

Political Leadership in Old and New Democracies

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This chapter examines the differences between political leadership in old and new democracies. It operationalises the concept of political leadership as the decision-making authority of the president and/or the prime minister in these systems. It adopts an institutionalist approach to the study of political leadership. It argues that different political institutions provide incentives for actors to behave in different ways. Taking old democracies to be those countries that have been continuously democratic since before the early 1990s and new democracies to be those that have democratised since this time, it shows that there are institutional differences between them. There has been a redistribution of regime types, with a decline in the number of parliamentary regimes and a rise in the number of semi-presidential regimes. This shift means that new democracies are more likely to have directly elected presidents and that there are now more complex patterns of political leadership than before with a greater emphasis on presidential/prime ministerial relations. In addition, the fragmentation of party systems in new democracies and the prevalence of proportional electoral systems has helped to generate a higher turnover of prime ministers in new democracies. Generally, prime ministers in new democracies tend to be weaker than their counterparts in new democracies. That said, it is important not overemphasise the differences. Within the set of parliamentary democracies patterns of decision making are recognisably similar in both old and new democracies. The same is true for presidential and semi-presidential democracies. Equally, even if the redistribution of regime types has generated changes in the general patterns of political leadership over time, there is variation within any given regime type and in any country across time. For example, even though there has been a general rise in semi-presidentialism, there is variation in the patterns of decision

making within the set of semi-presidential democracies. Overall, while institutions create incentives for actors to behave in certain ways, their effect is not deterministic. The redistribution of regime types has generated new patterns of leadership, but there is always room for particular patterns of decision-making authority in any particular country.

An institutionalist approach to the study of political leadership

This chapter adopts an institutionalist approach to the study of political leadership (Cole, 1994; Elgie, 1995; Helms, 2004). While institutions can be understood in many different ways (Helms, 2013), this approach interprets institutions as sets of formal rules and established procedures. Institutions are not actors. Only people can act. However, institutions structure the behaviour of actors by providing incentives for them to behave in certain ways and to refrain from behaving in other ways. These incentives are not deterministic. Actors can always depart from them. Even so, an institutionalist approach places more emphasis on identifying the behaviour that is induced by institutions than on the idiosyncratic behaviour of human agents.¹ Institutions are privileged in this way because they are considered to induce incentives that are both systematic and regular. They are systematic in that the incentives can be clearly identified. For example, a first-past-the-post electoral system produces a strong incentive for the emergence of a two-party system. They are regular in that the incentives are general and not context-specific. So, all else equal, a first-past-the-post electoral system produces such an incentive everywhere and at all times. The result is that if institutional incentives can be correctly identified, then institutions can be used to explain and, indeed, predict political outcomes. Shepsle (2006, p. 29) puts it as follows: “outcomes are clearly implied by the configuration of rules in a structured institution. These rules prescribe the mechanism for aggregating behaviors into a final result. Thus, any combination of behavioral repertoires by institutional politicians maps into a specific outcome”.

This chapter privileges the study of institutions in the explanation of leadership outcomes. The focus is primarily on presidents, prime ministers, and legislatures rather than the incumbents who occupy these positions. The

particular configuration of each leadership institution and the interaction between them provide incentives for actors to behave in different ways. These incentives can be deduced from a country's constitution and/or the law. For example, a powerful directly elected president will expect to propose policy solutions to the country's main problems, whereas a weak indirectly elected president will not be expected to do so. At the same time, institutions do not operate in isolation. Democracies operate according to the twin principles of the separation of powers and checks and balances. This means that different institutions may generate contradictory and/or competing incentives. For instance, a country with both a powerful directly elected president and a powerful fixed-term legislature is likely to find that the incumbents of both institutions will expect to propose policy solutions. These solutions may or may not be compatible. Viewed this way, leadership can be understood as the outcome of the competition between the various institutions in a country. While the precise configuration of the separation of powers and checks and balances is bound to vary from one country to another and, indeed, over time in any particular country, institutionalists identify similarities and differences in the general patterns of political leadership across countries. This chapter identifies differences in the patterns of political leadership between old and new democracies. In what ways are the institutional incentives in each of the systems different? How does the resulting decision-making authority of the various actors differ?

