

Bicameralism and Bicameral Reforms in Democracy and Dictatorship A Comparative Perspective

Alexander Baturo and Robert Elgie

Abstract

Scholars generally agree that the number and percentage of bicameral legislatures had been in decline but by the late 1990s the trend either had flattened out or reversed. Existing studies are informed predominantly by bicameral reforms in mature democracies. Our aim is twofold. First, drawing from new data, we reexamine the fortunes of bicameralism in all democracies and dictatorships from 1945 to 2016. Second, we look under the hood of the observed trend and take stock of over a hundred cases of the introduction, removal, or reintroduction of second chambers. We find that democracies rarely reform bicameralism and, when they do, it is typically in the context of a transition period. By contrast, the change in dictatorships is much more frequent. Second chambers provide patronage opportunities to authoritarian leaders, which, in turn, may influence regime stability. Drawing from survival analysis, we find that dictatorships with partly or fully appointed senates are more durable. In general, we argue that it is important to bring the experience of change in nondemocratic regimes into the discussion about second chamber reform.

Keywords: Bicameralism, comparative, democracy, dictatorship, regime survival.

In this essay, we take stock of bicameralism, particularly the reform of bicameralism—the introduction and removal of a second chamber—in democracy and dictatorship, in comparative context. First, we trace the fortunes of bicameralism in the world over time (i.e., on a systemic level). Second, we examine each case of the adoption and removal of bicameralism

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and discuss under what general circumstances bicameral reforms typically occur. We find that reform is a surprisingly frequent occurrence across the world. From 1945 to 2016, in countries with a population of more than 500,000 people and excluding first post-independence constitutions, there were 125 changes, with half changing from a unicameral to a bicameral legislature and half abolishing their second chamber, with the change occurring more than twice in some countries. Revealingly, changes are much more frequent in dictatorships (henceforth, we refer to dictatorships and nondemocracies interchangeably) than in democracies: while democracies introduced second chambers twelve times and abolished them eighteen times, dictatorships did so fifty-two and forty-three times, respectively. The abolition of second chambers is particularly interesting. Indeed, it entails not only costly constitutional modifications but also, in some sense, a collective political “suicide” of the members of such second chambers, who often are required to vote and approve their own demise.

As we demonstrate below, many governments argue that the removal of a second chamber will improve democratic accountability. Somewhat paradoxically, other governments that introduce a second chamber—not only from different countries but also successor governments in the same country, as in Senegal, where a second chamber was introduced in 1999 and 2007 (and abolished in 2001 and 2012)—also argue that it will improve the democratic process. While senates were abolished in the process of democratic transition in Niger in 2011 and Tunisia in 2014, they were introduced in the course of the same transition in Poland in 1990 and Myanmar in 2009, all in the name of erasing the authoritarian past. Bicameralism is apparently a very malleable institutional feature and, whatever the official rhetoric, multiple reasons may exist behind its reform. In a comparative institutional context, reform in the number of legislative chambers is almost as frequent as reform of an electoral system and is much more frequent than a switch from/to presidentialism, semi-presidentialism, or parliamentarism.¹

While there exists a well-developed scholarship on bicameralism,²

¹ Regarding electoral reform, see Ken Benoit, “Models of Electoral System Change,” *Electoral Studies* 23 (2004): 363-389; on semi-presidentialism, see Robert Elgie, *Semi-Presidentialism: Sub-Types and Democratic Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

² John Charles Bradbury and W. Mark Crain, “Bicameralism,” in *Encyclopedia of Public Choice*, vol. 2, ed. Charles Kershaw Rowley and Friedrich Schneider (New York: Kluwer, 2004), 39-41; William Heller and Diana Branduse, “The Politics of Bicameralism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, ed. Shane Martin, Thomas Saalfeld, and Kaare Strøm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 322-251; Philip Norton, “How Many Bicameral Legislatures Are There?” *Journal of Legislative Studies* 10, no. 4 (2004): 1-9; Philip Norton, “Adding Value? The Role of Second Chambers,” *Asia Pacific Law Review* 15 (2007): 6-8; Samuel Patterson and Anthony Mughan, *Senates: Bicameralism in the Contemporary World* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999); Meg Russell, *Reforming the House of Lords: Lessons from Overseas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Meg Russell, “What Are Second Chambers For?” *Parliamentary Affairs* 54 (2001): 442-458; George Tsebelis and Jeannette Money, *Bicameralism*

discussion of second chambers and their consequences is largely dominated by reference to a relatively small number of examples in consolidated democracies. Such studies also included the abolition of second chambers at the subnational level, including in states of consolidated democracies, notably Queensland and Nebraska.³ More recently, reform debates in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, and elsewhere have increased the amount of information available about second chambers. Much of this debate, though, still refers predominantly to second chambers in long-standing democracies. This is perfectly normal and reasonable. It is important to compare like with like when considering reform in these countries. Even so, because the introduction and removal of second chambers is so common in nondemocratic regimes that they largely drive the global trend in the fortunes of bicameralism in the world, it is important to bring the experience of change in these regimes into the discussion about second-chamber reform.

Drawing on new data, this essay first maps the fall and rise of bicameralism in the world between 1945 and 2016. Our aim is to introduce new comprehensive data and validate the findings on the decline and rise of bicameralism globally. Next, we discuss under what general circumstances bicameral reforms occur in democracies, including democracies in transition, and in dictatorships. Because the existing literature on bicameralism in democracies is well-developed, we only briefly sketch the arguments for and against bicameralism. Instead, we discuss the rationale behind bicameral reforms in two regimes in transition that have not received significant scholarly attention. We find that reforms were driven by multiple, not mutually exclusive, reasons, including budgetary and patronage concerns and the need for symbolic change from an arguably discredited past, among other things. In the remainder of the essay, we first turn to the puzzle of frequent changes in bicameral arrangements in dictatorships—again, using several illustrative cases. Next, we address the Cox hazard model to estimate whether the presence of bicameralism increases regime durability in dictatorships. Finally, we conclude with a brief discussion of policy implications about bicameral reforms.

Admittedly, our goals are largely exploratory. Because this essay sets modest theory-informing goals, we largely enumerate and discuss only cases and circumstances under which reforms occur. Therefore, we cannot exclude the possibility that similar circumstances are also in place when such reforms do not occur. In other words, this essay introduces and describes the new data; underlines the importance of taking stock of bicameral reform in dictatorships; and establishes future research agenda.

(Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997); John Uhr, "Bicameralism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, ed. Sarah Binder, R. A. W. Rhodes, and Bert A. Rockman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 474-494; and Kenneth Wheare, *Legislatures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

³ Louis Massicotte, "Legislative Unicameralism: A Global Survey and a Few Case Studies," *Journal of Legislative Studies* 7 (2001): 154.

Bicameralism in the World

Second chambers “command much less attention than first chambers.”⁴ In scholarly terms, they remain “relatively little-studied institutions.”⁵ At the same time, second chambers matter. There are plenty of examples of policy-influencing second chambers, such as those in the United States and Germany.⁶ There also are examples, though much rarer ones, of second chambers playing a part in the survival of government, Italy and Romania being notable cases. Even when second chambers are seemingly less influential, and indeed perhaps for this reason, there often is plenty of debate about their role, composition, and even their existence. In Canada, reform of the Senate has long been the subject of deliberation.⁷ The same is true of the British House of Lords. In Ireland, there was a referendum in October 2013 on the very existence of the upper house, with voters finally deciding by a very small margin to maintain the Senate. Certainly, the ongoing debate about institutional reform in various countries has meant that the arguments for and against the existence of bicameralism are now well rehearsed. Even so, there is still much to be learned about second chambers and how they generally relate to broader issues about political life.

In broad terms, scholars have identified some trends in the existence of second chambers over time. It is well known that both the number of bicameral legislatures and the percentage of bicameral legislatures relative to unicameral legislatures declined in the period after 1945. Indeed, in the mid-1970s, Miguel Herrero de Miñón lamented what he saw as the passing of bicameralism.⁸ By the late 1990s, though, any such decline seemed to have stopped. Meg Russell concluded that there was now “no clear trend worldwide either towards or away from two-chamber parliaments,”⁹ and Donald Shell agreed, noting that there was “certainly no clear trend towards single chamber legislatures in the contemporary world.”¹⁰ At this time, Louis Massicotte’s global survey found that the proportion of countries with unicameral legislatures actually had declined slightly from 67.5 percent in 1980 to 64 percent at the turn of the millennium.¹¹ In the most recent census to date, John Coakley reported “a significant increase in the number and even proportion of bicameral chambers

⁴ Donald Shell, “The History of Bicameralism,” *Journal of Legislative Studies* 7, no. 1 (2001): 1.

