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Divided Executives and Democratisation

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Divided Executives and Democratisation

Abstract

This article examines the effect of a divided executive on democratisation in mixed systems where presidents are directly elected and prime ministers are responsible to the legislature. A divided executive is where the president and prime minister are not from the same party. The importance of a divided executive is hypothesised to vary according to the relative powers of the president and prime minister. In mixed systems where either the president or the prime minister is the dominant actor, then a divided executive will not affect democratisation. However, where both the president and prime minister have significant independent powers, then a divided executive should have a negative impact on democratisation because of the potential for destabilising intra-executive conflict. Using an ordinal logit model, the results show that mixed systems with a dual executive do not perform significantly worse than mixed systems where there is one dominant actor. This suggests that the standard wisdom about the impact of a divided executive in a mixed system is misplaced.

Divided Executives and Democratisation

There is a standard and highly intuitive wisdom about the impact of executive-legislative relations on the process of democratisation. All else equal, the process is more likely to be successful when the executive is responsible to a single representative authority. This is the basis of the commonly held conviction that “parliamentary government should be the general guideline for constitution writers in divided societies” (Lijphart, 2004, p. 102). In a parliamentary system, the central figure in the executive is the prime minister, who heads a government that is collectively responsible to the legislature. By contrast, the process of democratisation is less likely to be successful when there are dual lines of responsibility. This is the basis of criticisms of presidentialism (Linz, 1994). Here, the executive is unified in the form of the directly elected president, but there may be conflict between the executive and the legislature when the president fails to enjoy majority support in the latter (Stepan & Skach, 1993). This is also the basis of criticisms of mixed systems. Here, the executive may be divided between a directly elected president and a prime minister who heads a government that is collectively responsible to the legislature. When the president and prime minister are from different political forces there is the potential for intra-executive conflict (Valenzuela, 2004, p. 17). Such conflict may lead to a political stalemate that

encourages either the military to intervene, or the president to assume authoritarian powers as a way of breaking the deadlock.

In this article, we focus on the impact of a divided executive on the process of democratisation in a mixed system of government, i.e. a system where there is both a directly elected president and a prime minister who is responsible to the legislature. A textbook example of the danger of intra-executive conflict in such a system occurred in Niger in 1996. Here, the 1995 parliamentary elections returned a majority opposed to the incumbent president, Mahmane Ousmane. When the new majority elected a prime minister, Hama Amadou, there was a stand-off between the two parts of the executive: "As both president and prime minister went 'on strike', refusing to carry out duties prescribed by the constitution for the normal functioning of the government, a near-total breakdown in constitutional procedures resulted" (Villalón and Idrissa, 2005, p. 38). In January 1996, the military stepped in and Niger's first experiment with democracy came to an end.

In our sample of countries with a mixed system of government, we hypothesise that a divided executive is more likely to have a negative impact on democratisation when it occurs in countries where both the president and the prime minister have significant independent political powers than in countries where only one actor exercises significant power. We define a divided executive as the situation where the president and prime minister are from different political forces. To test for the effect of a divided executive on democratisation in

our sample, we use Freedom House's classification of countries as Free, Partly Free and Not Free.

Identifying the effect of a divided executive on democratisation is an important research theme. In January 2004, members of the Constitutional Loya Jirga approved a new constitution for Afghanistan. As late as September 2003 the draft constitution had included provision for a mixed system with both a directly elected president and a prime minister responsible to the Wolesi Jirga, the lower house of the Afghan National Assembly (Rubin, 2004, p. 12). In the end, a pure presidential system was recommended. There were political interests at stake in the choice of the system (ibid.). However, a key concern about the proposed system was the potential for intra-executive conflict. One of the participants in the drafting procedure summed up the reasons why presidentialism was chosen ahead of a mixed system: "There would be no uncertainty about who held executive power in Kabul, and Washington would retain the benefit of having a clearly identifiable Afghan partner ..." (ibid.). Of course, the success or failure of democratisation depends on many factors. All the same, there is a consensus that institutional features can make a difference to the outcome of the process. Even if Afghanistan finished by rejecting a mixed system, many democratically fragile countries have decided to adopt such a system. They include Timor-Leste in 2002, the Central African Republic in 2005, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in February 2006. Identifying the

effect of a divided executive on democratisation in such systems will help to determine whether or not they really should be avoided.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. The next section identifies the potential for a divided executive in a mixed system where there is a directly elected president and a prime minister responsible to the legislature. We then outline the standard wisdom that intra-executive conflict has a negative impact on the process of democratisation. Having established the hypotheses to be tested, we then identify the sample, the variables and the statistical model. We then present the results of the model. There is a brief conclusion.