Presidential and prime ministerial leadership in old and new democracies

Identifying old and new democracies

To what extent do institutional differences generate distinct patterns of decision-making in old and new democracies? To begin, it is necessary to distinguish between these two sets of countries. For the purposes of this chapter, the set of current democracies is defined as those countries that have been awarded a Polity2 score of +6 or more for at least the last five consecutive years.⁸ Within the set of current democracies, the old democracies are defined as those countries

that already had the status of a Freedom House Electoral Democracy in 1989, which is the first year that Freedom House records this status, whereas the new democracies are defined as those countries that have been awarded this status at some point since 1990 inclusive.³ Given this year corresponds to the standard beginning of the most recent wave of mass democratisations, it is a good cut-off point for distinguishing between old and new democracies. It should be noted that the Philippines and South Korea are included in the list of new democracies, even though they were both classed as Electoral Democracies in 1989. They are included because they democratised only at the very end of the 1980s. Therefore, it is reasonable to include them in the set of new democracies that emerged around this time. It should also be noted that this way of distinguishing between old and new democracies generates a set of seven hard-to-classify Latin American countries that democratised in the early and mid-1980s.⁴ These countries could be classed as old democracies partly because they democratised a few years prior to the wave of democratisation that occurred at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s and partly because in most cases they had already had at least some experience of democracy prior to their most recent democratisation. However, these countries could also be classed as new democracies because their most recent democratisation was close in time to the post-1989 democratisations elsewhere. To ensure that any results are not biased by this classification rule, the findings are reported on the basis of classifying them as both old and new democracies. In most instances, the results scarcely vary in whatever way these countries are classified. Overall, these classification criteria generate 85 democracies in total. If the seven Latin American countries are classed as old, then there are 39 old democracies and 46 new democracies. If they are classed as new, then there are 32 old democracies and 53 new democracies.⁵ (See Table 1.)

Table 1 about here

Presidential leadership in old and new democracies

What are the institutional differences between these two sets of countries and to what extent do any such differences generate distinct patterns of leadership? The

first difference concerns the basic separation of powers. Here, a distinction can be made between presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary systems. A presidential system is where there is both a directly elected fixed-term president and a fixed-term legislature and where the cabinet is not responsible to the legislature. Under this system, there may be a prime minister, but, if so, then the prime minister is only individually responsible to the legislature or is not responsible at all. A parliamentary system is where the head of state is either a monarch or an indirectly elected president and where the prime minister and cabinet are collectively responsible to the legislature. Under this system, the legislature may serve for a fixed term or, more usually, it may be dissolved by the prime minister. A semi-presidential system is where there is a directly elected fixed-term president and where the prime minister and cabinet are collectively responsible to the legislature. Under this system, the legislature may serve for a fixed term or it may be dissolved prematurely by either the president and/or the prime minister. A further distinction can be made within the set of semi-presidential systems. A president-parliamentary system is where the prime minister and cabinet are responsible to both the legislature and the president. A premier-presidential system is where the prime minister and cabinet are responsible solely to the legislature. A small number of countries do not fit any of these basic classificatory systems.

Table 1 records the distribution of macro-level regime types of all 85 democracies. There are clear institutional differences between the old and the new democracies. These differences are summarised in Tables 2a and 2b. The majority of old democracies have a parliamentary system. However, only a small percentage of new democracies have adopted such a system. There is a further difference within the set of parliamentary democracies that is not apparent from Table 1. Eleven of the old parliamentary democracies are monarchies and nine are republics.^{vi} However, only one of the seven new parliamentary democracies is a monarchy (Lesotho). The general decline in parliamentarism has been matched by a sharp rise in semi-presidentialism. There has been a noticeable increase in both forms of semi-presidentialism, particularly president-parliamentarism. That said, new democracies are still twice as likely to be premier-presidential than president-parliamentary. The incidence of presidentialism varies as a function of

whether the set of seven Latin American countries are classed as old or new democracies. If they are classed as old democracies, then the percentage of presidential democracies is remarkably similar across the set of old and new democracies. However, if they are classed as new, then there has been a large increase in the percentage of presidential democracies. Generally, the most noticeable difference between old and new democracies is the increase in the percentage of countries with directly elected presidents. Whatever way the seven Latin American countries are classified, around 80 per cent of new democracies have directly elected presidents compared with 43.7 per cent of old democracies if those seven countries are classed as old or 31.2 per cent if they are classed as new. Overall, in contrast to old democracies, directly elected presidents are the norm in new democracies.