⁵ Russell, “What Are Second Chambers For?” 442.

⁶ Tsebelis and Money, *Bicameralism*.

⁷ Gordon Gibson, *Challenges in Senate Reform: Conflicts of Interest, Unintended Consequences, New Possibilities* (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 2004), and Serge Joyal, *Protecting Canadian Democracy: The Senate You Never Knew* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003).

⁸ Miguel Herrero de Miñón, “The Passing of Bicameralism,” *American Journal of Comparative Law* 23 (1975): 236-254.

⁹ Russell, *Reforming the House of Lords*, 411.

¹⁰ Shell, “The History of Bicameralism,” 14.

¹¹ Massicotte, “Legislative Unicameralism,” 154.

in the early years of the twenty-first century,” suggesting that reports of the death of bicameralism might have been somewhat if not greatly exaggerated.¹² Furthermore, Phillip Norton pointed out that many legislatures, typically defined as formally unilateral, in fact, resemble bicameral ones, which, in turn, suggests that our estimations of bicameralism in the world need to be revised.¹³

The prevalence of bicameralism is invariably captured through a snapshot approach. For example, Coakley’s census of bicameralism has eight data points: 1914, 1930, 1947, 1969, 1985, 1996, 2001, and 2014. By contrast, we estimate the number and percentage of bicameral legislatures in all countries with a population over half a million on an annual basis from 1945 to 2016, building on the Institutions and Elections Project.¹⁴ We identify bicameralism whenever a country has more than one legislative chamber. Since we do not examine the relative powers of a second versus first chamber, the measurement of bicameralism herein encompasses strong and weak bicameralism. In several cases where a country may have more than two chambers (e.g., an additional Council of Elders), such instances are coded as bicameral as well. We not only added new coverage for the periods 1945–1971 and 2006–2016 to the Institutions and Elections Project (IAEP) dataset, but also we read through available constitutional texts and texts of constitutional amendments for the whole period of 1945–2016 to check whether a country had a bicameral legislature. Furthermore, we checked whether a second chamber in fact was convened or whether it existed only on paper. For example, even though the 2006 Constitution of Iraq provided for a bicameral parliament with a second chamber, the Federation Council, as of yet, has not been convened.

Based on figure 1, which displays all bicameral countries in black, we can reach the preliminary conclusion that the idea of the demise of bicameralism in the world is probably premature, at least as of 2016. At this time, almost half, 74 of 161 countries with a population over half a million, or 46 percent of such countries, featured bicameral legislatures. We also can add thirty-three smaller countries such as Saint Lucia, Kiribati, and Samoa—countries not included by Patrick Regan and David Clark but reported in the Inter-Parliamentary Union data. Eight of such small countries have second chambers and three fourths of them are unicameral. Taken together, 82 of all reporting 194 countries, whether large or small, or 42 percent, have bicameralism in place.¹⁵ With the exception

¹² John Coakley, “The Strange Revival of Bicameralism,” *Journal of Legislative Studies* 20 (2014): 548-549.

¹³ Norton, “How Many Bicameral Legislatures Are There?”

¹⁴ Patrick Regan and David Clark, “The Institutions and Elections Project” (2007), <http://www.binghamton.edu/political-science/institutions-and-elections-project.html> (accessed December 18, 2017).

¹⁵ Because we build on Regan and Clark data (ibid.), our sample also excludes several countries with a population below 500,000 people. We intend to extend full coverage to these countries since the time of their independence in future research.

Figure 1. Bicameralism in the World in 2016



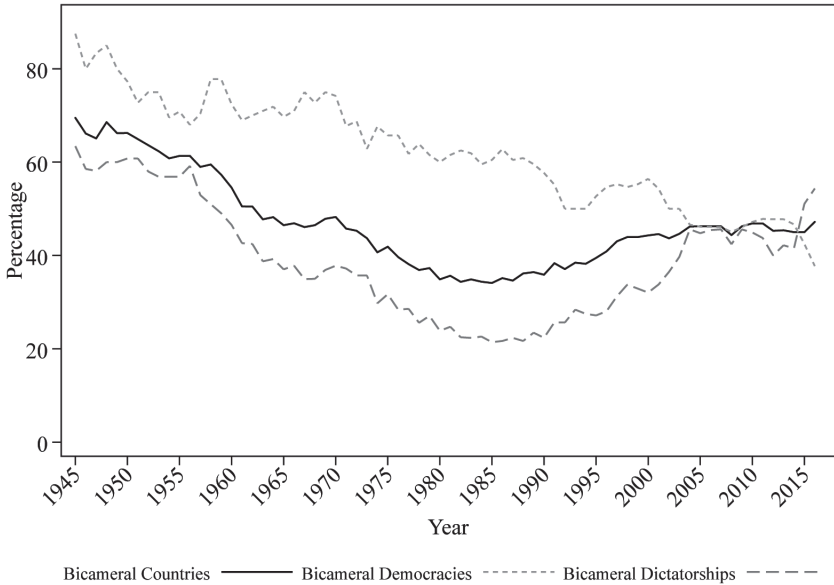
Bicameralism is present in the black-shaded countries.

of the People’s Republic of China, which formally has a unicameral legislature, the predominant majority of unicameral countries are also geographically small. But has there been a decline in bicameralism over time? Yes and no.

Given the tremendous increase in the number of independent countries in the 1950s and 1960s, and then again following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, even if only some of such countries had opted for a second chamber, the number of countries with a bicameral legislature or a unicameral parliament overall would not have declined. It is therefore more informative to look at the percentage of bicameral countries. Figure 2 displays the percentage of all countries with a second chamber, as well as all democracies and dictatorships with such a chamber, over time. It shows that indeed there was a decline in the overall percentage of bicameral legislatures after 1945, from 65 percent then to 45 percent in 2016. The decline, however, flattens out around the late 1980s to early 1990s, reaching 34 percent at the lowest point in 1985, but moderately increasing in the world since the mid-1980s. In summary, therefore, over time after 1945 there was a steady decline but then a rise in bicameralism, albeit a very modest one.

The overall figures, though, provide only the most basic information about the prevalence of bicameralism. It is worth unpacking these figures by distinguishing between bicameralism in democracies and nondemocracies. Here, we follow a conventional definition of democracy defined as a country with a Polity2 score of +6 or more. Is the decline in bicameral countries driven by the decline of bicameralism in democracies only, in dictatorships, or both? Figure 2 shows there was a steady decline in the percentage of democracies

Figure 2. Bicameralism in the World,
Democracy and Dictatorship, 1945–2016



with second chambers from around 80 percent at the end of World War II to just over 40 percent in 2016. Furthermore, because the majority of the thirty-three above-mentioned small nations that are excluded from the Polity data, in fact, are unicameral democracies (based on Freedom House data), the addition of such states only reduces the percentage of bicameral legislatures among democracies further. Also, among democracies, we do not see the moderate rise in bicameralism from the mid-1980s that is visible among all countries overall. Therefore, the reversal in the percentage of bicameral countries must be attributed to the rise of dictatorships with second chambers. And, this is precisely what we see in figure 2.

