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ARTICLE

The Normative Bases of Semi-Presidentialism: Max Weber and the Mitigation of Caesarism

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This article aims to locate the normative origins of the semi-presidential government in the theoretical contribution of German thinker Max Weber. I argue that Weberian reasoning about the Head of State, when freed from the German background in which it arose, may shed light on how semi-presidentialism can be justified in other national contexts nowadays. Methodologically, this work draws a link between Weber's constitutional thought and part of the literature concerning forms of government, especially semi-presidentialism. I evaluate particularly whether it is possible to build a normative theory of the semi-presidential system from similar concerns raised by him, that is, goals of national strengthening, selection of political leaders, and a popularly elected presidency working as a check on congressional and bureaucratic particularism. My analysis suggests that Weber's reasoning may be employed to defend a change to semi-presidentialism, provided the domestic powers of the popularly elected president be curtailed while her or his influence over foreign affairs is emphasized.

Keywords: Max Weber; forms of government; semi-presidentialism; presidency.

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Contemporary discussions on the semi-presidential system of government tend to be dominated by two basic issues: 01. the possibility of institutional conflicts between presidents and prime ministers; 02. the impact of the degree of power of presidents on the survival of the democracies that adopt the system. These have been the central lines of debate since Maurice Duverger (1980) coined the term 'semi-presidentialism' to designate systems that provide for the coexistence within the executive of a popularly elected president and a prime minister dependent on parliamentary confidence.

This debate often fails to mention the fact that the system of semi-presidentialism, as yet unnamed and unborn, had already been conceived of in Germany. In particular, the thinker Max Weber (1864-1920) gradually constructed a set of formulations that supported the adoption of a semi-presidential system. After the end of Imperial Germany in 1918, he formulated a theory justifying the adoption of a popularly elected presidency combined with a Chancellor who would answer to parliament (the Reichstag). There is therefore something of a gap in the current literature on semi-presidentialism. While analyses of presidentialism build on foundations laid by authors such as the American federalists, the theoretical heritage of the other system with an elected presidency remains in the shadows.

The literature on Max Weber's constitutional theories is characterized by several basic commonalities that are repeated over time: 01. critical analysis of whether or not the concepts of Caesarism and charismatic leadership – associated concepts in Weberian political thought – have a place in liberal-democratic theory; 02. discussion of these same concepts with reference to the German context during Weber's lifetime and the implications of their practical influence on the Weimar Republic. However, this discussion, however fruitful, tends, as I will show below, to be confined to Weber's national context. As he was one of the first authors to systematically reflect on the adoption of a popularly elected presidency in a cabinet system, this paper supports the hypothesis that an examination of his constitutional proposals and the dilemmas he faced in formulating them may shed light on comparable dilemmas today.

The first objective of this paper is to fill the gap mentioned above by bringing Weberian institutional thought to light, demonstrating how, when freed from the Imperial German context in which it was formulated, it can be used to

defend semi-presidentialism in other historical and national contexts. Methodologically, the text follows the path of Weber's constitutional theorizing in this regard, diachronically linking it to current reflections on systems of government. It then considers, synchronically, the possibility of constructing a normative theory of semi-presidentialism on the basis of similar concerns to those of Weber, namely, the goals of national empowerment, selection of the best political leaders and establishing a presidency that can check bureaucracy and congressional particularisms.

My ultimate aim in writing this article is not to advocate the adoption of semi-presidentialism in Brazil[1]. I seek rather to strengthen the terms according to which the system can be defended in countries where presidentialism has been criticized (or is in crisis) due to its instability and the legitimacy of its executives. One of the motivations of this article – I happily admit – is certainly my growing sympathy in recent years for the semi-presidential system.

This article is organized in the following way. The first section sets out the problem of the normative basis of semi-presidentialism and discusses the difficulties of arguing more convincingly about its desirability. In the second section, I discuss the institutions of the political regime of Imperial Germany (1871-1918), focusing on Weber's criticism (2013a) of the 'negative' way parliament functioned and foreign policy was conducted. In the third section, I present Weber's reformist proposals (2013a) for imperial political institutions, highlighting his concern with the selection of leaders through parliamentary accountability mechanisms and the debate on the degree to which his views can be described as liberal. The fourth section discusses the role of the concept of Caesarism in Weber's attraction (2013a) to a popularly elected presidency. The fifth section discusses what this presidency would look like and brings together the threads of this article's arguments, critiquing Weber's theoretical choices (2013a; 2013b) and sorting the wheat from the chaff to justify semi-presidentialism in today's world. In the conclusion, I present some ideas about the character of a semi-presidentialist president in the light of the preceding

[1]For such a defense in the Brazilian case, see Amorim Neto (2006b).

discussion, as well as some considerations about the role of Weberian reasoning in political science.

Semi-presidentialism: the problem of its justification

It is not very clear why one should defend semi-presidentialism. The system is widely adopted at present, especially in Europe, but its spread has not progressed in line with a theory that would justify it. Some normative mechanisms have been provided by Giovanni Sartori (1996). According to Sartori (1996), semi-presidentialism is superior to presidentialism, since it is better able to achieve what the French call 'cohabitation' between a president and a Congress who espouse opposed political lines. He also adds that "countries wishing to abandon presidentialism would do well to choose semi-presidentialism" because direct migration to pure parliamentarism could lead to teething problems. Countries wishing to replace parliamentarism would also be well advised to opt for semi-presidentialism if their parliamentary system functions in an assembly-like manner with a fragmented party system – a guarantee of frequent cabinet overthrows (SARTORI, 1996, pp. 152-153).

In a recent work, one of the leading experts on the system cites two basic advantages enjoyed by semi-presidentialism. The first concerns the possibility of sharing power within the executive itself, as separate political groups may occupy the presidency and the premiership. The second updates Sartori's argument (1996) by emphasizing the flexibility of the system in situations of divided government or 'cohabitation'. Semi-presidentialism can deal with this situation by reinforcing the president when he holds a parliamentary majority and weakening him when he is deprived of it (ELGIE, 2011, pp. 14-15; see also SAMUELS and SHUGART, 2010, p. 260 and AMORIM NETO, 2006a, pp. 185)

But what role does a popularly elected president play in the political system? What is the character of its legitimacy compared to its counterpart in the presidential system? These questions are lost in part in the literature, amid typically liberal considerations regarding institutional design and the need for it to include reasonable checks and balances between the president, the prime minister and parliament. In general, we can say that any discussion on the desirability of the semi-presidential arrangement has been somewhat tied to the two 'pure' systems,

presidentialism and parliamentarism. The arguments advanced by Robert Elgie (2011), for example, which are the standard assessment of the system, are strongly reminiscent of the debate between presidentialism and parliamentarism – a debate that was until recently strongly averse to the former (ELGIE, 2011, pp. 01-18).