Tables 1 and 2a and 2b about here

The redistribution of regime types means that political leadership is less parliamentarised in new democracies than in old democracies. What is the effect of such a redistribution? Unlike prime ministers, directly elected presidents do not require the ongoing support of the legislature to remain in office. As a result, presidents are more independent of the legislature than prime ministers. In presidential democracies, presidents may try to legislate by decree when faced with opposition in the legislature. They may try to rely on more fluid patterns of support among the deputies in the legislature rather than the more structured patterns of party or coalition support that usually occur under parliamentarism. In semi-presidential democracies, presidents often try to influence the behaviour of prime ministers, whereas they hardly ever do so in parliamentary democracies. Under semi-presidentialism, even during periods of French-style cohabitation when the parliamentary majority is explicitly opposed to the president, presidents still try to influence government policy, shape appointments to high public office, and so on. What is more, under president-parliamentarism presidential influence is extremely high. Here, as Samuels and Shugart (2010) have shown, cohabitation almost never occurs under president-parliamentarism. When presidents enjoy a parliamentary majority, they dominate the system. When they are opposed to the majority, they prefer to govern with independent prime ministers and with ad hoc majorities in the

legislature rather than to allow the opposition to form the government. Generally, the rise of semi-presidentialism since the late 1980s has generated a set of countries in which the crucial relationship is just as likely to be between the president and the prime minister and/or between the president and the legislature as between the prime minister and the legislature, which is typically the case under parliamentarism.

The different patterns of presidential leadership between old and new democracies can also be observed by examining the constitutional authority of presidents and legislatures. Siaroff's (2003) index captures variations in presidential power. The Siaroff index is based on nine indicators of presidential power, including whether the president chairs cabinet meetings, whether the president can veto legislation passed by parliament, whether the president can invoke emergency powers, and so on. Siaroff then examines the actual power of presidents in various countries and records a score of 1 if a president enjoys the particular power in question and 0 otherwise. On this basis, countries emerge with a Siaroff score somewhere in a range from 0-9. Siaroff's original paper (*ibid.*) provides scores for only 58 of the 80 presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary democracies in this study. However, van Cranenburgh (2008) and Costa Lobo and Amorim Neto (2010) have coded various African countries. If their scores are included, then the number of countries increases to 62, 25 of which are old democracies if the seven Latin American countries are included in this category and 37 of which are new. Also, by definition, Siaroff's index of presidential power excludes monarchies. If monarchies are included and given a Siaroff score of 0, then the total number of countries increases to 74 with the same number of old and new democracies. Table 3 reports the mean Siaroff scores for old and new democracies based on both whether or not monarchies are included and whether the seven Latin American democracies are classed as old or new.

Table 3 about here

The results clearly show that heads of state in new democracies have greater powers than their counterparts in old democracies. This is true whether the seven Latin American democracies are classed as old or new. Given the Siaroff index generates a 10-point scale, Model 1 shows that heads of state are around 25 per cent more powerful in new democracies relative to old

democracies. When monarchies are excluded, Model 1 still shows that presidents are nearly 10 per cent more powerful in new democracies. Indeed, Model 2 shows that presidents are more than 20 per cent more powerful in new democracies relative to old democracies when the seven Latin American countries are classed as new democracies and when monarchies are excluded. That said, these results merely reflect the general redistribution of regime types over time rather than an increase in the power of presidents/heads of state within specific regime types. Table 3 shows that under presidentialism and premier-presidentialism presidential powers are only marginally greater in new democracies relative to old democracies. The same is true for heads of state in parliamentary regimes. Indeed, when monarchies are excluded from this category, then the power of indirectly elected presidents does not vary across the set of old and new democracies. Instead, the reason why presidents/heads of state are generally more constitutional authority in new democracies than in old democracies is that there are now far more countries with directly elected presidents. Given these countries tend to have more powerful presidents than parliamentary republics and, certainly, parliamentary monarchies, then new democracies as a whole exhibit higher Siaroff scores than old democracies. Therefore, the primary emphasis should be on the impact of the redistribution of regime types across old and new democracies regime types, as above, rather than on the increase in presidential powers within individual regime types.

This point is confirmed when Fish and Kroenig's (2009) parliamentary powers index (PPI) is substituted for the Siaroff scores. The PPI is based on 32 indicators that capture the legislature's ability to influence the executive and to act autonomously. The PPI ranges from 0 (a completely powerless legislature) to 1 (a totally sovereign legislature).^{vi} Fish and Koenig (2009) provide scores for 78 of the 80 presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary democracies in this study. Table 4 presents the mean PPI scores for old and new democracies and for the different regimes types within them. Model 3 reports the results when the seven Latin American countries are classed as old democracies and Model 4 reports the results when they are classed as new. There is highly negative correlation between the Siaroff scores and the PPI (-0.71). Therefore, unsurprisingly, the results confirm the general picture provided by the Siaroff

scores. Model 3 shows that new democracies have legislatures that are around 5 per cent weaker than their counterparts in old democracies. Model 4 shows that new democracies have legislatures that are nearly 10 per cent weaker.^{vii} Again, though, the real difference lies with the redistribution of regime types over time. In presidential and parliamentary democracies the power of the legislatures is basically invariant over time. In premier-presidential countries legislatures are actually somewhat stronger in new democracies relative to old democracies, but still weaker than legislatures in both new and old parliamentary democracies. As with presidential power, the real change is with the emergence of a set of semi-presidential countries, and particularly president-parliamentary countries, in the new democracies. These systems have weaker parliaments than their parliamentary counterparts. Generally, the substitution of semi-presidential legislatures for parliamentary legislatures accounts for the fact that the new democracies have somewhat weaker legislatures than old democracies.