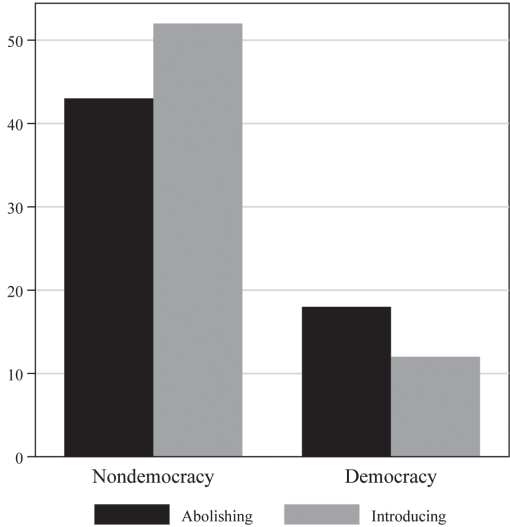
Among dictatorships, there is the same decline that we observe both among all countries overall and exclusively among democracies, but only until the mid-1980s. Since the late 1980s, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of bicameral dictatorships, from just over 20 percent to over 50 percent. Because the number of democracies is over twice as high as the number of dictatorships in the world now, the number of democracies with second chambers is also higher—albeit not twice as high—than the number of dictatorships with such chambers. The number of second chambers in democracies has increased, but the number of democracies has increased even more rapidly, reducing the percentage of democracies with second chambers. In fact, we see a linear decline in the percentage of democracies with bicameral legislatures since 1945. Until the early 2000s, democracies had a higher

percentage of second chambers than nondemocracies. Since this time, though, because the percentage of second chambers in democracies has continued to decline and the percentage in dictatorships has been rising since the late 1980s, the percentage has been roughly equal in each. In fact, if we draw a smooth Loess curve, the line for democracies is a straight downward slope, while the two lines for all countries and for dictatorships are similar in shape: they both flatten out in the 1980s and early 1990s and rise following the mid-1990s.

From the global trends of bicameralism, in terms of both numbers of bicameral countries and percentages of such countries, it is difficult to infer whether the rise and fall of bicameralism have occurred because (1) particular countries have introduced or abolished second chambers; (2) previously democratic countries that experienced democratic breakdown abolished or introduced bicameralism; (3) previously nondemocratic countries made changes during transition to democracy; or (4) bicameral and unicameral countries retained their legislative arrangements but experience democratic transitions and breakdowns. We aim not only to chart the fall and rise in bicameralism over time but also to document the changes, whether such a trend is driven by the simple addition of new member states into the world system or whether the pattern is mainly driven by the reform of such arrangements among existing member states.

In the remainder of this essay, we take stock of all 125 cases of reform. Figure 3 displays the count of reforms from unicameralism to bicameralism, and vice versa, in democracy and dictatorship, since 1945. The sample

Figure 3. The Creation and Abolition of Bicameral Legislatures in Democracies and Nondemocracies, 1945–2016



excludes first post-independence constitutions in nations that may or may not have had bicameralism (i.e., it focuses on instances where second chambers were introduced or abolished when political regimes were already in place as opposed to cases of constitutional engineering from scratch).

Because we do not have the data for the period prior to 1945 when many constitutions were first introduced with or without bicameralism, the inclusion of first post-independence constitutions since 1945 renders bicameral reforms a much more frequent occurrence in dictatorships as opposed to democracies. This is because many advanced democracies have long histories of statehood prior to 1945, while the predominant majority of independent nations after 1945 emerged and continued as dictatorships, at least for a significant period of time following their independence. For the record, we note that among seventy-seven countries in the dataset that gained independence after 1945 and had legislatures in their first year of sovereignty, fifty-six nations, or 73 percent, adopted unicameral parliaments, while twenty-one nations, or 27 percent, established two chambers of parliament instead. All but one of these twenty-one nations were dictatorships at the time. In figure 3, we exclude the twenty-one cases of adoption of second chambers in first post-independence constitutions and focus only on changes in countries that already had parliaments in place prior to reforms.

Figure 3 shows that of 125 subsequent changes in total, nondemocracies introduced a bicameral system 52 times compared with the equivalent change in only 12 democracies, including democracies in transition. Figure 3 also shows that in nondemocracies a bicameral system was abolished more than forty-three times during the period from 1945 to 2016, whereas only eighteen democracies did the same. Therefore, first, democracies are somewhat more likely to abolish bicameralism than to introduce it, while the chances for adoption or removal of a second chamber in dictatorships are roughly the same. The differences between regime types are not statistically significant, however. Second, institutional changes with regard to bicameralism are much more frequent in nondemocracies than democracies. These figures provide pause for thought, not least by indicating that it is important to look behind the headline figures when examining the prevalence or otherwise of second chambers.

The Reform of Bicameralism in Democracies and in Transition

Why do democracies reform bicameralism? To address this question, we briefly review a very extensive literature on bicameralism in democracies; we then examine the debate on the removal of a second chamber that occurred in Venezuela in 1999, to see if any of these general arguments appeared in the actual discussion “on the ground.” We also discuss the surprising case of Senegal, where a senate was adopted, abolished, and reintroduced, only to be abolished again in the brief period from 1998 to 2012. Finally, we summarize

the likely reasons for such reform across the world.

What is the purpose of second chambers? Nicholas Baldwin identified six reasons for the creation of bicameralism, ranging from the need for checks and balances, better representation of territories as well as elements within society, advancement of democratization and reflection, to improvement of legislation.¹⁶ Philip Norton subsequently summarized these reasons under two general headings: reflection and representation.¹⁷ The existence of a second chamber is thought to provide the opportunity for greater reflection. This idea applies to the legislative process. Given that the law-making agenda of governments in most contemporary democracies is packed, second chambers provide extra time for reflection. All else being equal, this creates the potential for the passage of higher-quality legislation. This point is made all the more forcefully when, as is usually the case, the composition of the second chamber is substantively different from the composition of the first chamber. The different mode of composition allows alternative viewpoints to be heard and members with specific expertise to voice their opinions, again promoting better legislative output. The idea that second chambers allow for greater reflection can be extended as well to the matter of accountability. Especially in parliamentary and semi-presidential systems, governments invariably control a majority, or at least a working majority, in the lower house. With party discipline, this can mean that there is little incentive to scrutinize legislation, but also little incentive to hold the government effectively to account. In this context, a second chamber may play a role in making the government more accountable. This may be because the government does not enjoy a majority in the second chamber, perhaps because a different electoral system is used for the upper house. It may also be because discipline is less strong there. In a weak second chamber, the costs of speaking out are less dramatic. In most countries, the government cannot fall because of the actions of the second chamber. The second chamber's power to shape legislation also may be restricted. Paradoxically, though, this may provide greater space for questions to be asked that would otherwise not be raised. In both ways, then, the presence of a second chamber may invite more and perhaps better reflection.

The existence of a second chamber also provides the opportunity for greater representation.¹⁸ In general terms, scholars suggest that bicameralism is more likely to be present when countries are diverse in terms of their ethnic, religious, or linguistic differences, when countries are large in terms of their population or geographic size, or when countries have a federal structure.¹⁹

¹⁶ Nicholas Baldwin, "Concluding Observations," *Journal of Legislative Studies* 7 (2001): 172-175.

¹⁷ Norton, "Adding Value? The Role of Second Chambers," 6-8.

¹⁸ Massicotte, "Legislative Unicameralism," 152.

¹⁹ Heller and Branduse, "The Politics of Bicameralism," 339; Arend Lijphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-one Countries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); and Uhr, "Bicameralism," 476.

Overall, bicameralism is often defended and promoted on the grounds of reflection and representation. In democracies, there are good reasons to believe that these principles indeed are likely to motivate the creation and survival of second chambers. If second chambers are so positive for democracy, why ever abolish them?

Bicameralism may be abolished due to financial concerns. For example, in the midst of severe economic recession in 2009 in Ireland, the leader of the opposition at the time, Enda Kenny, proposed abolishment of the second chamber as it would save some €150m during the legislative term.²⁰ Other reasons, though, may be behind such reform, particularly in transitional democracies or countries with shorter histories of uninterrupted democracy.

