to each actor, which in turn affects their perceptions of the benefits and costs of a set of actions, which in turn shapes actors' strategies.

When bureaucrats use their discretion over policy implementation against politicians' intent, exerting political control will be more difficult in presidential systems. Thus while separation of survival suggests executive autonomy to control the bureaucracy, principal-agent theory (e.g. Weingast 1984; Moe and Caldwell 1994, Huber and Shipan N.d.) implies that presidentialism creates incentives for both the president and legislators to design more detailed bureaucratic oversight mechanisms. Presidential cabinet control creates problems for legislators vis-à-vis the bureaucracy in terms of policy implementation: if, as Amorim Neto argues, a president can pay less attention to parties when naming a cabinet than a PM, this increases legislators' incentives in presidential systems to prefer detailed bureaucratic rules. Under

parliamentarism legislators will be more suspicious of the policy implementation process only under minority government. However, unlike their peers in every presidential system, legislators in parliamentary systems that produce minority governments still have at their disposal the means to terminate a cabinet they suspect of using the bureaucracy against their interests.

This is largely unexplored territory (see Eaton 2000). The relationship between the wider variety of cabinet types under presidentialism and bureaucratic management should be connected to emerging work in based in principal-agent theory. More generally, differences in cabinet control between presidential and parliamentary systems ought to generate substantially different political incentives for bureaucratic management and thus different dynamics of policy implementation in presidential and parliamentary systems.

In sum, although we agree that demand-side factors may be relatively more important for the policy process than differences between regimes, the importance of demand-side factors does not make institutional variation irrelevant. We identified three differences in terms of the policy process that follow from differences in regime times. Policy-making is likely to be relatively more visible under presidential government, it is likely to permit greater interest-group influence, and is likely to result in different relationships between both the executive and legislative branches and the bureaucracy. These differences are crucial for understanding how policy is produced and implementation, and at what cost to society.

8) H3d: Presidentialism, Representation and Accountability

Several of the issues discussed in the previous section are also relevant to discussions of the differences between presidentialism and parliamentarism in terms of representation and accountability. Shugart and Carey (1992) suggested a decade ago that presidentialism has the potential to maximize different kinds of representation and accountability - for example, for local

and national politics - at the same time. Under parliamentarism, given the smaller possible range of separation of purpose, the possibility for similar dynamic is less likely. Unfortunately, little research has followed up on this important hypothesis.

In terms of representation, unexplored questions include do voters think of presidents as they do PMs or do they perceive their roles differently? Likewise, do voters perceive a difference between legislators' roles in presidential and parliamentary regimes? Do different perceptions of representation across regime types impact voters' satisfaction with democracy or with incumbent performance? Does their satisfaction with democracy depend on their evaluation of the executive or the legislature in presidential systems? Is this satisfaction a function of executive unilateral power or separation of purpose? Is the likelihood of "party government" or what Przeworski, Stokes and Manin (1999) called "mandate representation" (which occurs when elected officials stick to their campaign promises) different in presidential and parliamentary regimes? In this regard, Stokes (1999) found that minority and coalition presidents are more likely to undertake policy "U-turns." Stokes' research suggests a general hypothesis about the potential for "mandate representation" under presidential government, which Shugart and Samuels (N.d.) and Samuels (2002) elaborate: *mandate representation will be less likely under presidentialism*, because differences in executive unilateral power and separation of purpose as well differences in party structures in presidential and parliamentary regimes encourage both voters and politicians to behave differently, leading to different conceptions of representation.

In terms of accountability, little theoretical or empirical work has explored whether, how, or to what extent voters hold governments accountable in different ways under different regimes. On the one hand, Persson's argument mentioned above suggests greater information revelation and thus at least the potential for greater accountability under presidentialism. Shugart and Carey (1992) and Samuels and Shugart (N.d.) provide a more nuanced hypothesis: different

types of presidentialism may permit voters to hold presidents *more or less* accountable; that is, certain institutional formats of presidentialism encourage or discourage accountability.

Research that directly explores the link between presidentialism and accountability is scarce. For example, economic voting research has largely ignored potential differences between the ability of voters in presidential and parliamentary systems to hold governments accountable.²¹ There are strong theoretical reasons to suppose that such differences exist. As noted, Shugart and Carey (1992) suggested that the separation of powers offers voters the potential to reward and/or punish presidents and legislators differently or for different things. Moreover, given Powell and Whitten's (1993) suggestion that "clarity of responsibility" increases voter capacity to hold government accountable, we might suppose that voters would hold presidents relatively more accountable than even single-party parliamentary governments, given that presidents are clearly identifiable as uniquely responsible for national policy.

Research should also explore whether and to what extent legislative or cabinet coalitions obscure accountability in presidential or parliamentary systems. Scholars could incorporate the different dynamics and theoretical implications of coalitions in each regime type into theories of accountability. Scholars should also consider the impact of off-year legislative elections in presidential systems. Do voters outside the US respond as scholars suppose they would, i.e., are off-year legislative elections a referendum on the president's performance?