Table 4 about here

This focus on regime types and the powers of presidents and legislatures points to a changing pattern of leadership over time. In old democracies there was a bipartite division between parliamentary regimes with weak heads of state and strong legislatures and presidential regimes with stronger heads of state and weaker legislatures. This division was unequal in that there were far more parliamentary regimes than presidential regimes. In new democracies, there is a tripartite division. There are presidential and president-parliamentary systems with strong heads of state and weak legislatures. There are premier-presidential systems with somewhat weaker, but nonetheless generally powerful heads of state and fairly strong legislatures. Finally, there is a small number of parliamentary republics with weak presidents and equally strong legislatures. In these ways, the universe of new democracies has more varied patterns of leadership. The majority of new democracies have to address incentives that flow from the presence of directly elected fixed-term legislatures. In presidential and president-parliamentary systems these incentives are particularly strong because legislatures have few countervailing powers. In premier-presidential systems there is a greater balance of power between presidents and legislatures. In these systems presidents are often prominent actors, but if they wish to act then they

have to do so in concertation with both the legislature and a government and prime minister that are responsible to the legislature. In only a few new democracies are there familiar forms of prime-minister-centred parliamentary leadership. Overall, the changing distribution of regime types means that there are clear differences in the patterns of leadership between old and new democracies.

Prime ministerial leadership in old and new democracies

To this point, the focus has been on presidents and legislatures. What about prime ministerial leadership in old and new democracies? Leaving aside the five idiosyncratic regimes and classifying the seven Latin American countries as old, 67.6 per cent of old democracies have prime ministers and 65.1 per cent of new democracies have prime ministers. In this way, the office of prime minister is just as prevalent in old democracies as in new ones. The substitution of semi-presidential regimes for parliamentary regimes has scarcely altered the prevalence of prime ministerships. If the Latin American democracies are classified as new, then the percentage of countries with prime ministers has declined over time (83.3 per cent compared with 56.0 per cent). All the same, given these Latin American countries do not have prime ministers,⁸ the number of countries with prime ministers is relatively even across the set of old and new democracies (25 and 28 respectively).⁹ This allows us to compare prime ministerial leadership in the two types of democracies.

To what extent are there different patterns of prime ministerial leadership in old and new democracies? In their work, Samuels and Shugart (2010) show that systems with directly elected presidents also have more presidentialised political parties. This characteristic impacts on prime ministerial leadership. For example, Samuels and Shugart (ibid., chap. 3) show that in parliamentary systems the prime minister, who is the principal political leader in the system, is much more likely to be an 'insider', meaning that they will have been the leader of their party at some point prior to assuming office, that they will have spent time on the party's executive and that they will have been elected to the legislature, than is the case for presidents in presidential systems. However, in

premier-presidential systems prime ministers are more likely to be outsiders than in parliamentary systems and in president-parliamentary systems insider prime ministers are hardly ever appointed. In addition, Samuels and Shugart also show that regime type makes a difference as to how principal political leaders leave power (*ibid.*, chap. 4). Here, the key observation is that in parliamentary systems prime ministers are more likely to leave office as a result of inter-party problems (coalition collapse) and intra-party dissent (heaves against the leader) than is the case for prime ministers in semi-presidential systems. Needless to say, directly elected presidents are scarcely ever dismissed for these reasons. Moreover, within semi-presidential systems, prime ministers are more likely to leave office for reasons relating to the president in president-parliamentary regimes than is the case in premier-presidential systems. Thus, the redistribution of regime types has had an effect not just on the power of presidents and legislatures, but also on the political background of the person who becomes the principal political leader in new democracies and also on the ways in which prime ministers leave office.

