

Conflict Resolution: Theories and Practice

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Power dividing

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Power sharing (often called consociationalism), centripetalism (sometimes called an integrative approach), and power dividing (also called the multi-majorities approach) constitute three strategies for building institutions in societies deeply divided along cultural lines. They share a common claim that democracy can function even in societies divided by deep ethnic or religious differences and that institutional arrangements that diverge from the simple majoritarianism associated with Westminster parliamentarism can improve the chances for democratic survival. They may recommend some of the same institutions in individual instances, but they usually diverge in recommending different configurations of institutions in constitutions so as to achieve their different strategic goals. Power-sharing strategies design institutions to bring representatives of the major ethnic or religious groups into a central government where they can reach compromises over policy and to give each group control over a part of the state so as to administer its respective homeland (a territorial solution) or cultural community (a non-territorial solution) (Lijphart 1972). Integrative strategies design institutions to induce ethnic or religious groups to cooperate in coalitions during electoral

campaigns in order to elect common representatives to the central government and to govern regions that they share (Horowitz 1985). While power sharing seeks solutions almost entirely within the state, the integrative approach seeks to move some of the bargaining and compromise into political society (such as political parties or electoral coalitions). In contrast to both power sharing and centripetalism, the power-dividing strategy designs institutions to rely on civil society rather than the state as much as possible to provide the cultural needs of individuals who belong to different ethnic and religious groups, to limit the privileged representation of these cultural communities in state policymaking to a domain that is as narrow as is realistically possible, and to encourage representation in state institutions of as many other cultural groups and socioeconomic interests as possible (Roeder and Rothchild 2005; Roeder 2005).

What is the Power-dividing Strategy?

In its philosophical roots power dividing is inspired by the twin principles of liberalism and pluralism, but the case for power dividing is not primarily normative; it is prudential. First, the power-dividing strategy seeks to remove the most divisive issues from the jurisdiction of the government and to reserve these decision-making powers to individuals and civil society. The principles of liberalism were formed by the crucible of culture wars (particularly the English Reformation and Revolutions) that tore apart states and wasted lives, and so liberals from the start have been keen to the dangers that arise when these issues are brought into the political realm and have long championed the cause of taking the most explosive cultural issues out of the hands of government, such as getting governments out of the business of writing books of common prayer. In the liberal strategy civil society and a robust associational life become the

primary means by which cultures preserve traditions. The state plays only a minimal role in this. Although this is rooted in deep liberal principles about the dignity and autonomy of each individual, in the power-dividing strategy it is a pragmatic principle: Power dividing seeks to lower the stakes in politics.

In terms of institutional arrangements the power-dividing strategy begins with extensive civil rights that restrict governments. For example, where distributive and regulatory choices among cultures are likely to ignite lines of division and to encourage escalation of conflict, it is often preferable that civil liberties prohibit government from making decisions on these cultural issues. Liberals press for broad civil liberties with particularly strong guarantees of freedom of association as barriers to government action. Thus, power dividing, first of all, divides decision-making rights between society and the government and constructs a high wall—in the United States it is the Bill of Rights enforceable in courts—to protect the decision rights that are set outside the reach of government such as decisions whether to support religion and which religions to support.

By empowering all citizens and all groups equally, the power-dividing strategy leaves to civil society rather than the state the decisions concerning which groups will form in order to meet the constantly evolving cultural needs of citizens. The power-dividing strategy grants similar political and civil rights to members of majorities and minorities—not only those currently recognized by the state, but also currently unrecognized groups and unforeseen cultural communities that may emerge in the future. These are not group rights, but rights of individuals with a freedom of association. The power-dividing strategy removes the government as much as possible from the dubious undertaking of deciding which cultural

communities will be officially recognized and privileged with access to government decision making, funds collected through taxation, and the like. Alternatively, power-sharing solutions end up privileging some cultures (such as Catholic, Reformed, and secular Netherlanders) at the expense of other macro-cultures (such as Buddhists and Hindus) that are not so privileged and at the expense of the microcultures (such as divorced Catholics or Muslims in same-sex marriages) that diverge only partially from the prescriptions of the privileged cultures.¹