Institutional divisions in parliamentary, presidential and mixed systems of government

When drafting a constitution, there are three basic systems of government from which to choose. (See Figure 1). Each system has its specific advantages and disadvantages. In this article, we focus on the issue of institutional conflict. Parliamentary systems provide the least opportunity for institutional divisions. Presidential systems provide the opportunity for division between the executive and the legislature. Mixed systems provide the potential for division within the executive between the president and the prime minister. This situation is the

basis of a general preference for parliamentarism over presidentialism and the reason why mixed systems are rarely recommended.

Figure 1 about here

In parliamentary systems, there is a single line of political accountability. The prime minister is the dominant individual within the executive and the prime minister and cabinet are collectively responsible to the legislature. In such systems, there is no guarantee that the prime minister will enjoy majority support in the legislature. Even so, there is little opportunity for prolonged institutional conflict. Either the legislature will vote no-confidence in the government and the prime minister will be replaced, or it will tolerate the government and the prime minister will continue to be the dominant figure within the executive.¹ In such systems, there may be tensions between the prime minister and the head of state – either a monarch or an indirectly elected president. However, in democracies these tensions are never regime-threatening. The single and direct line of accountability between the government and the legislature means that the prime minister's legitimacy is ultimately uncontested. Unless there is an authoritarian situation, as in Nepal, then ongoing intra-executive conflict will not occur in a parliamentary system.

¹ Of course, the prime minister's political power will depend on many factors, including the degree of fractionalisation of the legislature. The point being made is that the prime minister will not face competition from the president or monarch.

In presidential systems, there are two lines of political accountability. The president is directly elected and acts as both head of state and head of government. Therefore, there is no possibility of division within the executive.² By contrast, the president and the legislature both serve for a fixed term and so are independent of each other. As a result, in cases where the president fails to enjoy majority support in the legislature, then there is the opportunity for prolonged institutional conflict between the two branches of government as both institutions have an indisputable claim to popular legitimacy. Thus, in presidential systems the dual lines of accountability create the potential for institutional conflict. However, this conflict can only occur between the executive and the legislature.

In mixed systems, there are also two lines of political accountability. The president is directly elected for a fixed term, while the prime minister and cabinet are collectively responsible to the legislature. The system is mixed in that, as in parliamentary systems, there is no opportunity for ongoing institutional conflict between the prime minister and the legislature. If the legislature disapproves of the prime minister, then the government will be voted out of office. Thus, the prime minister will always have the support the legislature.³ By

² There may be division between the president and cabinet ministers, but for the purposes of this article we exclude this scenario.

³ This is true in the sense that a prime minister who is opposed by the legislature may always be voted out of office.

contrast, as in presidential systems, there is the potential for prolonged institutional conflict between the president and the legislature because the two institutions have equally indisputable claims to popular legitimacy. In contrast to presidential systems systems, though, in mixed systems this conflict is found within the executive. When it occurs, the source of the conflict lies in the fact that the majority in the legislature is opposed to the president, but the manifestation of this conflict occurs in the executive between the president and the prime minister. Thus, mixed systems are the only systems that provide the potential for ongoing conflict within a divided executive.

The problem of a divided executive in a mixed system of government

There are problems associated with parliamentary, presidential and mixed systems. In parliamentary systems, the single line of accountability can mean that there is a rapid turnover of governments in the event that the legislature is highly fractionalised. In presidential systems, the zero-sum nature of presidential elections may encourage the rise of presidents who feel they have the right to dominate the political process by virtue of their direct election. At the same time, the dual source of legitimacy in such systems means that presidents may fail to enjoy majority support in the legislature, so creating “the possibility of an

impasse between the chief executive and the legislative body for which there is no constitutionally available impasse-breaking device" (Stepan & Skach, 1993, p. 18). Moreover, the fixed-term nature of both institutions may mean that the conflict is protracted, encouraging authoritarian presidents to subvert the rule of law and/or leading the military to intervene as a *poder moderador* (Linz, 1994, p. 7). In mixed systems, the potential disadvantages are cumulative. As in parliamentary systems, the fact that the prime minister is responsible to parliament may mean that there is a high turnover of governments if the legislature is highly fractionalised. Moreover, as in presidential systems, the fact that the president is directly elected may encourage the rise of populist and/or authoritarian presidents. Indeed, when the president is supported by a loyal parliamentary majority Lijphart argues that mixed systems "actually make it possible for the president to be even more powerful than in most pure presidential systems" (Lijphart, 2004, p. 102). However, the most commonly cited disadvantage of mixed systems is unique to this form of government, namely the problem of potentially destabilising conflict caused by an executive "divided against itself" (Pierce, 1991).