Consider the debate on bicameralism in Venezuela at the time of the 1999 Constitutional Assembly. The assembly was tasked with promulgating a new constitution following the 1998 watershed election of Hugo Chavez. The new president proposed a number of sweeping changes to the constitution, including five rather than three branches of power, the removal of a ban on immediate reelection, and the introduction of a unicameral parliament. During the debate on the floor of the assembly, the delegates considered whether they should retain the second chamber, albeit under a different title, or abolish it altogether. One of the delegates, Aristobulo Asturiz, proposed:

We need a Parliament of representatives from areas where the large urban concentrations are, [the parliament] that builds the federalism, the new federalism. ... And to achieve that we have to dismantle the central state. In order to do so we have to push strongly for more decentralization. There are those who believe that decentralization must be about the states at the intermediate level; but there are those who believe that decentralization is about where people are, down there, and that people have to be represented directly. The bicameral structure drives corruption, it is costly, it hinders the process of drafting laws, and it encourages corruption.²¹

Another delegate, Mario Isea, argued that the very example of the unicameral Constitutional Assembly validated the viability of a single-chamber parliament in the future. Furthermore, he raised budgetary concerns, that is, that the duplication of parliamentary committees in two chambers

²⁰ RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann, Ireland's National Public Service Broadcaster), "FG Would Abolish Seanad—Kenny" (October 19, 2009), <https://www.rte.ie/news/2009/10/17/123091-politics/> (accessed April 30, 2016).

²¹ Asamblea Nacional Constituyente [Constituent National Assembly] (November 3, 1999), 49-50, <http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve>, under Asamblea Contituyente (accessed December 18, 2009). All translations in text are by the authors of this essay.

was very wasteful and unnecessary.²² Still, many delegates—forty-nine against seventy—opposed the change. For example, David de Lima and Ricardo Combellas both cautioned the eager reformers not to be carried away by the then strong societal antiparliamentary sentiment that led them to believe that everything that reduces the power of parliament was positive and “intrinsically revolutionary.”²³ Allan Brewer dismissed the views that Venezuela was essentially an urban country and argued that to be “consistent with a federal scheme, it is necessary to have the Federal Chamber that gives representation to the states and that allows them to participate equally in a national political process.”²⁴

In the end, the debate boiled down to the simplistic choice between institutional change, a dramatic break with discredited tradition, on the one hand, and the status quo, the defense of the hotbed of conservatives, party elites, generals, and *latifundistas* that even Simon Bolivar most likely would not have defended had he been alive, on the other. Guillermo Garcia even rejected the argument for the need for the second chamber’s moderating influence precisely because if they, as revolutionaries, “are going to make changes, then now less than ever do we need a moderating power next to the Chamber of Deputies.”²⁵ The delegates believed that the people gave them the mandate to create the new political order and retention of the second chamber would slow things down considerably. Iris Varela argued, “The Venezuelan people are waiting for us to actually show that there is a change here. The change is in transforming this Parliament into a unicameral structure so that the process of lawmaking is more expeditious.”²⁶ And change they made. Swiftly, President Chavez had a new constitution enacted that abolished the Senate altogether in 1999. While the *zeitgeist* in late-1990s Venezuela was strongly anti-status quo, with one of the casualties being the bicameral legislative tradition, a complementary reason for the switch to a unicameral parliament also could have been that, in the 1998 election, while the Hugo Chavez-led Movimiento V [Quinta] República (MVR) coalition gained the majority in the lower chamber, the more established Acción Democrática (AD) party performed more strongly in the upper chamber. Apart from abolition for financial reasons, this is the first hint that the creation and abolition of bicameralism can be motivated by reasons other than arguments concerning reflection and representation.

Figure 4 (sub-figure for democracy) attempts to categorize the general circumstances that accompany the reform of bicameralism in democracies, including democracies in transition. Clearly, as the debate in Venezuela demonstrated, there may be multiple, not necessarily mutually exclusive,

²² Mario Isea, transcript of speech in *ibid.*, 35-36.

²³ David de Lima and Ricardo Combellas, transcript of speech in *ibid.*, 33-34, 39-41.

²⁴ Allan Brewer, transcript of speech in *ibid.*, 45.

²⁵ Guillermo Garcia, transcript of speech in *ibid.*, 31.

²⁶ Iris Varela, transcript of speech in *ibid.*, 31.

reasons behind each instance of reform. To infer and argue that “the” reason for reform is exclusively about budgetary concerns, democratic accountability, or representation alone is too subjective. Instead, we categorize based on “observables,” such as whether reforms followed civil war or ethnic strife; were implemented during transition in a new democracy; or, in contrast, came into effect in an advanced democracy, for whatever officially declared reason.

In democracies, reform most commonly occurs during the transition from a previous authoritarian regime when a new democracy “reconfigures” its institutions: eight transitional democracies introduced a second chamber, and nine abolished it. For example, the absence of the second Chamber of Advisors in the new 2014 Tunisian constitution was dictated by the impetus for a clean break from an authoritarian past. Whenever information was available, we briefly studied the arguments for and against bicameralism that were made at the time of change. Almost always, countries that had a bicameral structure before it was abolished by the authoritarian government reinstated their second chamber upon their return to democracy—a move often heralded as a return to the democratic traditions of the past, such as in Spain in 1977 or Poland in 1990. This is not to argue that the adoption of a second chamber cannot be a part of a larger process of democratization and executive-legislative power reconfiguration. However, when countries instead featured unicameral legislatures before the advent of authoritarian rule or the rule of a strongman who adopted a second chamber, again, almost always the demise of bicameralism was justified as the return to democratic institutions in a process of democratization, such as in Tunisia in 2012, Niger in 2011, and Senegal in 2012, but also earlier in 2001.

In fact, in Senegal, the second chamber has had a vicissitudinous history. It was first established in 1998 under the presidency of Abdou Diouf, in power for seventeen years at that time and who headed an authoritarian party-based regime. Its creation was denounced by the then de facto leader of the opposition, Abdoulaye Wade, who promised to abolish it and characterized it as a “clientelist mechanism in the service of the old regime.”²⁷ True to his word, following his election in 2000, President Wade oversaw a new constitution that did away with the second chamber as well as the Economic and Social Council (*le Conseil économique et social*), a consultative body with nominal input into the law-making process.

However, even though Senegal under Wade became an electoral democracy, the new president repeatedly used constitutional reform to try to maintain his control over the system. Prior to Wade’s reelection in 2007, there were four constitutional amendments and no fewer than nine amendments between May 2007 and June 2009 alone. The first amendment in June 2003

²⁷ Assane Thiam, ““Une Constitution, ça se revise!” Relativisme constitutionnel et État de droit au Sénégal” [Constitutional relativism and rule of law in Senegal], *Politique africaine* [African Politics] 108 (2007): 149.

effectively was to reinstate the very consultative *Conseil* that had just been abolished. Then, in 2006, President Wade reintroduced the Senate. In the run up to the rescheduled election for the lower house and amid mounting tensions within the ruling party, the creation of the Senate was a neopatrimonial device to “accommodate” his political friends and to encourage them to remain and/or reward them for remaining loyal to him.²⁸ Indeed, the structure of the Senate guaranteed that no fewer than 65 percent of the members of the new institution were appointed by the president. As it turned out, his supporters held ninety-nine of the one hundred seats in the second chamber following the first elections in 2007.²⁹ Thus, the accusation of neopatrimonialism that the president had made against the previous regime some six years earlier was now turned against Wade himself.³⁰

There is no doubt that the creation of the Senate in Senegal in 1998, while ruled by a nondemocratic regime, and then its recreation in 2006, while Senegal was an electoral democracy, were examples of the “instrumentalisation of the Constitution for reasons other than democratic rationality.”³¹ Clearly, the reinstatement of bicameralism in 2006 was not motivated by the desire for more equitable representation, but by the need to find a way of managing party political problems that threatened the president’s hold over the regime. With Wade’s departure from office in 2012, however, his successor decided to return to a unicameral legislature. The example of Senegal suggests that, while in some settings bicameralism may be abolished or introduced in a new democracy in transition in order to return to the old democratic institutional traditions that existed prior to a nondemocratic period, such as in Poland in 1990, in other settings, such as in Senegal, bicameral reform may be a tool that the elected leaders employ for purposes of governing. While it is beyond the scope of this exploratory essay, further research may study whether executive-legislative power balance such as the minority status of a president’s party, or a president-party relationship, may explain the endogenous bicameralism in transitional democracies.