Difficulties are to be met even before the normative challenge presents itself. A look through contemporary literature on the system makes it clear that the first obstacle to be overcome is acceptance that semi-presidentialism exists. Much work on it begin by outlining and defending definitions of the system, given the obvious fact that many countries fail to meet the expectations of their own constitutions: in some, the executive is in practice organized much like presidentialism; in others, parliamentarism is actually strong despite a popularly elected presidency.

Some texts question the classification of semi-presidentialism in terms of the scope or analytical power of government systems (SIAROFF, 2003; TAVITS, 2009). Other treatments of cabinet systems question the applicability of the concept and employ the generic term 'parliamentary democracies' both for countries where there is a popularly elected president as well as for countries where the head of state is a monarch or the president is elected indirectly (STRØM, MUELLER and BERGMAN, 2004).

In a sense, a certain taxonomic unease with regard to semi-presidentialism is to be expected. This is a sign that hybridization has spawned a new species and that it is a generally successful one, even if there are specific cases where it has gone wrong. These remarks aim to underline what sometimes goes unnoticed or is insufficiently emphasized in the literature: namely, that semi-presidentialism is a mixed system of government, just as there are mixed electoral systems, so named due to their blending of majoritarian and proportional features.

This last observation brings us to the second obstacle, namely the case of the Weimar Republic, the first semi-presidential experiment and one which came to a tragic end – and also the example of Finland[2]. The Nazi

[2]Both were created in 1919. The Finnish system remains in place to this day, although the president is now directly elected rather than being appointed by an electoral college and the powers of the presidency have been reduced. Finnish semi-presidentialism is not the object of our attention in this paper. See Raunio and Wiberg (2004).

destruction of the Weimar experiment helped obscure the fact that semipresidentialism began with a theoretical foundation. Just as the tenets of presidentialism were set forth in the classic federalist articles – even though the term 'presidentialism' had yet to be coined – semipresidentialism (also as yet unbaptized) had been conceived in theory before it was born. In the words of a contemporary author: "Given the subsequent collapse of the Weimar Republic, its designers' justifications for what would later be called semi-presidentialism became discredited" (SHUGART, 2006, p. 357). The French Fifth Republic (1958-) overshadowed Weimar as the prototype of the system. However, Shugart points out that 'the neo-Madisonian logic' of Hugo Preuss and his Weimar founder colleagues persists in the design of subsequent semi-presidential regimes.

Shugart (2006) does not elaborate on the theme, but the suggestion is that there are 'bad' and 'good' components in the initial justifications of what would come to be called semi-presidentialism. The good or virtuous element would clearly be the (neo-Madisonian) logic of checks and balances contained in the possibility of containing the monopoly on executive control by either the prime minister or the president. The evil or perverted element would reside in typically non-liberal goals that leave aside the classic concern with concentration of power. Is it really like that? Answering this question is the subject of the following sections.

Max Weber and Imperial Germany

Before dealing with the institutional proposals formulated by Weber (2013a) at the sunset of the German Empire, we must address the historical context in which he defended a popularly elected presidency for Germany. It is instructive to briefly outline the constitutional structure of Imperial Germany (1871-1918), the first political regime after the country's unification.

The emergence of Imperial Germany in 1871, following the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, is usually described as "a revolution from above", with clear "social-conservative goals" (MOMMSEN, 1995, p. 01). This is not to say that Prussian conservatives simply imposed an authoritarian regime. The existence of political forces such as the National Liberals made a parliamentary system necessary. The chancellor himself was fully aware of such liberal pressures and

sought to accommodate them without giving in to their central demands. Moreover, Prussian conservatives could not afford to run the risk of the smaller states rebelling, so some means of federal power-sharing had to come to being. The result was, in Wolfgang Mommsen's terms, the creation of a "semi-constitutional system with supplementary party-political features" (MOMMSEN, 1995, p. 05).

The imperial chancellor did not have to answer to the elected chamber, the 'Reichstag', and was appointed and dismissed by the Kaiser. In Prusso-German constitutionalism, the chancellor could not count on parliamentary majorities in the way of French and English prime ministers, not least because his appointment did not stem from the idea that his hold on office would depend formally or informally on parliament (BERGHAHN, 2005, p. 180).

The characteristics of the chancellery merit emphasis, as it is difficult to describe the chancellor as a mere prime minister, as he was not a 'primus' among ministerial 'pares' – there was no cabinet or prime ministerial office as such. The chancellor operated as the chairman and agent of the Federal Council, or 'Bundesrat'. The 'Bundesrat' was made up of representatives of the 'Confederate Governments' and generally contained no representatives from political parties. Article 09 of the Imperial Constitution of 1871 forbade anyone from simultaneous membership of the 'Reichstag' and the 'Bundesrat'. Departments acting in ministerial portfolios were nominally associated with the Federal Council. Behind all this, there was still the possibility, considered legitimate within the constitutional parameters of the German Empire, of an authoritarian intervention in the political system by the monarch and the military.

In an effort to arouse the loyalty of the popular strata to the conservative arrangement that had been adopted – or as a preventive maneuver aimed at outflanking liberals and nascent socialism – Bismarck instituted universal male suffrage, with levels of electoral inclusion unprecedented in other countries with representative regimes at the time (ANDERSON, 2000, pp. 05-06). Elections became increasingly competitive, even giving way to forces that were anathema to conservatives, such as the social democrats. The scope of parliament spread to areas of public policy not foreseen by Bismarck. In any case, the structure was set up as a 'system of skirted decisions' that allowed the executive broad latitude, especially since the 'Bundesrat', controlled largely by Prussian delegates, did not

act as a brake on the chancellery and associated imperial departments (MOMMSEN, 1995, pp. 15-30).

The defects of this institutional structure, from the perspective of its contemporaneous liberal critics, were linked to two absences: 01. the absence of a real cabinet at the apex of the executive; and 02. the absence of politicians accountable to the electorate in the loci from which government policies emanated. Both defects were aggravated by post-Bismarck chancellors, all lacking the undeniable political talent of their predecessor. According to one specialist, as the parties "were not responsible for the formation of a government, they would try to win over votes by presenting irresponsible platforms" (BERGHAHN, 2005, p. 180). The building of parliamentary majorities took place on an ad hoc basis through government concessions and under the veiled threat of intervention by authoritarian state institutions, namely the Kaiser, the Prussian bureaucracy and the military. It is this state of affairs that Max Weber (2013a) called 'negative politics' in reference to the imperial parliamentary system, as confirmed by later historians. Whether attacking the government or working with it, the 'Reichstag' took no responsibility in either case (WEBER, 2013a, p. 212).