In mixed systems the problem of a divided executive is most pronounced when the president is from one party or political grouping and the prime minister is from an opposed party or grouping. This situation corresponds to French-style cohabitation. There is general agreement that cohabitation is not intrinsically problematic. For example, Suleiman (1994) has outlined in great

detail the reasons why France survived the first potentially destabilising period of cohabitation from 1986-88. However, Linz and Stepan (1996, p. 286) identify the circumstances when the effects of cohabitation may be much less benign:

When supporters of one or the other component of semi-presidentialism feel that the country would be better off if one branch of the democratically legitimated structure of rule would disappear or be closed, the democratic system is endangered and suffers an overall loss of legitimacy, since those questioning one or the other will tend to consider the political system undesirable as long as the side they favor does not prevail.

In these circumstances, they argue that “policy conflicts often express themselves as a conflict between two branches of democracy” (ibid., p. 287). In this context, Stepan and Suleiman (1995) recommend against the export of a French-style mixed system to democratising countries.

The problem of a divided executive is compounded by the worry that intra-executive conflict may not be confined to periods of cohabitation. For Linz, mixed systems are inherently problematic: “The result inevitably is a lot of politicking and intrigues that may delay decision making and lead to contradictory policies due to the struggle between the president and prime minister” (Linz, 1994, p. 55). In this regard, Linz is particularly concerned about the relationship between the executive and the military. In mixed systems there may be three or even four major actors: the president, the prime minister, the

minister for defence and the joint chief of staff of the armed forces. In this situation, he states: "The hierarchical line that is so central to military thinking acquires a new complexity" (ibid, p. 57). This complexity leaves room for "constitutional ambiguities regarding one of the central issues of many democracies: the subordination of the military to the democratically elected authorities and hopefully to civilian supremacy" (ibid, p. 59).

In theory, then, the problem of a divided executive can occur not only during periods of cohabitation but in other situations as well. In his paper on France, Suleiman explains why: "The reason for this lies in the competitive element that the system introduces" (Suleiman, 1994, p. 158). For example, Protsyk has emphasised the potential for intra-executive conflict during coalition government. He says the "fact that the president and prime minister belong to the same majority coalition ... does not serve as a sufficient condition for avoiding intraexecutive conflict" (Protsyk, 2005, p. 13). He continues: "... the incentives for president and prime minister to cooperate might be much less compelling when they are members of a highly factionalised party or of different parties that form a governing coalition than when they belong to the same organizationally disciplined and ideologically coherent political party" (ibid., pp. 13-14).

There is a further scenario that renders a divided executive potentially problematic. In the literature on presidentialism, there is a concern that the direct election of the president encourages populist candidates (Linz, 1990, p. 61). Such

candidates may try to appeal to the public over the head of political parties, thus bypassing traditional political channels. These candidates often style themselves as independent candidates or as candidates of the nation as a whole. Once elected, though, such presidents may be faced with a prime minister who has an explicit party affiliation and who promotes particular party interests. In this case, there is further potential for intra-executive conflict. It should be noted, though, that the same potential for conflict is unlikely to be present in the case where there is a party-affiliated president and a non-party prime minister as, invariably, non-party prime ministers are technocrats rather than populists.

Thus, there are good theoretical reasons to suggest that a divided executive in a mixed system of government is problematic generally and that the problems are not confined to periods of cohabitation. In terms of empirical studies, there is some statistical evidence to support the theoretical arguments, but in general terms the literature tends to be impressionistic. For example, in her study of semi-presidential systems Moestrup (2004) warns against the adoption of this regime type.⁴ She finds that Linz's worries "about the possibility of political stalemate during divided government are supported by the empirical

⁴ There is an ongoing debate about what constitutes a semi-presidential system (Siaroff, 2003). We sidestep this debate. We note, though, that there would be general agreement that all semi-presidential regimes come under our heading of a mixed system. There would not be general agreement that all countries under our heading of a mixed system are semi-presidential.

