

Presidents, Parties, and Prime Ministers

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To our families, for all their support

Presidents, Prime Ministers and Political Parties: A Framework for Analysis

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Preface and Acknowledgments

This book brings together strands each of us has been thinking about for many years. Shugart's interest in the "distinctiveness" of presidential democracy and its impact on legislative elections and political parties began as he was working on his dissertation at the University of California, Irvine. In the dissertation, Shugart (1988), inspired largely by the work of Leon Epstein as well as by his own observations of politics in the USA and several Latin American countries, noted that presidentialism had an impact on both the number of parties and their "nature." Yet developing just what that nature might be would lay dormant while he focused for a time on the number of parties, and worked on other aspects of comparative presidentialism. Later, after taking up a faculty position at the University of California, San Diego, Shugart would begin exploring the "intra-party dimension" of parties--the idea that electoral institutions would shape the behavior and organization of parties as much as--and maybe even more profoundly than--they shape their number. However, he would not put together these two strands--that presidentialism affects the nature of parties and that *legislative* electoral institutions shape the intra-party dimension--until some years later, in collaboration with Samuels.

In 1993, in his first semester of graduate school at UCSD, Samuels scribbled a comment in the margins of Kaare Strøm's 1990 article, "A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties" (*American Journal of Political Science* 34: 565-98): Samuels wrote, "But that is not how parties behave in presidential systems." Eventually, he tried to explain the sorts of behavioral incentives parties actually face in presidential systems in his 2002 article, "Presidentialized Parties: The Separation of Powers and Party Organization and Behavior" (*Comparative Political Studies* 35(4): 461-483), traces of which the reader will find in Chapter 5 of this book.

After publishing that article, Samuels realized that an article Shugart had published in

1998, “The Inverse Relationship Between Party Strength and Executive Strength: A Theory of Politicians' Constitutional Choices,” (*British Journal of Political Science* 28: 1–29) essentially told the flip side of the story he’d articulated in his 2002 article. As Shugart told it, party organization influences the structure of executive-legislative relations when politicians get to re-write the political rules of the game. And as Samuels told it, the structure of executive-legislative relations then influences party organization and behavior. Samuels then approached Shugart with the idea of building on their shared view that scholars had largely ignored the relationship between the separation of powers and political party organization and behavior.

Several years later, this book is the product of tying together the strands of our earlier work and graduate-seminar inspiration. For helping us along the way, we would like thank the following people. For research assistance, Jason Arnold, Andrew Dickinson (in memoriam), Fernando Furquim, Michelle Hogler, Catalina Hotung, Mihaela Mihailescu, Will Moody, Kuniaki Nemoto, Matthew Roberts, Stephanie Payne, Amit Ron, Jessica Schroeder, Kevin Watt, and Kimberly Wydeen. For comments and inspiration: Matthew Cleary, Scott Desposato, James Druckman, Leon Epstein, Jen Gandhi, Henry Hale, Reuven Hazan, Gretchen Helmke, Kathy Hochstetler, Yuko Kasuya, Ofer Kenig, Scott Mainwaring, Tom Round, Phil Shively, Georg Vanberg, Alisa Voznaya, and Erik Wibbels. Participants in Shugart’s graduate seminar on legislative and party organization in the spring of 2009 offered comments that helped improve the book, and the anonymous reviewer for Cambridge University Press helped us strengthen several of our arguments. We are also grateful to Robert Elgie for regularly answering queries about semi-presidential systems and cohabitation, and to Eduardo Leoni for sharing his data on Brazilian roll-calls. A grant from the National Science Foundation to Samuels made possible the collection of the district-level presidential election results used in Chapter Five.

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