Skeptical with this political structure, Weber (2013a) was nonetheless an admirer of German unification as the embodiment of an old liberal ideal. Indeed, his assessment of the Bismarckian legacy resembles an analysis of unanticipated effects. The chancellor achieved unification through a model that blocked alternative political leaders in order to 01. dampen tensions between the smaller states and Prussia and 02. maintain control over the post-unification political process. This stage of the Bismarckian project was successful in terms of its initial objectives of national affirmation. However, the resulting political system did not produce political leaders capable for the second phase of the Bismarckian project, according to which Germany should consolidate itself as a European and world power. The chancellor ran out of political solutions, resulting in his downfall and the subsequent rise of chancellors unable to promote the rise of the German National State: "Bismarck tragically reaped his own harvest" in the form of "the political impotence of parliament and the party leaders" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 176).

While maintaining parliament in the field of 'negative politics', Bismarck did not retain party political forces that supported him, thus exposing himself to dismissal from the chancellery after the coronation of a second Kaiser in 1890. It can be said that success in the first stage of national formation created unintended consequences that made it difficult to move on to later stages, in which, in Weber's view (2013a), Germany had to behave as a great power. Political leaders who took responsibility for the consequences of their actions were in short supply (WEBER, 2013a, p. 207)[3].

Weber (2013a) also criticized the monarch's role in the imperial system, especially in the field of foreign policy, a topic I will look at later. This was due in part to the side effects of Kaiser Wilhelm II's clumsy statements, which made it clear that the political system had no means of filtering the negative aspects of his influence. But the Weberian critique went beyond the specific person of the second German Kaiser. The Kaiser could not in any case be a political leader "under the conditions of the modern State" simply because he was not selected throughout an "inter-party" political struggle. Monarchs also do not meet the conditions to "control the administration", because they are rarely experts at anything (WEBER, 2013a, p. 209).

One of Weber's central concerns was bureaucratization, the tendency of modern organizations to rationalize their own operations on an efficient and calculable basis. This is done through specialization, technical training and rationally instituted regulations. This process affected both the State and private corporations, as well as the mass political parties that arose at the time. Weber (2013a) saw the trend as irresistible and inevitable: "The future belongs to bureaucratization" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 200). As David Beetham (1985) puts it, Weber's political texts conclude that bureaucracy has "an inherent tendency to exceed its instrumental function, and to become a separate force within society, capable of influencing the goals and character of that society" (BEETHAM, 1985, p. 65). While in 'Economics and Society' Weber is concerned with building an ideal type for the analysis of bureaucracy and bureaucratic domination (WEBER, 2013b,

[3]For a less negative view of the formation and quality of political leaders in Imperial Germany, see Anderson (2000, pp. 390-397). She compares German leaders with their counterparts in other European countries at the same historical moment.

pp. 956-1005), the political works in the Weberian corpus present a pessimistic view of bureaucratization[4].

This fear was highlighted in the German case, given the unimpeded manner in which bureaucratic departments operated. As much as he admired its effectiveness and professionalism, Weber (2013b) saw an essential shortcoming in the Prussian bureaucracy: officials were not trained to make decisions on political matters, which are typically riddled with conflicts of value and interest. Such training could only come from other arenas. Because of the technically superior features of the bureaucracy, it was necessary that limitations on its expansion into social life and individual autonomy be imposed in some way by other actors. If this did not happen, the bureaucracy would reduce the scope for individual voluntary action and end up weakening the country by fostering the assumption that decisions made according to the principle of bureaucratic rationality would automatically be considered as in the national interest.

The checks and balances must necessarily come from the political leadership: "Politicians must be the counterweight to the domination of public service" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 227). Weber (2013a) saw the fields of administration and politics as essentially distinct. Certainly, training is necessary for both fields. But while bureaucratic training aims at specialization and technical skills, political training can only come from the struggle between leaders who take responsibility for their actions and compete with one another for the power to command other men.

In this sense, Weber's approach bears distinctly liberal marks in that it discusses counterweights to bureaucratic domination that go beyond the purely administrative sphere and ponders how to "save at least some remnants of an 'individual' freedom of action" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 204). His conception is also permeated by objectives typically related to the strengthening of the national state.

[4]This article is too limited to elaborate on what Weber means by ideal type. This consisted of "a utopia obtained by the theoretical accentuation of certain elements of reality". The ideal type "is not a hypothesis but seeks to guide the formulation of hypotheses". As an ideal image, it does not describe reality, although its origin lies in some culturally significant value in society. It helps researchers to formulate causal links on the basis of major or minor discrepancies in reality (WEBER, 2012, pp. 124-125).

His analysis of the second stage of national formation, to continue using our terminology, is that there were too many bureaucrats in the leadership positions where there should have been a greater proportion of politicians. In his view, this impeded the nation's political maturity and contributed to the flaws in German foreign policy in the post-Bismarck period.

Evidently, tensions lie between the nationalist and liberal elements of Weber's thinking – a tension which remains unresolved as to which side should have priority in his thought (LASSMAN, 2013, pp. xxiii). The curbs on bureaucracy are related to individual freedom, but bureaucracy itself is linked to national goals. It is in the clash of individual voluntary actions, in a situation of formally free competition, that the space of human freedom must be guarded. This space resides in what the bureaucracy "does not accomplish", and this is the "leadership spirit" of entrepreneurs in the private economy and politicians in the public sphere. "No specific professional qualification in any area" is required of a leader (WEBER, 2013a, pp. 204-205).

Does this reasoning affect Weber's specifically constitutional proposals? The next section will investigate this.

Weber's constitutional proposals for Imperial Germany

Weber has a consistently negative judgment of pre-1914 German foreign policy. Bismarck's legacy emerges again in this case, given his resistance to promoting the expansion of German overseas possessions. Weber was a liberal imperialist, which in this case implies a view of Germany not only as a European but as a worldwide power. Such expansionism was necessary for economic and political reasons but was also seen by him as a natural consequence of the emergence of the German Empire. In this respect one can cite the oft-quoted observation that German reunification would remain a "juvenile prank" unless a superstructure of "German world power politics" were built upon it (WEBER, 2013a, p. 34; BEETHAM, 1985, p. 132).

The above quote dates from 1895, and it should be noted that the imperialist elements in Weberian thought, at least as regards expansionist or territorial annexation objectives, are mitigated in later writings. In his writings during World War I less 'enthusiasm' for imperialism is evident than was the case

in the 1890s (BEETHAM, 1985, p. 138). Generally speaking, however, the nationalist element in his thinking remained prominent. Germany's problems in the international arena were largely due to domestic factors such as Wilhelm II's personal rule and the absence of a parliamentary system that could produce responsible leaders.