evidence" (Moestrup, 2004, p. 222). On the basis of a statistical model, she concludes that semi-presidentialism "does not appear to be particularly well-suited for young democracies" (ibid., p. 228). Similarly, Protsyk (2005) finds that there was a high level of intraexecutive conflict in Eastern European regimes from 1991-2002. He writes: "... intraexecutive conflict was usually initiated by presidents who challenged the prime minister's leadership over cabinet" (ibid., p. 19). In terms of case studies, recent events in Timor-Leste suggest that a divided executive was at least part of the cause of the country's recent difficulties. In June 2006, President Gusmão threatened to resign unless Prime Minister Alkatiri stepped down.⁵ Indeed, the Timor-Leste case is particularly interesting because President Gusmão is a non-party figure, whereas Prime Minister Alkatiri represented the Fretilin party that had a large majority in the legislature. This situation was similar to the one in Poland during the Wałęsa presidency and, for Linz and Stepan (1996), this period was particularly difficult for the country: "Because of party fragmentation and its dualistic deadlock, Poland's efforts to advance toward a balanced budget and a mixed economy stalled" (ibid., p. 282). Overall, what empirical evidence there is seems to support the theoretical claims that a divided executive is damaging in mixed systems of government. In the rest of this paper, we test this standard wisdom.

⁵ See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/5105590.stm>

Sample, hypotheses, variables and model specification

In this article we examine the effect of a divided executive on democratisation. Our sample is mixed systems of government, i.e. systems where the constitution allows for both a directly elected president and a prime minister who is responsible to the legislature. There are currently 54 mixed systems in the world. (See Figure 2). In addition, other countries have had mixed systems in the past but have since abandoned them. For example, there was a mixed system in Burundi from 1992-96, in the Comoros from 1979-85 and from 1992-2000, in Congo-Brazzaville from 1992-97, and in Moldova from 1991-2000. We include these countries in our sample.

Figure 2 about here.

This sample allows us to test for the effect of divided government because it keeps constant the basic institutional architecture of countries, yet at the same time it allows for variation among the set of countries within the sample. For the purposes of this article, a key feature of the sample is that it includes countries with one dominant actor within the executive as well as countries where the president and prime minister share powers. The sample includes “hyperpresidential” (Lijphart, 2004, p. 102) countries like Georgia where the president is far and away the most powerful political figure in the executive. It also includes countries such as Slovenia where there is a figurehead president and where the prime minister controls the executive. In both types of situations,

we hypothesise that a divided executive is unlikely to have a significant effect on the process of democratisation because the dominant political actor will continue to control the decision-making process and because there is little potential for intra-executive conflict. In addition, the sample also includes countries with a dual executive like Niger where both the president and the prime minister enjoy significant political powers. In these countries, the potential for intra-executive conflict is greatest. Therefore, we hypothesise that a divided executive is likely to have a negative impact on democratisation when it occurs in countries where both the president and prime minister exercise significant political powers.

We distinguish between three types of countries in our sample of mixed systems of government. We identify presidential-like countries where the president dominates the executive and where the prime minister merely implements the president's decisions. We identify parliamentary-like countries where the president is directly elected but where the prime minister dominates the executive and where the president is merely a figurehead. We also identify dual executives where both the directly elected president and the prime minister share powers. We do not imply that there is an exact balance of power in countries with a dual executive, but both actors must have at least some significant independent powers of their own.

When classifying countries we rely primarily on the constitutional situation. (See Figure 3 for a list of classifications.) We examine the constitution identifying whether the president or prime minister has overwhelming

responsibility for political decision making, or whether there is some degree of authority. We focus on standard issues such as the appointment of ministers and public officials, powers over the assembly, decree and emergency powers, reserved policy domains and so on. To the extent that we are only trying to distinguish between three basic varieties of mixed systems, we do not need to code constitutions or provide scores for presidential and prime ministerial powers. We just need to identify basic authority relations. That said, we realise that constitutions can sometimes be unreliable power maps. Therefore, we use secondary literature to validate whether or not the constitution provides a basically accurate picture of the actual practice of political power. If it does not, then we classify a country on the basis of the actual power relations rather than the constitutional situation. This point applies to Austria and Iceland. We classify these countries as parliamentary-like, even though their constitutions give significant powers to the president. In both cases, the president's powers have become defunct and political authority rests solely with the head of government (Sartori, 1997, p. 126). For example, Muller (1999, p. 22) states that "Austria is generally considered as a parliamentary system by leading comparativists" and that these authors "by an large echo what specialists on Austrian politics have observed since long ago" (ibid). Talking about the president of Iceland, Kristinsson (1999, p. 86) notes:

The office was created with the establishment of a republic in 1944 to take over the functions of the Danish monarch, which were

largely ceremonial by that time. Many of the articles in the constitution dealing with the presidency are in fact transcribed from the constitution of 1918, when Iceland was still a kingdom, modelled on earlier Icelandic and Danish constitutions. Hence, it is customary in Iceland to regard the form of government as a parliamentary one, essentially similar to the Danish one, despite the different ways heads of state come into office.

