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0521429900 - Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics
Matthew Soberg Shugart and John M. Carey

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Scholarly analysis of the relative merits of presidential and parliamentary democracy has emphasized the weaknesses of presidential systems owing to the separation of power between the executive and assembly, which often leads to conflict between the two. Shugart and Carey, by contrast, focus on the potential strengths of presidential systems. They identify a number of alternative ways of balancing constitutional powers between the branches, demonstrating that some forms of presidentialism are more likely than others to generate conflict between the branches.

They also evaluate the role of electoral rules in presidential systems, demonstrating that the ways in which presidents and assemblies are elected play a critical role in determining the shape of the party system, the political agenda, and the prospects for cooperation and conflict between presidents and assemblies.

A typology of presidential systems is developed, including two hybrid forms defined by the authors as premier-presidentialism and president-parliamentarianism, and these various forms are evaluated according to a set of characteristics that determine the efficiency and effectiveness of governance. These characteristics include the manner in which the president is elected, the legislative powers of the president, the authority of the president over the cabinet, the timing of presidential and assembly elections in relation to one another, and the system of representation.

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To Merry Shugart
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Mary E. and Robert J. Carey

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