According to Mommsen (1990, pp. 150-153), by 1907-1908 Weber had formulated a set of institutional proposals aimed at mitigating the effects of bureaucratization and the 'dynastic prestige policy' pursued by the Kaiser. The first and foremost of these is the so-called right of inquiry, whereby the 'Reichstag' could exercise control over the bureaucracy and call on it to explain its actions and curb any abuses. This would occur through special committees that would have the power to request documents and information from civil servants, as other European parliaments were doing at the time. In this way, leading parliamentary politicians could reduce the discrepancy in technical knowledge that favored the bureaucracy and make political decisions beyond the technical realm. In 'Parliament and Government in Reorganized Germany', Weber (2013a) expressly defends the view that this right be a right of parliamentary minorities, protected from rule changes that could be imposed by majorities (WEBER, 2013a, p. 236).

As I have mentioned before, we see a mixture of typically liberal motivations with nationalist and elitist elements. The right of inquiry was not only intended to act as a brake on the Reich bureaucracy and parliamentary majorities, nor only on the effectiveness of transparency in public affairs, but also on the production of leaders who could lead the nation politically: "The 'transparency of the administration', imposed by effective 'parliamentary control', must be required as a prerequisite for the nation's political education and for any fertile parliamentary work" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 232). The parliamentary checks and balances, as well as the prerogatives of publicity and supervision, are thus pedagogical means for the formation of a nation that could involve itself in the destiny of the world. At no point are they ends in and of themselves.

The question of the chancellery's accountability to parliament becomes another of Weber's reformist foci in 1908. He discussed it with intellectual friends such as liberal politician Friedrich Naumann and lawyer Georg Jellinek. It should be noted that at no time does Weber advocate votes of confidence, i.e., the

chancellor's hold on office being dependent on the approval of a majority in the 'Reichstag'. One of the reasons for this is his concern about the delicate federal balance between the various German states, particularly in their relationship with Prussia. Jellinek could not initially see how federalism and parliamentarism could be reconciled and was convinced by Weber to consider the idea of resignation of the chancellor in two hypothetical situations: a two-thirds vote of the 'Reichstag' or a three-fifths vote of the 'Bundesrat'.

It is not possible to call these "votes of confidence" in today's sense of the term because, in theory, a chancellor could remain in office even if disapproved of by more than half of the members of both legislative houses. The ingenious proposal thus protected coalitions of smaller states from being deprived of say in any attempt to remove the head of government, thanks to the size of their caucuses in the 'Bundesrat' (MOMMSEN, 1990, pp. 150-152).

The reformist movement gained no traction in the conservative environment of imperial politics. Weber paid less heed to the issue in subsequent years, although his view of the need for parliamentarization of the imperial regime remained unchanged. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 renewed the urgency in his mind for initiatives for a more active parliamentary role in government. The reason for this seems to be his understanding that, whatever the outcome of the war, it would be impracticable for the Empire to remain with the same authoritarian features under which it was created. In texts published in 1917, notably 'Parliament and Government in Reorganized Germany'[5], the main novelty is his defense of the removal of Article 09 of the 1871 Constitution, which forbade anyone to be both a member of Parliament and the Federal Council: "A precondition, not for parliamentarization as such, but for healthy parliamentarization in the Reich, is the elimination of that provision" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 314).

Weber was thinking, above all, about the migration of representatives from the 'Reichstag' to the Federal Council. Article 09 had the consequence of blocking representatives from being able to occupy state secretariats (equivalent to ministerial portfolios) or even to become chancellor, as both of these belonged

[5]The articles that made up the text were collated the following year under this name.

to the sphere of the 'Bundesrat'. The few parliamentarians who from time to time were appointed secretary of state were forced to resign their parliamentary seats. This neutralized them politically by cutting them off from their party power bases and making them dependent on the bureaucracy. Weber also felt that it would be inappropriate to promote parliamentarization by appointing state party leaders to the 'Bundesrat', as this would reinforce particularist tendencies that threatened the unity of the 'Reich'. The parliamentary reinforcement of the Council as a representative entity of the states therefore necessarily involved the 'Reichstag'.

Even in Weber's 1917-18 formulations, parliamentary votes of confidence in the chancellor are not proposed as an instrument for the parliamentarization of the political system. It is clear then that Weber's central concern was not so much with the establishment of the typical delegation mechanisms of the parliamentary system under which the parliament would be accountable to the electorate while the cabinet (or at least its head) would be accountable to parliament. His central focus is the selection of capable political leaders: if partisan political struggle produces them and limits the power of bureaucrats, it seems unnecessary to go any further in terms of institutional design.

Undoubtedly, his espousal of federalism remains undiminished and the attachment to the formal structure of the Bismarckian constitutional arrangement figures prominently in his conception. A national government responsible only to the 'Reichstag' would stifle the prerogatives of states. Weber does not in principle reject the adoption of the vote of confidence – he finally supports it in 1919 – but seems to be comfortable with it only after his favorite priorities of the selection of leaders and the federal component have been satisfied.

How would members of the lower house be elected? Weber rejected ideas in circulation at the time that proposed restrictive formulas for suffrage, in line with his criticism of the electoral system in the Prussian Lower House elections. The Prussian arrangement divided the electorate into three classes based on the total tax paid, thus favoring the property-owners, as each class elected the same number of representatives. In 'Suffrage and Democracy in Germany', a brochure published in 1917, Weber (2013a) rejected the notion of voting by professional classes because he considered it naively inattentive to the conditions

of modern capitalism. He strongly defended "equal suffrage", which is what he calls universal suffrage under the formula "one man, one vote", in all state and national parliamentary elections.

His basically democratic conviction stems from the consideration that it would be politically untenable to deny soldiers returning from war equal suffrage, as this would amount to restricting voting rights for those who had defended the nation at the front line; they had the right to choose the leaders who would decide the nation's fate. Characteristically, he defends this for practical reasons and in relation to national factors: "It is in the Reich's interest that, 'in relation to those who remained at home', no combatant has his political right to vote impaired", and "any form of suffrage other than equal suffrage would inevitably lead to such treatment" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 136; MOMMSEN, 1990, pp. 245-252).

The remarks above, whether they concern parliamentarization or democratization, are important to highlight an important and controversial point in the textual interpretation of Weber's political thinking. His defense of both changes taking place in Imperial Germany is necessarily linked to a project to strengthen the country's National State. Given subsequent German history, this point has become sensitive and controversial in the secondary literature on Weber.