We are confident that the classification of countries in Figure 3 matches the standard judgement of comparativists and country experts.⁶

Figure 3 about here.

Having identified the different types of mixed systems, we define a divided executive as the situation where the president and prime minister are from different political forces. In our sample, we identify three types of divided executives in mixed systems. We identify the situation where the president and

⁶ We checked our classifications in Figure 3 against equivalent classifications of mixed regimes by Siaroff (2003, pp. 299-300) – his category 5 – and classifications of presidential and mixed regimes by Cheibub (2002, pp. 137-138). There is a very high degree of overlap between three classifications. That said, it should be noted that no two sets of classifications will be exactly the same due to the subjective nature of the exercise. For example, there are differences between Siaroff and Cheibub's classification. Moreover, it should be remembered that both Siaroff and Cheibub classify regimes on the basis of presidential powers, whereas we are concerned with both presidential and prime ministerial powers.

prime minister are from opposing political parties.⁷ This corresponds to classic French-style cohabitation between political enemies where the potential for intra-executive conflict is high. We also identify the situation where the president and prime minister are from opposing political parties, even if these parties are part of a broad governing alliance or coalition. We call this intra-coalition conflict. In these cases, even though the president and prime minister may have, or have had, a common purpose, they may also have diverging party interests that can be the source of tension and intra-executive conflict. Finally, we identify the situation where there is a non-party president but where the prime minister is a member of a political party. As outlined above, if such presidents are faced with a prime minister who has an explicit party affiliation and who promotes particular party interests, then there is further potential for intra-executive conflict. Our measures are cumulative. Thus, the variable called “intra-coalition” includes cohabitation as well as presidents and prime ministers from different parties within a governing coalition. The “non-party president” variable includes cases of cohabitation and intra-coalition divided executives as well as non-party presidents.

To test for the effect of a divided executive on democratisation in the different types of countries in our sample, we use Freedom House’s classification

⁷ We rely on the affiliations given in www.worldstatesmen.org/. We then use secondary sources to confirm whether or not examples of a divided executive are cases of cohabitation.

of countries as Free, Partly Free and Not Free as our dependent variable. We begin in 1976, when Freedom House had just begun to classify countries in this way. From that time, we take the annual rating of each country as noted in the Freedom House 2005 survey (Freedom House, 2005). As noted above, the standard wisdom is that newly-democratising countries should avoid mixed systems because of the potential for intra-executive conflict inherent in them. The literature assumes that institutional effects of this sort only 'kick in' when the process of democratisation has begun. Thus, we include countries in our sample only when they have a system where there is both a directly elected president and a prime minister responsible to the legislature *and* when the country is first classed as Partly Free or Free by Freedom House. This means we exclude from our analysis countries such as Cameroon, Chad and Egypt because these countries have always been classified as Not Free, even though for some or all of the 1975-2004 period constitutionally these countries have had a mixed system of government. Equally, we only include a country like Mauritania from 2001 when it was first classed as Partly Free, even though it adopted a mixed system in 1991 when it was still classed as Not Free. We treat the tripartite Freedom House classification as an ordinal variable. We expect lower values of the dependent variable when there is a divided executive in a dual system than when there is a divided executive in a parliamentary-like or presidential-like system.

We control for a standard set of factors that are highlighted in the democratisation literature.⁸ We control for GDP per capita, expressed in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (in constant 2000 international \$). We also control for GDP growth (annual % change). We lag the growth figure by a year. We use the World Bank's World Development Indicators as the source of all our economic data. (For a full list of countries and years in our sample, see Figure 3). In addition, we include legislative fractionalisation as measured by the 2004 version of the World Bank's Database of Political Institutions. This is Rae's fractionalisation index, which equals one if every legislator is a member of a different party and zero if all legislators are the members of the same party. We specify this variable quadratically. On the one hand, very low legislative fractionalisation is bad for democracy because it reduces the legislature's ability to act as a check on the executive and indicates a low level of electoral competition. On the other hand, very high fractionalisation reduces the probability of both an effective legislature and effective cabinet government. Finally, we control for the prior presence of consolidated democracy. We assume that if a country chooses a mixed system when democracy is already the only game in town, then we would expect the system to remain democratic whether or not there is a divided executive and whatever type of mixed system is in place. Using Freedom House scores, we take the Free classification to be a proxy for the

⁸ See Przeworski, et al (2000).

presence of consolidated democracy. So, for example, Mongolia adopted a mixed system of government in 1992 when it was already rated as Free by Freedom House. Missing data leaves us with 638 observations. We use an ordinal logit model to test our hypotheses.