The difference between old and new democracies can also be demonstrated in terms of the power of prime ministers. Unlike the situation for presidents, there are no general indices of prime ministerial power. Instead, the standard proxy for assessing the relative power of prime ministers is average duration in office (Baylis, 2007, p. 84). In this chapter, the average duration is calculated as the number of prime ministers in a country divided by the total number of days since the first prime minister to take office after 1 January 1990 or since democratisation whichever is later until the date of the appointment of the current incumbent. The identification of prime ministers is taken from www.worldstatesmen.org. Prime ministers who headed governments that are officially identified as caretaker governments are excluded. Reshuffles under the same prime minister and reappointments of the same person as prime minister without a break are not counted as separate periods. However, if the same person holds office on more than one occasion and there is a break, then each period is counted as a new prime ministership. To illustrate the methodology, the average duration of UK prime ministers is calculated as the number of prime ministers divided by the number of days from 28 November 1990 when the first

prime minister to take office after 1 January 1990 assumed power until 11 May 2011 when the current incumbent took power. There were three prime ministers during this 7,105-day period, giving an average duration of 2,368 days. The average duration of Romanian prime ministers is calculated as the number of prime ministers divided by the number of days from 1 October 1991 when the first prime minister under a democratic Romania assumed office until 22 December 2008 when the current incumbent took up his position. There were seven prime ministers during this 6,293-day period, giving an average duration of 899 days. The average duration of prime ministers in old and new democracies and for each regime type is presented in Table 5.

Table 5 about here

The main conclusion to be drawn from Table 5 is that in the last 20 years prime ministers have remained in power for longer in old democracies than in new democracies. Indeed, the figures suggest that prime ministers have remained in office for almost twice as long during this period. With the caveat that the number of countries is very small, there is some evidence that in old democracies presidential intervention in semi-presidential systems may have made prime ministerial tenure shorter than in parliamentary systems. However, in new democracies average prime ministerial tenure varies very little across semi-presidential and parliamentary countries. Instead, the main reason for the difference in prime ministerial tenure lies in the party systems and electoral systems of old and new democracies. New democracies tend to have more fragmented party systems than old democracies. Moreover, Colomer (2005) has shown that the choice of electoral system is often endogenous, with the result that countries with few parties tend to choose plurality/majority systems and that countries with multi-party systems tend to choose proportional systems. This means that new democracies are more likely to choose proportional electoral systems that, in turn, are less likely to generate two-party, or two-block party systems. Using the International IDEA table of electoral systems as the source,³¹ the figures confirm this intuition. In old democracies, eight semi-presidential and parliamentary countries have plurality/majority electoral systems, whereas in new democracies only two countries (Mali and Mongolia) have chosen such a system. To the extent that stable coalitions are less likely to be

forthcoming when legislatures are more fragmented, then prime ministers in new democracies are likely to find that their security of tenure is less assured. This point applies to all new democracies. Whatever the type of regime, prime ministers have less security of tenure in new democracies relative to old democracies.

This observation has consequences for patterns of prime ministerial leadership. In the last 20 years, new democracies are less likely to have been led by prime ministers such as Tony Blair, Angela Merkel, or John Howard, who emerged in old democracies, headed stable dominant-party governments and stayed in office for long periods of time. Instead, new democracies are more likely to have been led prime ministers who headed multi-party coalition governments and who remained in office for a shorter period of time. Given prime ministers in new democracies have been more likely to lead multi-party governments, they may have had to spend more time in government managing the business of coalition politics. Also, the shorter tenure in office may have affected prime ministerial time horizons. They may have been more likely to front-load policy reforms. Finally, as noted in the previous section, in many young democracies prime ministers have had to manage a relationship with the president as well as with the legislature, generating an extra set of potentially destabilising institutional incentives. That said, policy making has not necessarily been more efficient in old democracies during the last 20 years. There is no reason why policy making in single-party governments is inherently better than in coalition governments. For example, when single-party governments alternate in power, the result can be wholesale policy reversals that may be socially and economically damaging. Moreover, even though prime ministerial turnover has been higher in new democracies, it may be the case that prime ministers from the same party have replaced each other or that prime ministers from different parties within the same coalition have replaced each other. If so, then high prime ministerial turnover may mask broader government stability. In addition, it should be remembered that in semi-presidential systems presidents serve for a fixed term, thus generating a degree of leadership stability even when there is turnover at the prime ministerial level. Overall, while it is certainly the case that in the last 20 years prime ministers in new democracies have spent less time in

office than their counterparts in old democracies and while there is good reason to think that the shorter period in office has had considerable intra- and inter-party ramifications, there is no reason to believe that the quality of prime ministerial leadership has necessarily been better in old democracies.