In Wolfgang Mommsen's classic liberal critique, the "democratization of the German state structure" was favored by him above all "to unify all of the nation's political energies". The matter of German power took precedence over "specifically domestic considerations" and the selection of capable leaders is viewed from the perspective of foreign policy (MOMMSEN, 1990, p. 189). Notions of collegiate leadership, popular will, or individual rights are given little importance in his thinking. Weber did not believe in these notions and found them insufficient to legitimize political regimes in the process of bureaucratization. There is the famous passage in Weber's letter to Robert Michels in which he says that the concept of the will of the people is a fiction. It is also clear that his view of democracy is a "functional" one and not related to normative associations, a thing that he wished to avoid (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 139; MOMMSEN, 1990, p. 395-396).

Is Weber then a 'disenchanted' liberal who no longer wishes to emphasize the deontological elements of the tradition? That is Richard Bellamy's (1992)

reading, a more positive analysis than Mommsen's (1990) of Weberian nationalism. According to Bellamy (1992), "the liberalizing of domestic politics and nationalist foreign policy were two sides of the same coin", with Weber's "advocacy of imperialism" being "the inevitable consequence of his desire for a liberal political system and a dynamic economy". Imperialism and territorial annexation serve in this interpretation to destroy backward and autarchic economic structures, as analyzed in the inaugural speech 'The Nation-State and Economic Policy' (2013a). This would allow the preservation of the sphere of individual autonomy, in both the economic and political arenas, which Weber undoubtedly saw as desirable (BELLAMY, 1992, pp. 172-174).

In a similar vein, Beetham (1985) sees Weber as a "protagonist of bourgeois values", not only because he clearly defines himself as a "self-conscious bourgeois" but also because he applies these values as a means of checking certain threats present in advanced capitalism. Consider the ascetic and vocational attitude toward labor found in 'The Protestant Ethics' (2004), and "the ideal of an independent sphere of activity for each individual as a means to distinctive personal development" in his writings on Russia (BEETHAM, 1985, p. 55-56; WEBER, 2013a). Both viewpoints, typically bourgeois, emphasize the dynamism of the individual versus patriarchalism and traditional peasant communal structures in the Russian case, and against bourgeois tendencies that accommodated rentier structures in the German case.

Thus, both Bellamy (1992) (more intensely) and Beetham (1985) (less so) draw an association between individualism and free competition with the liberal ideal. Bellamy (1992) went so far as to reconcile imperialism with liberalism in Weberian thinking, provided that the effects of imperialism could generate competition and economic dynamism. In short, the "bureaucratization of political and social structures led Weber to give a major emphasis to the role of the individual leader at the head of such organizations" (BEETHAM, 1985, p. 57).

The reading that emphasizes Weber's liberalism finds its limit, in my view, when we finally pay attention to the implications of the institutional structures he defends. It is in these that the tensions and incompatibilities between Weber and the premises of liberalism become clearer, and in which his preference for special

individual leadership acquires 'decisionist' characteristics. This will come into focus once we examine the concepts of Caesarism and plebiscitary democracy[6].

The concept of Caesarism and the popularly elected presidency (1918-19)

Weber's frequent use of the concept of Caesarism has already been described by one expert as the "most problematic feature" of his political thinking (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 133). His use of the term, in the form of the adjective "Caesarist", appears as early as the 1890s, in reference to Bismarck and his political system (MOMMSEN, 1990, pp. 86-87). But it is during the war that it received the most detailed treatment, due to Weber's concerns about the institutional changes that would probably have to be made after the end of the conflict. It should be noted that from this point on, Max Weber associates Caesarism with institutional features related to the format of the executive.

Caesarism as a term carries obvious Roman allusions, referring "to the ancient practice whereby soldiers elect their victorious leader as ruler" (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 133). The historical context of its emergence can be identified with some precision against the backdrop of the conflicts in the late Roman Republic between supporters of Julius Caesar and those of Cato. Caesar attempted "to break the old combinations of nobles and clients and organize all the citizens of Rome" into one group of clients, "united in loyalty to the ruler". The process was subsequently brought to fruition by Augustus (TAYLOR, 1949, p. 162). Thus the concept is associated from the outset with a personal concentration of power in a charismatic leader and is regarded as deleterious to republican institutions and constitutional order (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 146).

In Republican thought, the figure of Caesar was regularly viewed negatively until the nineteenth century, when the term was invested with new meanings in intellectual and political debate. (BAEHR, 2008, pp. 13-58). Weber's initial use of the term is also negative, related to his criticism of Bismarck's legacy, referred to earlier in this article. But it is not "Caesarism per se that he is rejecting" but its Bismarckian format. In the form of modern leadership by plebiscite, the

[6]For a different approach from the one here, see Sell (2011).

concept is seen as an essential tool of the emerging forms of democratic mass politics, "a corollary of modern party politics" (BAEHR, 2008, pp. 59-60).

Weber's 1919 lecture 'Politics as a Profession and Vocation' makes reference to Caesarism and links it to the person of British Prime Minister William Gladstone, a member of the Liberal Party. Weber was clearly impressed by Gladstone's ability to build an electoral machine made up of loyal followers thanks to his personal charisma, talent as a speaker, and personal ethics. Gladstone is thus one of the first finished examples of the modern Caesarist leader, representing the emergence of "a Caesarist-plebiscitary element in politics: the dictator of the electoral battlefield" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 430).

Is modern Caesarism necessarily associated with elections? In another text, Weber seems to suppose so, by stating that the "Caesarist system" (in the broadest sense of the word) "prevails where there are "direct popular elections for the head of state", in a reference that includes the case of the United States (WEBER, 2013a, p. 162). This is somewhat misleading, given that American presidential elections, although popular, are indirect, but it should be noted that he was also thinking about municipal elections in some American cities. In any case, the key to clarifying this point is the frequently quoted passage from 'Parliament and Government', which notes that in every democracy there is "a tendency to Caesarism in the selection of leaders" and that "the specifically Caesarist means is the plebiscite". Here Weber means not an ordinary election, but "a profession of 'faith' in the calling for leader of he who requests such an acclamation". (WEBER, 2013a, p. 280)

Next, Weber makes an important institutional distinction when he states that "in democratized hereditary monarchies (...) the Caesarist-plebiscitary element is usually moderate, but not absent". In citing the British Prime Minister he is referring to demagogic elected heads of state, such as the aforementioned Gladstone (WEBER, 2013a, p. 281). While it is noteworthy that Weber attributes a higher rate of Caesarism to regimes in which the head of state is popularly elected (what we now call presidentialism), he avoids giving greater importance to institutional formats.

As a result, there is no clear distinction between acclamation referenda and elections insofar as they relate to the emergence of a Caesar, especially if we

consider competitive elections (SLAGSTAD, 1993, p. 128). In a presidential election, a number of potential 'Caesars' may emerge and then remain in perennial competition in subsequent elections. Weber was thinking of only one top political leader at a time, underestimating the possibility that this leader would employ his plebiscitarian legitimacy to produce an authoritarian regime. After all, a popularly acclaimed Caesar may supplant parliamentarism by using his unequivocal claim to legitimacy and thereby block the emergence of any 'parliamentary Caesars'. This reasoning opens room for criticism that Weber's view can be reinterpreted in an authoritarian way.