Results

The three types of divided executives identify impressively different numbers of observations. (See Table 1). There are almost fifty per cent more observations of intra-coalition division within the executive than there are of cohabitation, while there are over fifty per cent more cases of non-party presidents governing with party prime ministers than there are of cohabitation and intra-coalition division of the executive combined. According to the Mann-Whitney test, each of the three measures is strongly associated with the Freedom House classification. This represents a good start for the theory, but, of course, it has to survive the inclusion of controls.

Table 1 about here.

We hypothesise that in mixed systems a divided executive will have a different impact on the process of democratization under different institutional situations. Specifically, we hypothesise that the impact will be more negative when there is a dual executive than when there is either a parliamentary-like or a presidential-like executive. Table 2 illustrates that divided executives are

extremely rare in presidential-like mixed systems. The only example of cohabitation in a presidential-like mixed system was in the Central African Republic in 1996. In addition, three further presidential-like observations have had presidents and prime ministers from different parties: the Central African Republic in 1993, Comoros in 1992 and Senegal in 2000. There are ten years of observations of non-party presidents governing with party prime ministers in presidential-like mixed systems. If cohabitation and/or intra-coalition division of the executive are problems for democratization, they can only be substantially so in mixed and parliamentary-like mixed systems.

Table 2 about here.

We proceed by presenting three ordinal logit models in which we predict Freedom House classification using all of our controls and our three measures of divided executives in turn. We excluded the single observation of cohabitation in a presidential-like mixed system, as we did the three further observations of presidents and prime ministers from different coalition parties in a presidential-like mixed system. In these two models, there is only one interaction term for divided executives. These four cases and the ten cases of non-party presidents and party prime ministers in presidential-like mixed systems have been included in the last equation. Therefore, in this model, divided executives are interacted with both mixed and parliamentary-like mixed systems. (See Table 3).

Table 3 about here.

All of the coefficients for the control variables are in the right direction and in most cases they are also statistically significant. The exceptions are lagged growth, which is never significant, and the parliamentary-like type, which is only significant in the cohabitation model. The coefficient for the interaction of cohabitation and dual executive systems is negative, as the theory would predict, but it does not approach statistical significance.⁹ Executives divided between presidents and prime ministers from different cabinet parties perform similarly. The coefficient for non-party presidents and party prime ministers is positive, which is the opposite of what the literature would predict. These results were unaffected by the exclusion of any of the states in the sample.¹⁰

⁹ Obviously, the interaction of two categorical variables (sub-regime type and divided executive) introduces multicollinearity and the possibility of inflated standard errors. However, there are reasons to believe that the insignificance of the divided executive variables is not due to multicollinearity. First, in simple equations, containing the collinear variables themselves, but not the vital regime and legislative fractionalization controls, the variables are significant. So, the interaction terms in themselves do not preclude a statistically significant result. Second, the equations presented above do not exhibit the characteristically very large coefficients and standard errors of very severe multicollinearity.

¹⁰ Excluding Macedonia from the cohabitation or intra-coalition models precluded convergence. In the non-party president model the value of the dependent variable was completely determined for the parliamentary-like states. Macedonia is the only case of a parliamentary-like state which has at any stage been Partly Free, rather than Free.

In sum, our data from a near 30-year period and 47 states around the world reproduces the robust results of other studies in terms of the effect of wealth, consolidation and legislative fractionalisation. However, it does not provide statistically significant results for the effect of any of our three measures of a divided executive. Therefore, we conclude the theory that divided executives undermine democracy is unproven.