Second, in its strategy for building institutions to make state policy, the power-dividing strategy is rooted in principles of pluralist democracy. In what remains of the state sector after many decision rights are reserved to individuals and civil society, the power-dividing or multiple-majorities strategy disperses governmental decision making both horizontally and vertically to multiple functionally specific organs of government rather than concentrating this in a single supreme parliament-plus-government or dividing this between a central government and a single layer of general-purpose homeland or communal administrations. In this strategy many organs of the central government, where policy is made for all within the state, exercise definitive policymaking power within only a narrow realm—such as setting interest rates, regulating aviation among regions, regulating securities markets, or establishing higher-education standards. By establishing these organs to represent the public interest in different configurations of majorities and minorities, power dividing institutionalizes a separation of powers among the organs of the central government so as to lower the likelihood that a single majority will make all decisions.

¹Indeed, so potent is this power to discriminate among cultures that many argue to use power-sharing institutions specifically in order to empower more moderate leaders, such a moderate Muslims, at the expense of radicals within their communities.

In designing jurisdictions at the subnational level, power dividing devolves decision rights to multiple, cross-cutting jurisdictions, so that all devolved powers do not concentrate in the same political jurisdictions. Thus, school districts are not coextensive with water basin districts, which in turn are not coextensive with police districts, and so forth, and each of these is not subordinated to or nested within an overarching regional jurisdiction. Thus, the power-dividing strategy warns against creating territorial (ethnofederal) or non-territorial (ethnocorporatist) autonomies that exercise powers across a wide range of policy domains.

In establishing decision-making rules within organs and local administrations, unlike power sharing, power dividing remains committed to the democratic principle that the majority must decide policy whenever possible. Power dividing sees privileging minorities through vetoes or supermajority requirements that permit the minority to frustrate the majority in policymaking as a denial of democracy. Thus, the separation of powers does not mean checks and balances, where policy must jump through multiple bodies, each of which exercises a veto. The one exception to this is constitutional revision, particularly changes in the rights of individuals against governmental predation. This must require either multiple referenda (separated in time) or approval by multiple governmental organs.

In its rules of representation, power dividing prescribes different rules for representing society in different organs and jurisdictions so as to represent the different configurations of interests that might exist, for example, between creditors and debtors over monetary policy or between up-stream and down-stream dwellers in a common river basin.² That is, power dividing accepts the pluralist amendment to the simple Westminster model that society is not

²As an illustration of multiple majorities see Faust's (1996) discussion of the special formula in the Federal Reserve that Congress used to represent shared and diverging interests concerning inflation.

simply divided into one majority and one minority, but is divided across issues among many majorities and many minorities that typically do not correlate well (Dahl 1961; Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960; Lewis-Beck, Jacoby, Norpoth, and Weisberg 2008). One response to empower multiple majorities might be referenda—as in Switzerland. Rather than recurrent referenda, the power-dividing strategy relies on institutions designed so that many of these different majorities can make policy through representatives. In this multiple-majorities strategy, while most decisions are made by majority rule, few decisions are made by the same majority because different decision centers configure representation of society in alternative ways; taken together these institutionalize cross-cutting cleavages in society.

In the power-dividing strategy ethnic and religious communities may be empowered to decide specific issues through decision-making organs in the central government that bring together representatives of the communities or in one or the other of many local administrations such as regional cultural agencies or city cemetery commissions. However, the agencies defined by any one cultural divide are empowered only in a narrow range of issues. Overlapping, cross-cutting communities and interests are empowered to decide other issues. Similarly, after conflict that has already become severe, the power-dividing strategy attempts to avoid privileging the parties to the previous conflict in the post-settlement government as much as possible. If parties to previous conflict must be coopted into post-settlement institutions or if there is no way to prevent these parties from reconstituting themselves within a post-settlement government, then first and foremost the power-dividing strategy divides decision making among multiple decision-making centers with different rules for representing society

and with jurisdictions that are limited and drawn so as to make it more difficult to represent the one cultural divide in every organ.