The point is important because the concept of Caesarism, as the author uses it, is devoid of value in relation to institutional formal arrangements. It is characteristic of Weber to take value-laden terms and convert them into value-free conceptual instruments. There may be a Bismarckian Caesarism, for example, which is internally problematic not so much due to the authoritarian way in which the chancellor is kept on power, but due to the way it blocks the formation of leaders in parliament. Caesarism can also emerge through military means, as in the cases of Napoleon I and III, whose power was later confirmed by confirmatory plebiscites. It also exists in a democratic way when a leader galvanizes the masses in an election and enjoys the support of the entire nation.

Caesarist selection of leaders is decisively differentiated from parliamentary selection, which Weber considered to have important effects. Even in parliamentary regimes or, to use his terminology, "democratized hereditary monarchies", the leader of the parliamentary majority becomes effectively independent of parliament. With "the country at large" as his "power-base", a demagogic leader (in the positive sense of the term) stands above parliament and is acclaimed in virtue of having been elected by the people (BAEHR, 2008, p. 72).

The evaluation of the concept of Caesarism in the literature on Weber's political thinking is controversial. The problem lies in part in the fact that the term appears most often in Weber's political writings, and much less in works of sociological theory such as 'Economics and Society' (2013b). What is the relation, for example, between Caesarist leadership and charisma, defined as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered

extraordinary?" (WEBER, 2013b, p. 241). For Sven Eliaeson (2000), Caesarism is a mixed historical form in which there may be elements of the three ideal types of legitimate domination – legal, traditional, charismatic. While charisma would be "a relational concept" referred to as "personal influence", Caesarism would be "a method for the continuous exercise of power", especially through referenda or the threat of their use (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 140). Peter Baehr (2008) claims that this is an attempt to "tidy up" Weber's analysis and that the concept had largely rhetorical functions, as Weber was conversing with a specific audience and using terms whose meanings were understood at the time. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the concept of charisma does not occur in his political texts, except for 'Politics as Vocation' (BAEHR, 2008, pp. 61-62).

Caesarism necessarily creates a virus within democratic theory, if we want to find a place for it among the typically institutional elements of liberalism. There can be no guarantee that a Caesarist leader will not act to limit or neutralize parliamentary power. It can only be assured that he will be popularly elected and dismissed by popular initiative – which may be via plebiscite. The internal problem in the Weberian scheme is its constant reference to the masses as passive participants subject to the influence of the 'emotional elements' of the leadership formation process, and the typical elitist motto that politics are dominated by the 'smallest number'. From where would come the popular initiative to remove the Caesar when he becomes a tyrant?

The 'liberal' interpretation of Weber meets its limit here, as we suggested at the end of the previous section. There is no political 'dynamism' (although there may still be economic dynamism) in the operation of democratized Caesarism as a routinized political system or regime – only the leader is 'dynamic' as the holder of political initiative and accountable for its effects. He will respond to demands from members of his party machine, no doubt, but such demands exist as a result of the existence of leadership. Even if we admit that Caesarist aspects were correctly identified by Weber and persist to this day in the elections, the assumption of dynamism would require a competition between Caesars and their respective party organizations, and Weber does not draw out such a scenario.

All roads seem to lead to a directly popularly elected presidency, but some remarks are called for on how Weber alters his view of the method for appointing

a German head of state. At the end of 1918, in the midst of the revolutionary crisis provoked by defeat, Weber still supports the maintenance of the hereditary monarchy, even the same dynasty, with the replacement of the monarch (whom he had always despised). Even after the forced abdication of Wilhelm II in November of that year, Weber still held some hope that the monarchy could be preserved (MOMMSEN, 1990, pp. 288-293).

The role of monarchical thinking in Weber is of some importance for the purposes of this article, since the president of the Republic who was poised to come into existence is, in some interpretations, seen as a continuity of the German imperial arrangement. The 'Kaiser-Kanzler' dualism is replaced by another two-headed executive scheme in which the president is "able to play a leadership role once played by the Kaiser" in combination with a chancellor now subject to popular representation (VEIGA, 2017, p. 134).

Max Weber's argument in favor of constitutional monarchies follows two lines. In the first, derived from 'technical considerations' in Mommsen's words (1990), he considers that the monarchic regime is better able to protect the highest position of the state from "Caesarist rule by military upstarts" (WEBER, 1982, p. 421). This is fundamental in militarized States, that is, political communities in which the military makes up a body large and important enough to the political goals of the country.

His remarks about the functions of the constitutional hereditary monarch in contexts of modern political competition run along similar, more detailed lines. In negative terms, the existence of a legitimate monarch "formally limits the power struggle of politicians by definitively occupying the highest position of the state". Weber also correctly observes that such a function cannot be fulfilled by an elected president. The reason, being obvious, is not cited by the author: being elected, party competition would infect his office just as it does in parliamentary seats. In positive terms, the arrangement implies that "the king can take an active part in government only by virtue of his personal capacities or social influence (Kingdom of Influence), not simply by virtue of his formal rights (Kingdom of Prerogative)" (WEBER, 2013b, p. 1148).

It is worth bearing the ideas of the two 'kingdoms' in mind, as they will be important to an analysis of the president's role in semi-presidentialism. Weber was

by no means idealizing the concept of hereditary monarchy, and his initial defense of it in the midst of the revolutionary crisis contains nothing by way of emotional attachment (MOMMSEN, 1990, p. 289). In discussing the "genuine charisma" of military heroes, prophets and saints, for instance, he states ironically that its meaning "is radically different from the convenient pretensions of the present 'divine right of kings', which harks back to the 'inscrutable' will of the Lord, 'to whom alone the monarch is responsible'" (WEBER, 2013b, p. 1114)[7].

The institution of hereditary monarchy still serves as a source of legitimacy to the extent that people believe that its original charisma is transferable by blood ties. Weber considers such a transfer (which occurs not only in monarchical situations) to be the "most frequent case of a depersonalization of charisma", in itself a strictly individual quality and closest to the ideal type of the phenomenon. At this point there is no inconsistency in the Weberian scheme: charismatic domination is inherently unstable, and its persistence or routinization will only occur imperfectly in relation to its pure type. In their desire to provide some administrative continuity even after the erosion of the initial grace period of any venture of charismatic domination, social actors will combine charisma in various ways with traditional and legal forms of authority (WEBER, 2013b, pp. 1135-1139).