As seen in figure 4, in five cases, the second chamber was abolished in democracies with a long democratic tradition. Here, the second chamber was portrayed by its opponents as a remnant of the old order; as the argument was offered in Ireland in 2013, its removal was to save the public expenditure (e.g., New Zealand in 1951 and Sweden in 1971). In three cases, a senate was

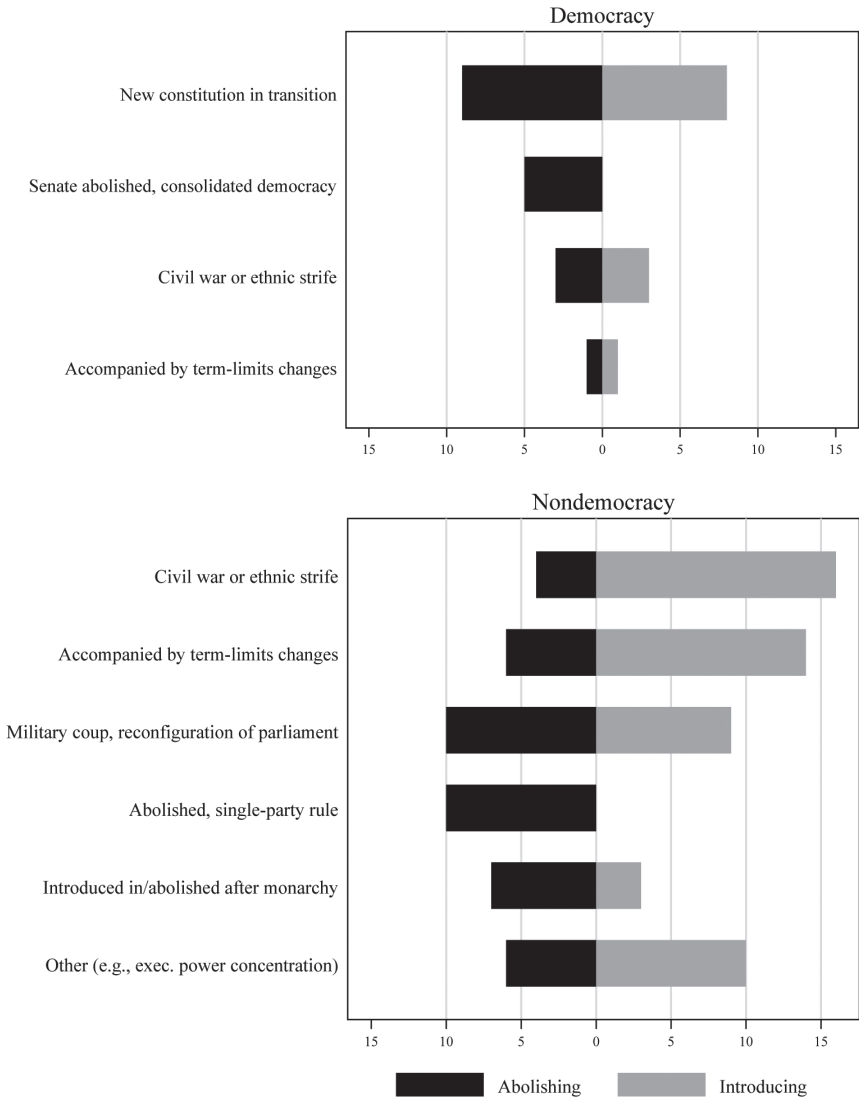
²⁸ Gerti Hesselting, “Le Sénat au Sénégal, une attraction secondaire?” [The Senate in Senegal, a secondary attraction] *Afrilex* (2010): 13, <http://afrilex.u-bordeaux4.fr/le-senat-au-senegal-une-attraction.html> (accessed June 12, 2015).

²⁹ Thiam, “Une Constitution, ça se revise!” 151.

³⁰ Mody Niang, *Qui est cet homme qui dirige le Sénégal?* [Who is this man who is running Senegal?] (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006), 278-279.

³¹ Ismaila Madior Fall, *Évolution constitutionnelle du Sénégal. De la veille de l’Indépendance aux élections de 2007* [The constitutional evolution of Senegal: From the eve of independence to the 2007 elections] (Paris: Karthala, 2009), 184.

Figure 4. Number of Changes in Bicameralism
in Democracies and Nondemocracies, 1945–2016



adopted, and in three it was removed, following a period of civil conflict or significant ethnic and societal disturbances. For example, a second chamber was introduced in the aftermath of ethnic strife in Kenya in 2010, and in Pakistan in 1973, following the violent secession of Bangladesh, then East Pakistan. Finally, in Venezuela in 1999 and in Senegal in 2009, the removal and introduction of a second chamber was accompanied by other constitutional changes that included the extension of term limits for sitting incumbents—a dual institutional change that is much more frequent in nondemocratic regimes, to which we now turn.

The Fall and Rise of Bicameralism in Dictatorships

As we showed earlier, the reversal of the decline of bicameralism in the world since the 1990s has been due primarily to the adoption of this institutional form in dictatorships. In fact, not only do dictatorships tend to adopt second chambers, but also they are just as likely to abolish them, often only to reintroduce them all over again. Figure 4 (sub-figure for nondemocracy) captures the factors associated with the reform of bicameralism in nondemocracies.

There is nothing in the argument about bicameralism and representation that is not applicable to dictatorships. Louis Massicotte underlined that the existence of a second chamber in a given country does not necessarily imply that the country is more democratic, only that bicameralism is associated with the potential for greater representation of interests in a manner consistent with the basic principle at work.³² A second chamber was introduced in sixteen cases during or immediately after civil war (e.g., Ethiopia in 1995 and Rwanda in 2004), compared with only four where it was abolished—perhaps when the institutions of the former regime, including bicameralism, also were purged following conflict. This suggests that the creation of bicameralism indeed can be one of the ways to reduce societal and ethnic discontent, as well as a means to credibly commit to future power-sharing.

Bicameralism, however, also may be introduced in settings where concerns about representation do not apply. Consider the case of Belarus, where the 1996 constitutional amendments included the introduction of a second chamber, among other institutional changes. Belarus is a medium-sized state without any significant regional cleavages or history of ethnic or intercommunal conflict. It also has a relatively homogenous population, with 84 percent of the population being ethnic Belarusians, and 8 percent and 3 percent Russians and Poles, respectively. There were no compelling historic or representational reasons that would have made bicameralism a logical choice at that time.

Following his 1994 election to the newly created presidential post, Alexander Lukashenka quickly consolidated his power through cabinet and

³² Massicotte, “Legislative Unicameralism.”

regional appointments and censorship of the media.³³ The new president also began to issue a series of executive decrees, and found himself on a collision course with the unicameral legislature and the constitutional court. The political crisis deepened when the president continued to trespass on parliamentary prerogatives after the 1995 parliamentary elections, which had created stronger opposition against the authoritarian reversal underway in the country, with communists and agrarians gravitating toward liberals and social democrats. Unable to exert executive control over the legislature calling for his impeachment, the president lamented:

The presidency, Supreme Council and Constitutional Court failed to coordinate their work. And it is not the President's fault! The situation when the President is responsible for the state of affairs in the country and engaged in practical problems, while the deputies and the constitutional judges are focus on impeachment of the President as their primary occupation, cannot continue indefinitely.³⁴

Instead, the president proposed to end the deadlock by introducing a new constitution with a new bicameral parliament able to “professionally” work with the executive:

The Senate as an institution of territorial representation, will have a mixed composition, including that with the participation of the Head of State. The most experienced and intelligent representatives of the different categories of the population will enter the upper chamber.³⁵

When the Constitutional Court began consideration of the impeachment case in 1996, the president decided to bypass the existing institutions by proposing a referendum on a new constitution. Despite the fact that the referendum could have been only consultative and nonbinding under the old 1994 constitution, the plebiscite, no longer merely consultative, proceeded. As a result, various irregularities during the process notwithstanding, the majority approved the new constitution that increased the president's powers vis-à-vis other branches, extended his five-year term by two additional years, and substituted

³³ Vitaly Silitsky, “Preempting Democracy: The Case of Belarus,” *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 4 (2005): 86.

³⁴ This and subsequent text is available in V. Brazovskaya, *Tolko Narod Vprave Rreshat' Svoyu Sud'bu: Materialy Vsebelorusskogo Sobraniya 19-20 Oktyabrya 1996 g.* [Only the people have the right to decide its fate: Materials of All-Belarusian People's Assembly, October 19–20, 1996] (Minsk: Presidential Administration, 1996).