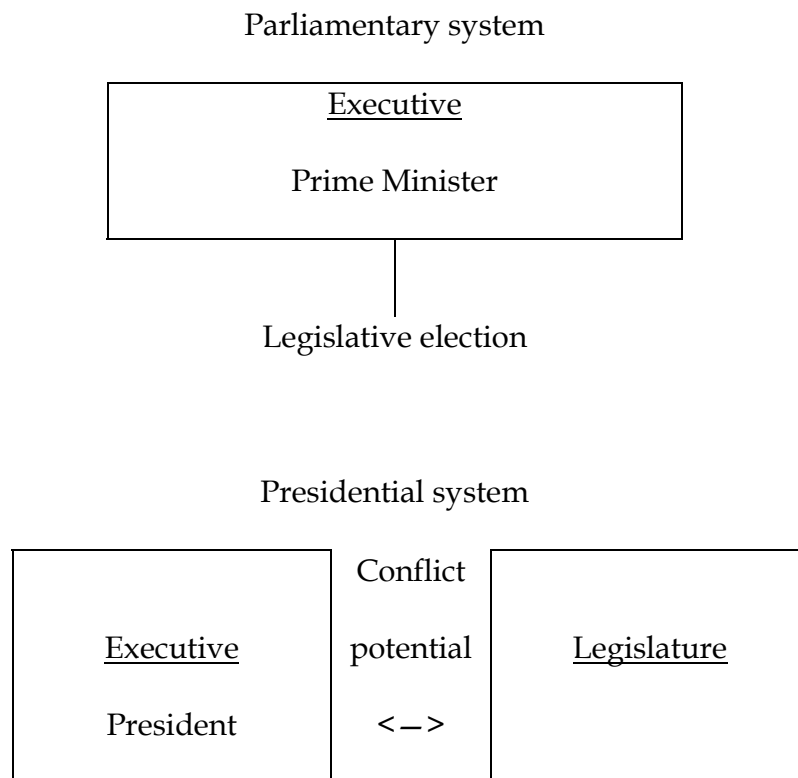
Conclusion

There exists a powerful consensus on the negative effects of divided executives in mixed systems, so powerful that constitution writers in Afghanistan and elsewhere have revised initial plans for introducing such systems. This consensus is based on a theory with a clear and powerful logic, but only impressionistic evidence, lacking in generality, quantification and controls. Our systematic study questions the consensus about the negative effects of divided executives. This is not to question the argument that divided executives produce conflict, or that this conflict can and does have negative consequences. However, divided executives in mixed systems where both the president and the prime minister have significant independent powers have not generally had such a profound effect on the political system that they are associated with a downgrade of Freedom House classification. It is worth noting that there is no shortage of qualitative evidence consistent with our quantitative findings.

Indeed, Poland, a case used by Linz and Stepan to launch an influential campaign against mixed systems, is perfectly consistent with our conclusion. There was a period of intense inter-institutional conflict but this had no effect on overall democracy ratings. Political engineers have no general empirical basis on which to recommend against the adoption of a mixed system of government with a dual executive on the basis these countries may experience divisive intra-executive conflict that will be more likely to have a negative effect on the process of democratisation.

Figure 1

Systems of government





Mixed system

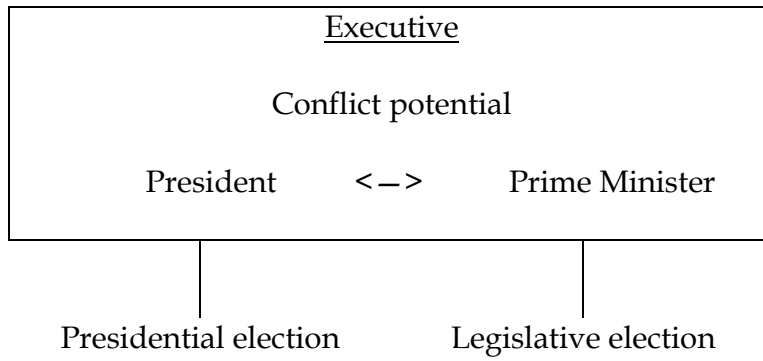


Figure 2

Mixed systems of government, 2006

Algeria	Haiti	Russia
Angola	Iceland	Rwanda
Armenia	Ireland	Sao Tome e Principe
Austria	Kazakhstan	Senegal
Azerbaijan	Kyrgyzstan	Singapore
Belarus	Lithuania	Slovakia
Bulgaria	Macedonia	Slovenia
Burkina Faso	Madagascar	South Korea
Cameroon	Mali	Sri Lanka
Cape Verde	Mauritania	Taiwan
Central African Republic	Mongolia	Tajikistan
Chad	Mozambique	Tanzania
Croatia	Namibia	Timor-Leste
Egypt	Niger	Togo
Finland	Peru	Tunisia
France	Poland	Ukraine
Gabon	Portugal	Uzbekistan
Guinea-Bissau	Romania	Yemen

Figure 3

Dataset and type of mixed system

State	Years in Dataset	Type of mixed system
Algeria	1989-91	Presidential-like
Angola	1991-92	Presidential-like
Armenia	1992-2004	Presidential-like
Austria	1976-2004	Parliamentary-like
Azerbaijan	1998-2003	Presidential-like
Belarus	1994-96	Presidential-like
Bulgaria	1994-2004	Parliamentary-like
Burkina Faso	1978-79; 1993-2004	Presidential-like
Cape Verde	1990-2004	Dual executive
Central African Republic	1991-2003	Presidential-like
Comoros	1982-84; 92-99	Presidential-like
Congo (Brazzaville)	1992-97	Dual executive
Croatia	1993-2004	1991-2000 Presidential-like 2001-2004 Parliamentary-like
Finland	1976-2004	1976-2000 Dual executive 2001-2004 Parliamentary-like
France	1976-2004	Dual executive