Basically resigned to the realities produced by the revolutionary crisis in late 1918, Weber went on to support the establishment of a president elected by popular vote. The question then was whether this president would operate predominantly under the realm of influence or of prerogative. In the first case, the presidency of the Weimar Republic, the political regime established by the 1919 Constitution, would not be an expression of continuity with the deposed monarch, for surely the Kaiser had enjoyed authoritarian prerogatives in the political system. In the second case, partial continuity would occur in distinctly democratic terms.

It is clear that Weber saw the future president firmly anchored in the 'kingdom of prerogative', and certainly not in a position similar to that of the

[7]The reference seems to be directed at Kaiser Wilhelm II. Cf. Note 04 of the editor of the same volume, p. 1157.

English king. We can say, then, that his view of the head of state evolved between 1918 and 1919 from that of a monarch established in the kingdom of influence, as opposed to the authoritarian arrangements of Imperial Germany, to that of a plebiscitary president surely anchored in formal powers and effective leadership over much of the national administration. The main text in which he expounds his position is 'The President of the Reich', published in March 1919. 'The President of the Reich' (2013a)deserves close examination, as the influence of Weberian formulations on the approval of Article 41 of the Weimar Constitution, which stipulated that the president be popularly elected, is universally accepted by experts (ELIAESON, 2000, p. 142).

Weber and semipresidentialism

In this section I intend to discuss semi-presidentialism in connection with the Weberian theoretical contribution that resulted in the adoption of a popularly elected presidency in tandem with a cabinet system. Two approaches can be employed in this regard. The first is of a conceptual-normative nature and asks whether Weber's reasoning can be the basis for changes in forms of governments towards semipresidentialism. The second, of a historical nature, asks whether the semi-presidentialism chosen by Weber and German politicians in 1919 influenced the subsequent adoption of the system in other countries. This section focuses on the first approach, and I shall make some remarks about the second one in the Conclusion.

'The President of the Reich' (2013a) was written after the election of Social Democrat Friedrich Ebert as President of Germany by the National Assembly. Early on, Weber argues that the next president "must necessarily be directly elected by the people". There is little doubt then that he viewed the president thus elected as a Caesarist-plebiscitarian leader, endowed with charisma by virtue of the confidence that the masses had placed in him. The absence of any explicit reference to the three terms – Caesarist, plebiscitarian and charismas – in the text is of minor importance, given that it is a work of direct political intervention in the debate. Its conceptual framework is implicit. Weber was able to "remind" the Social Democrats "that the much-discussed 'dictatorship' of the masses demands a 'dictator', 'a man trusted by the masses and elected by them', to

whom they will subordinate themselves as long as he is the repository of their trust" (WEBER, 2013a, pp. 383-384).

We need not dwell on the terms 'dictator' and 'dictatorship', for it is clear that they are used in the classical and Roman sense of the word, however questionable they may seem in retrospect. Weber's 'dictator' would be both Caesarist and democratic. The association between mass dictatorship and the dictatorship by the president, in itself absurd, is obviously tactically directed at the doctrinal core of the social democrats, who still defended the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (BAEHR, 1989, p. 22). That the president would be a charismatic leader, impure or distant from the ideal type, is evident from the author's own theoretical remarks about charismatic domination: "Pure charisma does not recognize any legitimacy other than one which flows from personal strength proven time and again" (WEBER, 2013b, p. 1114).

In addition to the situation of economic crisis generated by military defeat and subsequent revolution, there are two interrelated reasons that led Weber to propose the presidency: the unity of the new regime and the expected effects of the legitimacy of a leader thus elected. The first stems from his concerns about regional and partisan interests, which would be reinforced by the proportional representation system adopted for 'Reichstag' (lower house) elections. Moreover, the 'Bundesrat', the Federal Council with representatives of the German states, would continue to exist 'mutatis mutandis' in the new republic. Weber considered it "utterly Utopian to believe that (...) governments designated by the people of the individual states" would accept being excluded "from the administration of the Reich". Weber's judgment was not merely factual but also normative, given his attachment to some of the federal institutional aspects of the imperial regime (WEBER, 2013a, p. 383; MOMMSEN, 1990, p. 336).

The continued strength of the 'Bundesrat' would mean the possibility of the emergence of regional parties and the weakening of the lower house, which would then be taken over, thanks to the effects of proportional suffrage, by narrow and sectoral social and economic interest groups. Politicians without a vocation, in short. Popular election of a president would provide a political system with an actor who would represent the entire nation. Indirect election was summarily dismissed by Weber as "a mockery of the principle of democracy in favor of

haggling between parliamentarians", a conclusion that is hardly surprising given the widespread rejection by German intellectuals at the time of the French Third Republic, a parliamentary regime with an indirectly elected president (WEBER, 2013a, pp. 383-384; HEWITSON, 2000).

The popular selection of the president is suitable to producing a strong and responsible leader who can reorganize political parties, preside over appointments, and contain the hegemony of Prussia. Weber argues that the president's powers should only be invoked in "temporarily insoluble crises" through the appointment of technical ministries, the calling of referendums, and veto power over bills passed in parliament. Clearly, he is thinking of a president with significant limitations on his institutional prerogatives.

After 'The President of the Reich' (2013a), however, Weber becomes decidedly pessimistic about the role of parliament, and strongly aligns himself with the view that supports strengthened presidential power. According to David Beetham (1985), later echoed by Richard Bellamy (1992), Weber's adoption of a popularly elected presidency disturbed the "balance between elitist and liberal elements", a balance that his theory of parliamentary government had previously favored. Hence even the reading which places Weber closer to liberalism objects 'to the weakening of parliament embedded in his constitutional proposals post-1918' (BEETHAM, 1985, p. 238; BELLAMY, 1992, p. 207).

In this article I agree that Weber was wrong to attribute extensive partisan and administrative powers to the Head of State, but I suggest that his plebiscitary considerations should be kept inasmuch as the president is encouraged to maintain his role more often than not restricted to the 'kingdom of influence'. My interpretation is that a popularly elected presidency can be mobilized as a counterpoint of national unity in relation to congressional, federal, and bureaucratic interests when these powers may contain features perceived as corrosive to the legitimate exercise of political power. This 'mobilization' would be most effective where presidential influence is concentrated in policy areas which are not, so to speak, domestic. This immediately suggests foreign affairs and defense.

Semi-presidentialism is best justified when the typically non-liberal elements in the political theory that formed it are not concealed. They reflect real tensions in the makeup of the office of head of state, and they plague

institutional choices about it to this day. If we adopt the typically liberal concerns with the limitation of power, the Weberian, albeit resigned, emphasis on the president should be checked as regards the 'kingdom of prerogative'. The Caesar must, of course, be controlled or 'mitigated'. The point here is that an eventual establishment of semi-presidentialism must keep in mind the possibilities presented by a presidency driven by considerations related to ideas of national interest, as well as the symbolic legitimacy of the presidency itself. This step necessarily implies coherent reasoning about the realm of influence, which will not be written down entirely in constitutional rules.