²¹ Przeworski and Cheibub (1999) argue that economic conditions do not affect presidents' "survival in office." They suggest that this finding is both "surprising and dismaying" (229). However, the conclusion is unsupported because the authors include in their analysis cases where presidents must leave office because of term limits. In these cases by definition a president cannot survive in office another year, and as such economic conditions are irrelevant to survival. Confusingly, the authors recognize this at the end of the chapter and state that "it is therefore *not* surprising that economic performance has no effect on the probability that the incumbent survives in office" (235, emphasis added). Unfortunately, the authors' analysis also does not permit valid inferences about the impact of economic conditions on the remaining cases, because they consider cases where presidents could run for reelection with cases where presidents did not survive in office due to the collapse of the democratic regime. This illogically supposes both that coups that destroy democracies are a form of democratic accountability (the paper's object of investigation) as well as assumes that coups embody an equivalent dynamic to voters' retrospective

Moreover, comparativists have ignored the possibility that voters reward or punish the incumbent president's *legislative party* or *coalition* (but see Lewis-Beck 1997). The economic voting literature has explored only executive elections under presidentialism, which assumes by omission that voters do not hold legislators in the president's coalition co-responsible. This may or may not be true, but empirical research, which tends to pool *executive* elections in presidential systems with parliamentary (i.e. legislative) elections, provides little guidance. Research on the US suggests that voters do hold politicians in both branches of government accountable for economic outcomes, although perhaps to different degrees (e.g. Radcliff 1988; but see Erickson 1990).

At a general level, we hypothesize that variables such as the electoral system and legislative structure will be critical determinants of the "clarity of responsibility" and thus of accountability in presidential systems, much as in parliamentary systems (Powell and Whitten 1993; Powell 2001; Anderson 1995, 2000). Perhaps these variables also have different effects in different democratic regimes because of different ways in which voters hold legislators accountable in presidential and parliamentary systems. Here again we hypothesize that the critical variables for accountability may be executives' unilateral powers, the separation of purpose, and the degree of preference divergence between the executive and pivotal legislator.

9) Conclusion

In this paper we reaffirmed the importance of the differences between presidential and parliamentary regimes. We first showed that institutions promoting unilateral executive power and separation of purpose are more likely under presidentialism. Then we confirmed that even the minimal differences between regimes are *necessary and sufficient* causes of differences in political output. Moreover, we showed that similar configurations of non-core institutions have a

decisions to toss an incumbent from office or not given certain economic conditions. Thus the authors' conclusion

greater impact under presidentialism, thus generating more substantial differences in political output. This third hypothesis suggests that a “veto players” approach that does not consider the differences between regime types as prior to other institutional variation may be theoretically mis-specified: differences in regime performance due to variables such as electoral rules, bicameralism, or malapportionment for example, may be a function of differences in regime type to begin with, since the presence and importance of these “smaller” variables is associated with presidentialism.

We suggest that the concepts of unilateral executive power and separation of purpose can guide future research on the questions addressed in this paper. We also hope that we have provided at least some useful suggestions for how this research could proceed. Although scholarship has made considerable advances in terms of understanding the differences between presidential and parliamentary government, many key questions remain unasked and thus unanswered. Moreover, emerging research continues to pull existing arguments in new directions.

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Figure 1: Relationship Between Executive Power and Separation of Purpose

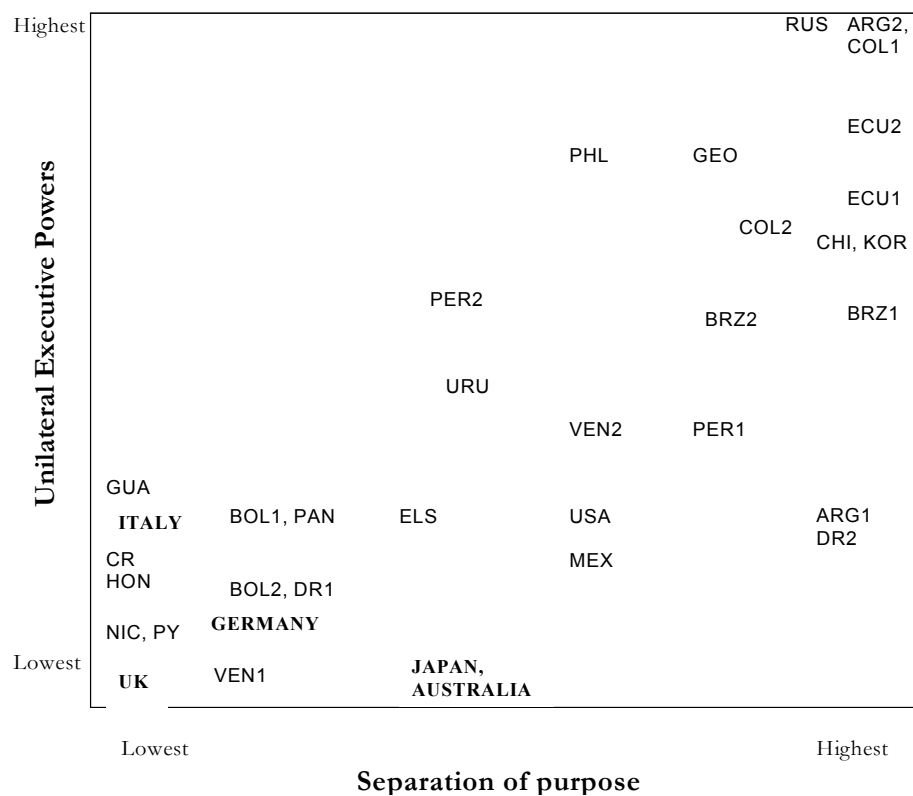


Table 1: Fractionalization and ENP

A	B	C	D	E	ENP
33.0	33.0	33.0	0.0	0.0	3.06
40.0	30.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	2.94
45.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	5.0	3.17
49.0	30.0	11.0	5.0	5.0	2.88