Political leadership in old and new democracies

There are different general patterns of leadership in new democracies when compared with old democracies. That said, it is important not to overestimate the differences between the two types of systems and for two reasons. Firstly, within each type of regime there are similarities between the patterns of political authority in both old and new democracies. For example, in parliamentary democracies the key leadership relationship is between the prime minister and the legislature. Prime ministers only remain in office for as long as they retain the confidence of the legislature. Moreover, given legislative politics is party politics, it follows that prime ministers only remain in office for as long as they retain the confidence of their own political parties. So, as Samuels and Shugart (2010) demonstrate, while prime ministers have remained in office for longer in old democracies, even long-serving prime ministers have to confront the ineluctable realities of parliamentary democracy. For example, in the UK, Tony Blair, who as party leader won an historic three consecutive elections for the Labour Party, was eventually obliged to step down because of intra-party pressure. In Australia, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was ousted by a vote of his parliamentary colleagues. Even if prime ministers in new democracies have tended to head less institutionalised and, therefore, perhaps more volatile political parties and even though multi-party coalitions in new democracies have not been uncommon, prime ministers in both old and new democracies are aware that, at bottom, they serve in office at the favour of their party and the legislature. Therefore, while there are differences between old and new democracies as a whole, within the set of parliamentary democracies there are commonalities between them.

The same point applies to presidential and semi-presidential regimes. For example, in semi-presidential democracies the key relationship is between the president, the prime minister and the legislature. Old semi-presidential

democracies such as France and Portugal have experienced difficult periods of cohabitation when the president has been isolated in the executive, facing a prime minister and government from an opposing political coalition with majority support in the legislature. For their part, new democracies such as Bulgaria, Mongolia and Poland have faced equally challenging periods of cohabitation. In Romania, the onset of cohabitation coincided with a referendum on the impeachment of the president. In Lithuania President Rolandas Paksas was formally impeached during a period of cohabitation. Even outside cohabitation relations between the president and the prime minister have often been strained in both old and new semi-presidential democracies. In Portugal, the relationship between the president and prime minister is usually more conflictual outside cohabitation because presidents feel that they have greater legitimacy to intervene. In Central and Eastern Europe intra-executive conflict has also been a common feature of new semi-presidential democracies. Indeed, Sedelius and Ekman (2010, p. 525) have demonstrated that intra-executive conflict is a more powerful predictor of pre-term cabinet resignation in this region. Overall, therefore, while the redistribution of regime types has generated different patterns of leadership between old and new democracies, within any given regime type there are similarities between old and new democracies.

The second reason why the differences between old and democracies should not be overestimated is that there is variation in leadership patterns within any given regime type and indeed within any country over time. For example, while the average turnover of prime ministers in new democracies is greater than in old democracies, suggesting that political leaders are stronger in the latter than in the former, it is also the case that some old democracies are marked by weak prime ministers and that some new democracies have been characterised by strong leaders. In Japan, an old democracy, there has been a regular turnover of prime ministers and a strong leader has never really emerged. By contrast, in Hungary, a new democracy, a system of Chancellor Democracy has developed (Schiemann, 2006). In 2010 Viktor Orbán was appointed as prime minister with the support a large legislative majority that allowed him to amend the Hungarian constitution and further institutionalise strong leadership. Similarly, in Slovakia, also a new democracy, Vladimír Mečiar

served as prime minister from 1992-1998. He was a dominating and controversial figure in Slovakia's transition, personalising the political process (Haughton, 2002). Therefore, while there are differences in political leadership between old and new parliamentary democracies as a whole, it is important not to imply that all new democracies operate in the same way or, indeed, that all countries within any given regime type in new democracies operate in the same way.

This point applies even more forcefully to semi-presidential and, particularly, premier-presidential regimes. In general, premier-presidential regimes are characterised by a dual executive in which there is both a fairly powerful president and a fairly powerful prime minister. This situation characterises old democracies, such as France, and new democracies, such as Bulgaria, Mongolia, Poland, Romania and Timor-Leste. However, within the set of both old and new democracies there are premier-presidential regimes with largely figurehead presidents and prime ministers who exercise leadership free from almost any presidential intervention. In Ireland, an old democracy, the president has very few powers and there is a strong head of government, the Taoiseach. In Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia, all new democracies, the directly elected president also has very few powers and, in practice, the prime minister is the principal political leader. This does not mean that the prime minister in these countries is necessarily a strong leader. In many of these new democracies, there has been considerable prime ministerial turnover. All the same, what these countries have in common is the absence of presidential leadership and only very rare examples of presidential/prime ministerial rivalry. In short, there is considerable variation within premier-presidentialism. Thus, the typical pattern of leadership under premier-presidentialism is not witnessed in all premier-presidential democracies. Overall, while it is reasonable to identify distinct patterns of leadership between old and new democracies, it is necessary to remember that such patterns represent general trends. There is always country-specific variation within these general trends.