³⁵ Ibid.

two chambers—a 110-member lower house and the Council of the Republic with 64 members—for the formerly unicameral legislature. Under the new constitutional clauses, the senators were not to be directly elected but instead either appointed by the president or by compliant regional councils. The new constitution also provided that the president could appoint half of the constitutional court. Following the referendum, the initial composition of the new parliament was drawn from the ranks of the previously elected members of the unicameral parliament who pledged loyalty to the new regime, with other deputies simply dismissed without regard for the constitutionality of their discharge.

The adoption of bicameralism in Belarus in 1996 indicates that the introduction of a second chamber may serve the specific instrumental goals of a dictator—to impose more control over the legislative branch and to justify the revision of a constitution so as to strengthen the executive or dismantle checks and balances altogether. In their rhetoric, however, many nondemocratic governments across the world argue that the introduction of a second chamber will improve democratic accountability. At the same time, other dictators argue that the removal of a second chamber will improve the democratic process or reduce public corruption. For example, in Turkey, bicameralism was first introduced in 1961, then it was abolished in 1982, both times following military coups after which the military decided to recalibrate civilian institutions and establish what it thought was a more efficient government. In other words, the adoption or removal of bicameralism always can be justified on democratic principles, even in dictatorships.

Looking at the cases of bicameral reform, we divide them based on whether each occurred following a military coup; after a civil war or a significant ethnic disturbance; or when accompanied by constitutional changes that strengthened the executive. In a number of cases, we do not observe a coup, the aftermath of a civil war, or the promulgation of a constitution with stronger executive powers. We categorize such cases based on the type of nondemocratic regime at the time, or place it instead into the category, “other.”

Bicameralism may be introduced and abolished by the military. In Egypt, the Shura Council, previously loyal and ineffective under President Mubarak, was abolished not by President Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, who came to rely on the council after the courts dissolved the Islamist-dominated lower chamber in 2012, but by the new ruler of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who overthrew Morsi in 2013 and made sure that the new constitution of Egypt omitted a second chamber. Overall, bicameralism has been adopted and abolished in nine and ten cases, respectively, on the initiative of the military that overthrew the civilian authority and undertook a major constitutional revision (e.g., multiple times in Thailand when, following the military takeover, the previous parliament was closed and then reconvened with a different configuration of chambers). In other words, a military junta does not always remove the second chamber; it also may introduce it in a previously unicameral

parliament. Whether facilitating the adoption or abolition, the military acts in the role of a moderator or a guardian and “recalibrates” civilian institutions by breaking down vested interests in the old legislature.

Second chambers also were abolished or introduced in twenty cases that can be described as an institutional reconfiguration following a new ruling coalition’s taking office (i.e., whenever a new nondemocratic regime replaced the previous, different, nondemocratic regime). This category is chosen only if a new ruling coalition, a new regime type, takes office as opposed to leader turnover in the same nondemocratic regime. We find that in ten cases bicameralism was removed when the new party-based regime took over (e.g., Hungary’s left-wing party dictatorship after the Second World War). In seven cases, bicameralism was removed following the overthrow of the monarchy, and a party-based regime, typically a personalist regime, took over (e.g., Nasser’s and Gaddafi’s regimes following the monarchy in Egypt and Libya, respectively).

It is also not surprising that so many party-based regimes, particularly left-wing ones such as in Nicaragua in 1987, almost always chose unicameralism. During the French Revolution, Abbé Sieyès argued that because the people could not have two wills, unicameralism could be the only proper form of democratic representation. Ever since, revolutionaries of the world have tended to establish party-based nondemocratic regimes and opted both to institutionalize such unity and to have single-party rule in a single-house. Even in populous China, the Chinese Communist Party governs in a unicameral legislature.

Altogether, in thirty cases, bicameral reform occurs together with sweeping constitutional changes that go beyond second chambers. Among these thirty cases, in fourteen and six cases, bicameralism was introduced and abolished, respectively, at the same time that the amendments to presidential term limits were promulgated.³⁶ Based on the example of Belarus that already was nondemocratic at the time, or for that matter, Senegal that was categorized as an electoral democracy, it is very likely that the introduction of second chambers may directly serve to improve the ability of dictators to control the legislative branch. This can be seen in the high proportion of appointed legislators that second chambers typically include. This is true in both democracies and nondemocracies. For example, drawing from the data provided by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, we can compare the method of selection in democracies and nondemocracies. Because many second chambers are of mixed composition and the number of senators varies significantly across countries, we calculate the total number of senators elected by different means in all democratic and nondemocratic regimes, and then report average percentages per category. We find that on average, even in democracies, only

³⁶ Alexander Baturo, “The Stakes of Losing Office, Term Limits and Democracy,” *British Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 3 (2010): 635-662.

46 percent of all senators are directly elected, while 30 percent are appointees, though no doubt not all such appointees owe their positions solely to the chief executive in democracies. On average, 23 percent of upper house legislators are indirectly elected. In nondemocracies, the situation is starker, with only 17 percent of all legislators being directly elected. Here, we find that over a third of all members of second chambers are appointed and that 83 percent are either appointed or indirectly elected. In nondemocracies, therefore, the incumbent regime is likely to be in control of all direct appointments, and the selection of indirect appointees is apt to be easier to manage as well. Furthermore, establishing a second chamber in a nondemocratic setting may be an additional tool to enhance cooptation, since upper-chamber seats can serve as patronage jobs to be distributed among regional elites and various appointees. Unlike the lower chambers that are filled by direct elections and, therefore, subject to a degree of electoral uncertainty, however small, upper chambers provide much easier means to dictators to reward their supporters (by directly appointing them, or securing their appointments indirectly through regional councils).

Similar to the majority of contemporary dictatorships that operate elections, however a sham and uncompetitive, during the long first wave of democratization, political elites extended suffrage and granted access to a lower chamber. Often, though, they retained a considerable degree of control over the legislative process by retaining influence in a second chamber. For example, in 1848, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte was directly elected as president of France, operating in a system with a unicameral legislature.³⁷ However, in 1851, he seized power in a coup and introduced a new constitution the following year. The 1852 constitution introduced a senate. The senate was comprised of cardinals, marshals, and admirals, as well as “citizens that the president of the Republic judges to be worthy of being raised to the dignity of a senator” (art. 20). These senators served for life and could not be dismissed. This case has a contemporary feel to it, despite the fact that it occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. In Britain, the nineteenth century was marked by a series of Reform Acts that gradually extended the suffrage in the House of Commons and paved the way for the rise of political parties and modern electoral competition. However, the House of Lords remained largely unchanged and was willing to use its veto to stymie progressive legislation right through to the period prior to the First World War.³⁸ Arguably, therefore, a similar, “conservative” logic of the adoption of a second chamber may also be present in contemporary dictatorships. Using Adam Przeworski’s data on political institutions and political events, we estimate that from 1788 to 2008, 53 percent of second chambers in bicameral legislatures were elected, directly or indirectly, and 21

³⁷ François Luchaire, *Naissance d'une Constitution: 1848* [Birth of a constitution: 1848] (Paris: Fayard, 1998).

³⁸ E. Anthony Smith, *House of Lords in British Politics and Society, 1815-1911* (London: Longman, 1992).

percent of the senates were partially and 26 percent fully appointed by the executive.³⁹

Bicameralism and Regime Durability

It exceeds the scope of this exploratory essay to go beyond simple enumeration of the general circumstances under which bicameral reforms occur. Also, while we know that bicameralism may have effects on policy stability or legislative effectiveness *inter alia* in democracy, we know little about the effects of bicameralism in dictatorships.⁴⁰ We can hypothesize, however, that because the introduction of a senate in a nondemocratic regime appears to serve the purpose of creating extra patronage jobs for the president's supporters or for coopting his or her rivals, the presence of bicameralism, all things being equal, should influence regime durability. Indeed, the number of possible high-profile patronage jobs always is limited, and the introduction of a senate may usher in an additional 50 to 150 senatorial posts—many of them directly appointed by the president, which in turn will contribute indirectly to intra-elite stability.