Georgia	2004	Presidential-like
Guinea-Bissau	1991-2004	Presidential-like
Haiti	1994-2000	Dual executive
Iceland	1976-2004	Parliamentary-like
Ireland	1976-2004	Parliamentary-like
Kazakhstan	1992-94	Presidential-like
Lithuania	1993-2003	Dual executive
Macedonia	1992-2004	Parliamentary-like
Madagascar	1978-2004	1978-91 Presidential-like 1992-95 Dual executive 1996-2004 Presidential-like
Mali	1993-2002	Presidential-like
Mauritania	2001-2003	Presidential-like
Moldova	1992-2000	Dual executive
Mongolia	1992-2004	Dual executive
Mozambique	1991-2004	Presidential-like
Namibia	1991-2004	Presidential-like
Niger	1991-95, 1999-2004	Dual executive
Peru	1989-2004	Presidential-like
Poland	1992-2004	Dual executive
Portugal	1977-2004	1977-79 Dual executive

		1980-2004 Parliamentary-like
Romania	1991-2004	Dual executive
Russia	1994-2004	Presidential-like
Senegal	1991-04	Presidential-like
Singapore	1991-04	Presidential-like
Slovakia	1999-04	Parliamentary-like
Slovenia	1992-04	Parliamentary-like
South Korea	1988-2004	Presidential-like
Sri Lanka	1978-04	Dual executive
Tanzania	1992-04	Presidential-like
Togo	1999-02	Presidential-like
Tunisia	1978-98	Presidential-like
Ukraine	1992-04	1992-94 Dual executive 1995-2004 Presidential-like

Notes: If a country moved to Not Free, the first year of this status is included in the period above. Due to missing data, the above list of states and periods, does not cover all years in all states, during which there was a mixed system and a Free or Partly Free regime.

Table 1**Divided Executives and Freedom House Classification**

	Cohabitation		Intra-Coalition		Non-party president		Total
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Move to Not Free	1	15	1	15	1	15	16
Partly Free	7	292	22	277	45	254	299
Free	66	257	107	216	150	173	323
Total	74	564	128	510	196	442	638
Mann-Whitney z	-6.899		-8.014		-8.720		
P > z	0.000		0.000		0.000		

Table 2**Regime Types and Divided Executives**

	Cohabitation		Intra-Coalition		Non-party president		Total
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Presidential-like	1	226	4	223	14	213	227
Mixed	35	215	61	189	78	172	250
Parliamentary-like	38	123	65	96	57	104	161
Total	74	564	130	508	196	442	638

Table 3

Ordinal Logit Regressions of Freedom House Classification

	Cohabitation	Intra-coalition	Non-party president
Wealth - lagged	0.0001908 (0.0000298)***	0.0001933 (0.0000308)****	0.0001938 (0.0000308)***
Growth - lagged	0.0308722 (0.0216567)	0.0314674 (0.0217369)	0.0341534 (0.0216616)
Consolidation at entry	3.201036 (0.3273276)***	3.207089 (0.3226089)***	3.218591 (0.3173707)***
Parliamentary-like	1.067567 (0.5631595)*	1.031986* (0.5727557)	1.397577 (0.7289098)*
Dual Executive	1.170248 (0.3310134)***	1.181543 (0.3341219)***	1.048797 (0.3485256)**
Divided Executive	1.079554 (1.270118)	1.364085 (1.233929)	0.2340413 (0.8682075)
Parliamentary- like*Divided Executive	-	-	-0.2474821 (1.210641)

Dual*Divided Executive	-1.020777 (1.438037)	-1.357226 (1.350723)	0.5124723 (0.963636)
Legislative fractionalization	5.844381 (1.981056)**	6.066345 (1.994909)**	6.521812 (2.041027)**
Legislative fractionalization ²	-4.959888 (2.288742)*	-5.212217 (2.306764)*	-5.971844 (2.39632)*
Cut 1	-1.097183 (0.3511957)	-0.9648077 (0.3636157)	-0.9951173 (0.3649586)
Cut 2	5.047628 (0.5121674)	5.127559 (0.5277795)	5.157451 (0.5329739)
States	47	47	47
Observations	637	634	638
Log Likelihood	-212.18822	-211.19624	-211.01071
Prob > LR chi ²	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
McFadden Pseudo R ²	0.5796	0.5801	0.582
Notes: For each coefficient standard errors are in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.			

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