Conclusion

Political leadership is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. One way of interpreting the nature of leadership is to see it as the decision-making authority of the principal political office-holders in a country, typically presidents and/or prime ministers. Institutions shape the authority of these political leaders, creating incentives for them to behave in certain ways. A general set of institutional incentives are created by the basic separation of powers in a country. Presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary regimes create different incentives. Across the set of old and new democracies there has been a redistribution of these regimes types, with directly elected presidents becoming much more prevalent than was previously the case. This redistribution of political authority has created basic differences in the patterns of leadership between old and new democracies. In new democracies there are stronger presidents, weaker legislatures and more complex relations generally between presidents, prime ministers and legislatures. In addition, new democracies have exhibited more fragmented party systems and have tended to adopt proportional electoral systems. These factors have combined to make it more likely that prime ministers remain in office for a shorter period of time when compared with old democracies. This does not mean that the quality of leadership has been worse in new democracies, but it has created a different political dynamic. All the same, within parliamentary democracies there are similarities between old and new democracies. The key relationship is still between the prime minister and parliament. Equivalent similarities can be found within the set of presidential and premier-presidential democracies as well. Moreover, institutional incentives are not deterministic. Even if the redistribution of regime types has generated differences in the general patterns of leadership between old and new democracies, there is variation within any given type of regime and indeed within any country over time.

Notes

ⁱ To put it another way, the impact of human agency on political outcomes will be found in the error term of a statistical equation, whereas the impact of institutions can be estimated directly.

ⁱⁱ Note that the Polity IV dataset does not include countries with a population of fewer than 500,000 people. Therefore, this study does not include countries such as Iceland, Malta, or the Pacific island democracies. The Polity IV dataset with scores up to and including 2010 is available at: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>, accessed 20 July, 2011.

ⁱⁱⁱ Freedom House only systematically records Electoral Democracies since 1989. So, 1990 is the first year in their dataset when additions to the set of Electoral Democracies can be identified. The list of Electoral Democracies is available at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=439>, accessed 3 November 2011.

^{iv} They are: Argentina (which received a Polity2 score of ≥ 6 in 1983), Bolivia (1982), Brazil (1985), El Salvador (1984), Guatemala (1986), Honduras (1982), and Uruguay (1985).

^v The case of the Solomon Islands is excluded because even though it democratised in the 1970s, it suffered a democratic breakdown in 2000. It has since redemocratised, but it is a moot point as to whether it should be classed as an old or new democracy.

^{vi} The 12 monarchies are Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the UK.

^{vii} The data are available at: <http://www.matthewkroenig.com/Datasets.htm>, accessed 3 August 2011.

^{viii} Simple bivariate linear regressions with heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors show that there is no significant correlation between old democracies and the PPI as the dependent variable in Model 3. However, the relationship is significant at the 1 per cent level in Model 4.

^{ix} In Argentina, there is a head of government (*jefe de gabinete*), but the institution is only individually responsible to the legislature.

^s At the time of writing there had been no prime ministerial turnover in Lesotho or Serbia. So, results for 26 new democracies are presented in Table 5.

^a See <http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm>, accessed 18 August 2011.

Table 1 Old and new democracies and regime types (2011)

Old democracies		New democracies	
Country	Regime type	Country	Regime type
Argentina	presidential	Albania	parliamentary
Australia	parliamentary	Benin	presidential
Austria	SP pres-parl	Bulgaria	SP prem-pres
Belgium	parliamentary	Burundi	presidential
Bolivia	presidential	Cape Verde	SP prem-pres
Botswana	other	Chile	presidential
Brazil	presidential	Comoros	presidential
Canada	parliamentary	Croatia	SP prem-pres
Colombia	presidential	Czech Republic	parliamentary
Costa Rica	presidential	Estonia	parliamentary
Cyprus	presidential	Georgia	SP pres-parl
Denmark	parliamentary	Ghana	presidential
Dominican Rep.	presidential	Guinea-Bissau	SP pres-parl
El Salvador	presidential	Guyana	other
Finland	SP prem-pres	Hungary	parliamentary
France	SP prem-pres	Indonesia	presidential
Germany	parliamentary	Kenya	presidential
Greece	parliamentary	Latvia	parliamentary
Guatemala	presidential	Lesotho	parliamentary
Honduras	presidential	Liberia	presidential
India	parliamentary	Lithuania	SP prem-pres
Ireland	SP prem-pres	Macedonia	SP prem-pres