As a test of possible effects of second chambers in dictatorships, we briefly investigate whether the presence of such chambers influences regime durability. We can additionally distinguish between the presence of bicameralism, in general, and the presence of senates with a considerable number of executive appointments. Because our own data on bicameralism do not include details about the composition of second chambers over time, we rely on the data from Adam Przeworski, which however omit several countries and do not distinguish whether senates actually exist or are only on paper.⁴¹

The duration of nondemocratic regimes is taken from Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erika Frantz;⁴² we also draw nondemocratic category variables from the same source. To predict possible effects of bicameralism on the durability of nondemocratic regimes, we fit the Cox proportional hazards model. Apart from bicameralism and the type of nondemocratic regimes as covariates, we also include the Cold War dummy variable, as well as civil war, logarithm of GDP per capita, and economic growth rate, also taken from Przeworski.⁴³ Single-party regime—a nondemocratic regime category with the longest average survival rate as found in numerous studies—is chosen as the baseline category. Table 1 reports the results, with negative coefficients indicating that the hazard decreases with changes in the predictors.

³⁹ Adam Przeworski, "Acquiring the Habit of Changing Governments through Elections," *Comparative Political Studies* 48, no. 1 (2015): 101-129.

⁴⁰ Tsebelis and Money, *Bicameralism*, and Uhr, "Bicameralism."

⁴¹ Przeworski, "Acquiring the Habit of Changing Governments through Elections."

⁴² Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erika Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics* 12 (2014): 313-331.

⁴³ Przeworski, "Acquiring the Habit of Changing Governments through Elections."

Results indicate that military and personalist regimes have higher hazard rates than party regimes (omitted category), while civil war increases, and economic development decreases, the hazard of regime breakdown. Regimes were also more likely to break down during the Cold War and when Polity2 scores were higher, possibly indicating the moment of political liberalization. Model 1 that includes bicameralism suggests that the presence of a second chamber has no effect on regime survival.

Table 1. Bicameralism and Regime Survival

	All Dictatorships		Bicameral Only	
	Model 1:	Model 2:	Model 3:	Model 4:
Military	2.483*** (0.296)	2.456*** (0.301)	3.171*** (0.738)	3.343*** (0.743)
Monarchy	-0.349 (0.495)	-0.31 (0.528)	0.864 (0.959)	1.224 (0.866)
Personalist	1.440*** (0.314)	1.561*** (0.319)	2.068** (0.818)	2.197** (0.777)
GDP pc, log	-0.992** (0.350)	-0.951** (0.348)	-1.051 (0.759)	-0.882 (0.710)
Economic growth	-4.525*** (0.881)	-4.423*** (1.021)	-4.929 (3.084)	-5.628** (2.763)
Civil war	0.417 (0.312)	0.464 (0.315)	0.596 (0.670)	0.649 (0.587)
Cold War	0.680** (0.277)	0.746** (0.280)	0.165 (0.578)	0.428 (0.474)
Polity2	0.126*** (0.026)	0.136*** (0.025)	0.142*** (0.041)	0.151*** (0.043)
Senate	0.168 (0.273)	--	--	--
Senate, appointed	--	-1.102** (0.476)	-1.305** (0.488)	--
Senate, block powers	--	0.684+ (0.358)	1.1 (0.786)	--
Senate, composite index	--	--	--	-0.496** (0.187)
N	3293	3231	938	1026
N countries	107	107	58	61
N failures	178	174	56	62.00
Log-likelihood	-1160.859	-1117.365	-277.462	-316.135

Note: Model specifications are proportional hazard Cox regression, with standard errors clustered by country (in parentheses). Coefficients are reported. Only nondemocratic regimes are included, from 1946 to 2000. Party-based regime is a baseline omitted regime category. Models 3–4 include regimes with bicameral legislatures. Significant at + p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.

Instead, it appears that it matters what kind of bicameralism is implemented. Models 2–3 include two predictors that differentiate among the types of bicameralism in place. Model 2 is estimated on the full sample of dictatorships, while Model 3 is estimated on the sample of dictatorships that feature bicameralism. Two new variables account for whether a senate is appointed and whether it can block the lower chamber.⁴⁴ While the coefficient on *Senate, block powers* is not statistically significant, *Senate appointed* reduces the hazard of regime breakdown. An “appointed” senate is associated with lower risk than is present in unicameral parliaments or bicameral ones with an elected senate.

As a final test, for Model 4, we construct a *Senate, composite index* variable, based on these two variables. The new variable takes the value of 1 if the senate is fully appointed or hereditary, 2 if appointed and also can impose a veto or return a bill for reconsideration, and 3 if it is appointed and must approve legislation or can impose a final veto on a bill. The resulting *Senate, composite index* has a statistically significant coefficient that indicates that this measure reduces the hazard of regime breakdown.

Results suggest that it is not the presence of a second chamber per se that affects regime stability, but rather the presence of a second chamber that is staffed by a leader’s appointees. In this regard, the challenge remains to identify the effects of the processes that lead to the very need to provide patronage (senate seats) to the elites and to separate such effects from the subsequent effects of bicameralism. As a result, even though we account for possible confounding factors, we still may not be able to observe whether the presence of bicameralism improves regime durability. While future studies will have to account for possible endogeneity, we treat the results from table 1 as indicative of the likely importance of bicameralism for regime survival.

Conclusion

The introduction and removal of a second chamber is a reform that occurs more frequently than conventionally assumed. As we discussed in the text, there exists a well-developed scholarship on second chambers, their reforms, and their consequences, that draws from a small number of consolidated democracies. In this essay, we have shown that a second chamber is a

⁴⁴ Senate appointed equals 1 if *UPPER HOUSE* equals 2 or 3 (i.e., if the second [upper] house is partially appointed, or if the second [upper] house is fully appointed or hereditary), zero otherwise. Senate, block powers takes the value of 0 if *UPPER HOUSE* equals 0 (i.e., if the second [upper] house cannot block or delay legislation passed by the lower house). Senate, block powers takes the value of 1 if *UPPER HOUSE* equals 1 or 2 (i.e., if the second house can only issue a suspensive veto or can send a bill for reconsideration, or if the second house must approve legislation or can issue a final veto). See Przeworski, “Acquiring the Habit of Changing Governments through Elections.”

surprisingly malleable institution, with 125 changes to this most basic arrangement—the number of legislative houses—in the world between 1945 and 2016. The total number of changes increases to 146 if we include the adoption of second chambers in first post-independence constitutions since 1945. We also have shown that bicameralism indeed is in decline, but only in terms of the percentage of bicameral countries—not in terms of numbers—and only in democracies. We find that democracies rarely reform bicameralism. When they do, they usually are transitional democracies, eager to replace the old authoritarian legislature with a new democratic one, whether unicameral or bicameral. By contrast, dictatorships reform their second chambers much more regularly, typically following military coups or civil wars, and often together with constitutional changes in an attempt to concentrate executive power. Admittedly, a causal inference research design is required to study whether similar circumstances also are in place when bicameral reforms do not occur. As it stands, we believe we were able to shed new light on the introduction and removal of second chambers across democracy and dictatorship in the world. We underline that while comparative research has advanced our understanding of bicameral reforms in democracies, more than three-fourths of such reforms, about which we know little, occur in nondemocracies. Future research will investigate further the inner mechanisms of bicameral reforms and their consequences for nondemocratic regimes.

While there exists no consensus about bicameralism among governance, aid, and foreign-policy practitioners, some prominent organizations and actors advocate the adoption of a second chamber. In Kenya, a new second chamber was created in 2010 following the violent aftermath of the 2007 presidential election that resulted in an internationally brokered power-sharing agreement in 2008. The assumed logic is that such second chambers will improve the quality of the legislative process, increase the representation of underrepresented groups, or facilitate peace and reconciliation. For example, the Council on Foreign Relations suggested bicameralism as a constraint on majority power in the Middle East, particularly in light of the resurgent Islamic movement.⁴⁵ While bicameralism indeed may be appropriate in this region and during reconciliation efforts in other countries such as the Central African Republic, in other settings it may not be and the reformers need to take context and circumstances into account very seriously. This is at least partly because dictators always can make valid-sounding arguments about the democratic principles underpinning any reform of bicameralism.