For these reasons I consider it insufficient to justify the existence of a popularly elected presidency in a cabinet system with neo-Madisonian arguments. To draw the boundaries of functions of government in terms of the typical liberal argument of checks and balances is not, in the approach outlined here, a persuasive argument to support a semi-presidential system. Why not just keep presidentialism and make a few adjustments here and there? The plebiscitary element of semi-presidentialism is associated with the search for a core of legitimacy, protected against centrifugal tendencies in the political system, and the corrosion in public opinion caused by the establishment and maintenance of governing coalitions of sectoral interests.

In this regard, one expert commented in support of a change to Brazil's system of government: "The superiority of semi-presidential government over pure presidentialism lies in the fact that the former dissociates constitutional competence from political influence, while the latter seeks, by virtue of legal provisions, to transform both into an identity" (AMORIM NETO, 2006a, p. 185). We find ourselves, then, back in the kingdom of influence as the best option for emphasizing the president's role in semi-presidentialism. A president indirectly elected without popular vote, a defining characteristic of pure republican parliamentarism, also belongs in this realm, but he or she could never function as a focus of national legitimacy in countries that have already experienced popularly elected presidents.

Let us assume the presidency is largely colonized by the management of the various interests that make up its supporting coalition, as is the case in some presidential systems, including Brazil's. Then the idea of a president who is

institutionally distinct from parliamentary forces and focused on foreign policy and symbolic expression of the country may be of interest. In this sense, it is certainly possible to understand coalition presidentialism as an institutional arrangement somewhat plagued by problems of legitimacy, not in relation to its elections but in relation to the need for the president to behave as a managing actor of congressional and bureaucratic interests. A mitigated Caesar should not manage coalitions.

It is often said in analyses or defenses of parliamentarism that it protects the Head of State from day-to-day political disputes to a greater extent than does presidentialism. This occurs because the Head of State, being outside the government, can act as a moderating and neutral element (at least formally) in times of crisis. The argument has already been used to criticize systems that follow the American model. According to one important critic of presidentialism, the system has trouble combining the "symbolic and deferential dimension of power" with the "role of the partisan politician fighting to implement his program". In pure parliamentarism, "the head of state can play the role of adviser or arbiter by bringing party leaders together and facilitating the flow of information among them" (LINZ, 1994, pp. 24-25, 47).

I propose here that the same analysis can be used to defend semi-presidentialism, provided that the following characteristics be observed: 01. the president enjoys reduced legislative powers, concentrated in some kind of veto power; 02. he or she does not have the ability to unilaterally dismiss the prime minister, but only to nominate him for Congressional approval; 03. he may exercise influence rather than direct command over the foreign affairs portfolio; 04. she has nominal command of the Armed Forces, so as to formally prevent the emergence of the military upstart described by Weber. Finally, the establishment of the new system would have to take place under a referendum, which does not mean that any president thus established would enjoy the unilateral power to call for future referenda.

Conclusion

As a starting point for these concluding comments, it is important to note how often the semi-presidential system is associated with plebiscites. Brazil's 1993

plebiscite comes to mind, in which semi-presidentialism was in the ballot under the name of parliamentarism. So too does the French referendum of 1958, through which the political system itself gained popular approval and is still in force as the Fifth Republic. Semi-presidential constitutions often provide for a presidential ability, to some degree, to call for referenda, as is the case in Romania (Article 90) and Poland (Article 125). Weberian Caesarist logic thus seems to persist in at least part of the practical operations of the political systems of many countries. Also, the power to influence, rather than direct, foreign policy seems indeed to be part of the profile of a mitigated Caesar in a semi-presidential arrangement, acceptable to political liberalism and compatible with proportional representation in parliamentary elections.

Of course, the functioning of governing coalitions and their disagreements with the opposition may also affect such areas of public policy. Such a system does not presuppose institutional monism. The president would operate in foreign policy in parallel, as well as integrated, with defense and foreign affairs policies emanating from the Cabinet. Popular presidential elections would be of interest to political parties, and I make no naive assumption here to the effect that these powerful groupings would not seek to win or influence presidential electoral competition. Nonetheless, the election of this president and the competition for the job could be governed from the outset from considerations not present in national and regional elections.

At this point it is worth noting the importance of Max Weber in political science in connection with my discussion. The way to do it seems to be through the distinction between fact and value and the amount of tension this distinction gives to his political thinking. At the beginning of 'Parliament and Government', for example, Weber warns his readers that the book "does not have the authority of a science, because ultimate positions taken by will cannot be decided by scientific means" (WEBER, 2013a, p. 167). However, the same work reveals the presence, whether explicit or not, of various concepts of Weberian empirical science, together with opinions on contemporary political conflicts. Weber did not propose a normative political theory, as we use the term today, nor do his words about politics necessarily form a coherent whole. However, there is certainly something of political theory in Sheldon Wolin's epic sense, that is, an effort to

account for the recurring "problematic state of the political world" (WOLIN, 2018a, p. 28).

In Gabriel Cohn's reading (2003), which goes beyond the issues addressed here, the Weberian approach is critical and resigned, and science is left to deal with the "domain of resignation" and "detached' knowledge of the facts" (COHN, 2003, p. 212). Wolin, in a similar vein, associates the Weberian scientific man with the Puritan Calvinist, the ideal-typical actor of Protestant ethics, as a model of self-discipline and renunciation (WOLIN, 2018b, pp. 204-205). This is probably one of the ambiguities of Weber's thinking that will remain largely unsolvable, while fruitful for my purposes. When political science looks at real 'crises', some form of 'political theory of crisis' emerges, even if initially under the aegis of the distinction between fact and value in the normal course of scientific inquiry. It is in this way that Weberian adherence to an elected presidency must be understood: an act of theory and critical engagement with the ontological problems of the world.

Max Weber's mistake, 'agonistic' as it may have been in the difficult context of 1918-20, was that he failed to think about institutional arrangements in terms of foreign policy, a central motivation behind his previous proposals. He assigned an excessive role to the president in domestic policy. In fact I argue for a trade-off between the domestic and international functions of the presidency. At the domestic level, good arguments for authority derived from 'dignity' can be enlisted to conclude that a semi-presidential president partially protected from congressional conflict, laden as it often is with sectoral interests, is desirable. It does not follow that a president must be protected from international political conflicts. It would not be appropriate to protect the head of state from the vicissitudes and conflicting aspects of international politics. On the contrary, domestic protection for the president could act as a shield for the presidency to engage in international debate and national affirmation, without having to manage governing coalitions, addressing them only upon the formation and break-ups of governments.

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