Israel	parliamentary	Malawi	presidential
Italy	parliamentary	Mali	SP prem-pres
Jamaica	parliamentary	Mexico	presidential
Japan	parliamentary	Moldova	parliamentary
Mauritius	parliamentary	Mongolia	SP prem-pres
Netherlands	parliamentary	Montenegro	SP prem-pres
New Zealand	parliamentary	Namibia	SP pres-parl
Norway	parliamentary	Nepal	other
Portugal	SP prem-pres	Nicaragua	presidential
Spain	parliamentary	Panama	presidential
Sweden	parliamentary	Paraguay	presidential
Switzerland	other	Peru	SP pres-parl
Trinidad & Tobago	parliamentary	Philippines	presidential
Turkey	parliamentary	Poland	SP prem-pres
UK	parliamentary	Romania	SP prem-pres
Uruguay	presidential	Senegal	SP pres-parl
USA	presidential	Serbia	SP prem-pres
		Slovakia	SP prem-pres
		Slovenia	SP prem-pres
		South Africa	other
		South Korea	presidential
		Taiwan	SP pres-parl
		Timor-Leste	SP prem-pres
		Ukraine	SP pres-parl

Source:

For the identificaton of democracies, see

<http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>, and

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=439>.

For the identification of presidential, parliamentary and other regimes, see

<http://bit.ly/qqPS0P>. For the identification of semi-presidential regimes, see

<http://bit.ly/sAL2a3>.

Table 2a The distribution of regime types across old and new democracies with seven Latin American democracies classified as old

	Presidential	Semi-presidential president-parliamentary	Semi-presidential premier-presidential	Parliamentary	Other
Old (n, %)	12 (30.8)	1 (2.6)	4 (10.3)	20 (51.3)	2 (5.1)
New (n, %)	15 (32.6)	7 (15.2)	14 (30.4)	7 (15.2)	3 (6.5)

Table 2b The distribution of regime types across old and new democracies with seven Latin American democracies classified as new

	Presidential	Semi-presidential president-parliamentary	Semi-presidential premier-presidential	Parliamentary	Other
Old (n, %)	5 (15.6)	1 (3.1)	4 (12.5)	20 (62.5)	2 (6.3)
New (n, %)	22 (41.5)	7 (13.2)	14 (26.4)	7 (13.2)	3 (5.7)

Source: See Table 1

Table 3 Mean Siaroff scores in old and new democracies with seven Latin American democracies classified as old (Model 1) and new (Model 2)

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Old mean (n)	New mean (n)	Old mean (n)	New mean (n)
Presidential	6.75 (12)	6.92 (12)	6.60 (5)	6.89 (19)
President-parliamentary	1.00 (1)	7.14 (7)	1.00 (1)	7.14 (7)
Premier-presidential	3.75 (4)	4.33 (12)	3.75 (4)	4.33 (12)
Parl. (incl. monarchies)	0.60 (20)	1.50 (6)	0.60 (20)	1.50 (6)
Total (incl. monarchies)	2.95 (37)	5.24 (37)	2.03 (30)	5.50 (44)
Parl. (excl. monarchies)	1.50 (8)	1.50 (6)	1.50 (8)	1.50 (6)
Total (excl. monarchies)	4.36 (25)	5.24 (37)	3.39 (18)	5.50 (44)

Source: Siaroff (2003), van Cranenburgh (2008) and Costa Lobo and Amorim Neto (2010)

Table 4 Mean PPI scores in old and new democracies with seven Latin American democracies classified as old (Model 3) and new (Model 4)

	Model 3		Model 4	
	Old mean (n)	New mean (n)	Old mean (n)	New mean (n)
Presidential	0.53 (12)	0.49 (15)	0.51 (5)	0.50 (22)
President-parliamentary	0.72 (1)	0.52 (7)	0.72 (1)	0.52 (7)
Premier-presidential	0.64 (4)	0.70 (12)	0.64 (4)	0.70 (12)
Parliamentary	0.72 (20)	0.73 (7)	0.72 (20)	0.73 (7)
Total	0.65 (37)	0.60 (41)	0.68 (30)	0.59 (48)

Source: Fish and Kroenig (2009)

Table 5 **Average prime ministerial duration in old and new democracies**

	Old mean days (n countries)	New mean days (n countries)
President-parliamentary	1442 (1)	829 (7)
Premier-presidential	1370 (4)	932 (13)
Parliamentary	1750 (20)	837 (6)
Total	1677 (25)	882 (26)

Source: www.worldstatesmen.org

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