Also, different motivations for reform may be present. In light of conflict in Eastern Ukraine since 2014, policy makers have discussed the idea of federalism and possibly bicameralism as a potential way forward for Ukraine.⁴⁶ However,

⁴⁵ The Council on Foreign Relations, *In Support of Arab Democracy: Why and How* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2005), 21.

⁴⁶ For instance, on April 17, 2014, in Geneva, the representatives of the European Union, the

the idea of a bicameral legislature has been proposed and debated multiple times in the past in that country. As early as 1995, one of the opposition leaders at the time, Alexander Moroz, foreboded that “bicameral parliament will not only encourage the separatist sentiments that are present in the state today but will also fix the administrative division of the state, which may not always be effective.”⁴⁷ Further research therefore is required to study bicameral reforms and factors behind them that may go beyond the questions of governance or regime survival and even be related to the irredentist meddling in domestic politics by foreign powers. The adoption of second chambers is not always related to the logic of reconciliation or improved representation and may have a less lofty rationale.

United States, Ukraine, and Russia issued a joint statement urging consideration of regional interests and a country’s diversity (e.g., the “constitutional process will be inclusive, transparent and accountable. It will include the immediate establishment of a broad national dialogue, with outreach to all of Ukraine’s regions and political constituencies...”), http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en (accessed March 1, 2017).

⁴⁷ “Dvukhpalatnyj Parlament—ot Retro k Sovremennosti” [Bicameral legislature—from retro to today], quoted in *Ukrainska Pravda* (July 6, 2007), <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/articles/2007/07/6/4420912/> (accessed March 1, 2017).

Supplementary (online) Table:
Introducing and Abolishing Bicameralism, 1945–2016

Country	Year	Democracy	Change	Detail
CAR*	2016	no	1	after conflict
Cote d'Ivoire*	2016	no	1	after conflict
Somalia	2016	no	1	after conflict
Egypt	2014	no	0	after coup
Fiji	2014	no	0	after coup
Thailand	2014	no	0	after coup
Cameroon	2013	no	1	other
Eq. Guinea	2013	no	1	also term limits
Kenya	2013	dem	1	after conflict
Senegal	2012	dem	0	transition
Tunisia	2012	dem	0	transition
Niger	2011	dem	0	transition
Niger	2010	no	1	also term limits
Myanmar	2010	no	1	after coup
Senegal	2009	dem	1	also term limits
Bhutan	2008	no	1	in/after monarchy
Turkmenistan	2008	no	0	other
Kyrgyzstan	2007	no	0	after conflict
Nepal	2007	dem	0	after conflict
Iraq*	2006	-	1	after conflict
Sudan	2006	no	1	after conflict
Zimbabwe	2005	no	1	other
Chad	2005	no	0	also term limits
Taiwan**	2005	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
Tunisia	2005	no	1	also term limits
Uzbekistan	2005	no	1	also term limits
DRC	2004	no	1	after conflict
Rwanda	2004	no	1	after conflict
Bahrain	2003	no	1	after conflict
Togo*	2002	no	1	also term limits
Burkina Faso	2002	no	0	other
Burundi	2002	no	1	after conflict
Senegal	2002	dem	0	transition
Yemen***	2001	no	1	also term limits
Croatia	2001	dem	0	transition

Supplementary (online) Table:
Introducing and Abolishing Bicameralism, 1945–2016

Country	Year	Democracy	Change	Detail
Tajikistan	2000	no	1	also term limits
Venezuela	2000	dem	0	also term limits
Cambodia	1999	no	1	after conflict
Niger	1999	dem	0	transition
Senegal	1999	no	1	other
Gabon	1997	no	1	also term limits
Belarus	1997	no	1	also term limits
Chad	1997	no	1	after conflict
Comoros	1997	no	0	after conflict
Oman	1997	no	1	in/after monarchy
Kazakhstan	1996	no	1	also term limits
Morocco	1996	no	1	in/after monarchy
Niger	1996	no	1	other
Algeria	1996	no	1	after conflict
CAR	1995	dem	0	transition
Ethiopia	1995	no	1	after conflict
Kyrgyzstan	1995	no	1	also term limits
Malawi****	1995	dem	1	transition
Peru	1994	no	0	also term limits
Comoros	1993	no	1	after conflict
Congo	1993	dem	1	transition
Madagascar	1993	dem	1	transition
Burkina Faso	1992	no	1	other
Mauritania	1992	no	1	other
Turkmenistan	1992	no	1	other
Iceland	1991	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
Guinea	1991	no	0	other
Nepal	1991	dem	1	after conflict
Romania	1991	dem	1	transition
Poland	1990	dem	1	transition
Zimbabwe	1990	no	0	other
Afghanistan	1988	no	1	after conflict
Ethiopia	1988	no	0	after conflict
Haiti	1988	no	1	after conflict
Philippines	1988	dem	1	transition

Supplementary (online) Table:
Introducing and Abolishing Bicameralism, 1945–2016

Country	Year	Democracy	Change	Detail
Uruguay	1986	dem	1	transition
Lesotho	1984	no	1	after coup
Panama	1984	no	0	after coup
Burundi	1982	no	0	single-party rule
Turkey	1982	no	0	after coup
Egypt	1981	no	1	other
Ecuador	1980	dem	0	transition
Iran	1980	no	0	in/after monarchy
Nicaragua***	1980	no	0	single-party rule
Thailand	1979	no	1	after coup
Afghanistan	1978	no	0	in/after monarchy
Libya	1978	no	0	in/after monarchy
Cambodia	1977	no	0	single-party rule
Spain	1977	dem	1	transition
Thailand	1977	no	0	after coup
Portugal	1977	dem	0	transition
Uruguay	1977	no	0	after coup
Cuba	1976	no	0	single-party rule
Laos	1976	no	0	in/after monarchy
Guinea	1975	no	1	other
Myanmar	1975	no	0	single-party rule
Nicaragua	1975	no	1	also term limits
Thailand	1975	no	1	after coup
Eq. Guinea	1974	no	0	also term limits
Lesotho	1974	no	0	in/after monarchy
Madagascar	1974	no	0	single-party rule
Pakistan	1974	dem	1	after conflict
Philippines	1974	no	0	also term limits
Panama	1973	no	1	after coup
Sri Lanka	1973	dem	0	after conflict
Thailand	1973	no	0	after coup
Nicaragua	1972	no	0	also term limits
Morocco	1971	no	0	after conflict
Sweden	1971	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
Thailand	1969	no	1	after coup

Supplementary (online) Table:
Introducing and Abolishing Bicameralism, 1945–2016

Country	Year	Democracy	Change	Detail
DRC	1968	no	0	single-party rule
Kenya	1966	no	0	single-party rule
Paraguay	1968	no	1	also term limits
South Vietnam	1968	no	1	after conflict
Haiti	1965	no	0	also term limits
Burundi	1963	no	1	other
Nepal	1963	no	0	other
South Korea	1963	no	0	after coup
Turkey	1962	no	1	after coup
South Korea	1960	no	1	also term limits
Iraq	1959	no	0	in/after monarchy
Egypt	1957	no	0	in/after monarchy
Denmark	1953	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
Thailand	1953	no	0	after coup
Greece	1952	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
New Zealand	1951	dem	0	in consolidated dem.
Costa Rica	1950	dem	0	after conflict
Thailand	1950	no	1	after coup
Ecuador	1947	no	1	after coup
France	1947	dem	1	transition
Hungary	1947	no	0	single-party rule
Romania	1947	no	0	single-party rule
Ecuador	1946	no	0	other

Note: *Change* includes the introduction (1) and abolishment of bicameralism (0).
 *Senate not convened yet, as of January 2017. **The National Assembly that existed alongside the Legislative Yuan is suspended until “unification.” ***In Yemen, the Shura Council appointed by the president in 1997, added in the constitution in 1991. In Nicaragua, unicameralism is formally since 1987. ****Senate never convened; abolished in amendment in 2001. Democracy is when countries have a Polity2 score of +5 and above (1945–2014) and when the Freedom House Status is “Free” (2015–2016). A Polity2 score is not available for Iraq in 2006. In the majority of cases, the year stands for the first year when a senate was in place, whenever it is possible to ascertain; otherwise, the year is for the year of constitutional change.