Power sharing and integrative approaches tend to recommend very specific institutions to address ethnic and religious conflicts. Power sharing favors parliamentarism with list proportional representation (list PR) electoral systems for the central government and either ethnofederalism (territorial autonomy) or ethnocorporatism (non-territorial autonomy) for communal self-government. The integrative approach tends to recommend alternative vote (AV) or 'voting pooling' (concomitant-majorities) electoral systems and federalism that unites ethnic communities in shared states. Alternatively, power-dividing does not recommend specific institutions, but a strategy that avoids the monopolism of any single mode of representation. Thus, in the central government, each organ is constituted on different rules of representation of society so that the majority that makes decisions in one body is unlikely to be the same majority that makes decisions in another body. In this way the power-dividing solution seeks to complicate the task of constituting the same governing majority in every organ of power. Moreover, the power-dividing strategy warns that simple borrowing of institutions that result in multiple majorities in one country does not guarantee that they will produce multiple majorities in another. In culturally divided countries, the logic of power dividing requires identifying alternative, crosscutting divisions in that particular society that do not replicate the ethnic divide and will not be trumped by cultural differences.

One illustration of power dividing—up to a point—is Switzerland, where ethnolinguistic identity has been only a latent basis for political action and seldom has represented an important political divide (Bogdanor 1988, 73; Steiner 1969, 290). In part the low salience of

ethnicity is attributable to the good fortune of demographic patterns, because differences in language, religion, and urban-rural residence cut across one another (Steiner 1974, 255; Switzerland 1993, volume 16, tables 2.002-2.004). Even so, good power-dividing institutions are an equally important factor. The low salience of ethnicity owes much to the fact that Switzerland embeds the rights of ethnic groups in a set of rights shared by many other, often more salient, groups. Today linguistic groups share similar rights with religious and class groups. All of these groups must express many of their claims through a common set of cantonal decision rights that divide and sometimes trump all three types of social cleavage. Moreover, for the development of individual cultural communities, the Swiss rely heavily on civil society and private action. Indeed, Switzerland, like the United States, comes closer to the ideal of limited government than most established democracies. (For example, government spending, as a share of GDP, is 47 per cent higher in Switzerland's four neighbors than in Switzerland [United Nations 2001a].) The Swiss government is about a third smaller than its neighbors (even after taking into account the different size of the countries) and leaves many more decisions to the private sector or civil society.

In Swiss governmental decision-making processes no one configuration of interests is privileged (Schoch 2000, iv). Switzerland's bicameral legislature represents the Swiss people by two different formulae—neither of which privileges ethnicity. The collective presidency balances ideological (left-right), cantonal, religious as well as ethnolinguistic representation. Decisions may be made by direct democracy in referenda and initiatives, by consensus in the federal institutions, or in cantonal or communal institutions. At every level of government many decisions are made by agencies of self-administration (Milizverwaltung), such as the water-

supply system in the high valleys of Valais (Linder 1994, 52-54). As Jürg Steiner and Robert H. Dorff (1985, 53) conclude, 'it becomes less clear as to how much Swiss decision processes are federal or unitary. . . . The main impression is the great amount of variation from one decision process to another' (also see Steiner 1987). In sum, the Swiss have not created a simple ethnic power-sharing constitutional order; they have empowered civil society and multiple majorities in government, so that winners and losers do not accumulate along ethnolinguistic lines (compare Steiner 1998, 19).

The most obvious divergence from the power dividing strategy in Swiss practices is the initiative—the right of citizens to propose constitutional amendments and to adopt these in one election. The power-dividing strategy recommends much stronger guarantees of the rights of individuals and private associations, including rights to build minarets. These might include a requirement that constitutional amendments require two popular votes separated by at least one year or that they be confirmed by the national legislature or constitutional court as well.

Consequences of Power-Dividing Institutions

In evaluating the three alternative strategies, the case for power dividing is based first of all on an instrumental or prudential claim: Power dividing is more likely to lead to free development of identities and respect for the rights of individuals (micro-level), more likely to lead to a vibrant civil society less and likely to lead to overarching ethnic divides that cartelize or pillarize society (meso-level), and more likely to lead to robust state institutions that weather many diverse conflicts rather than falling to the one overarching cultural conflict (macro-level). All three of these are essential to democratic survival. This causal claim is rooted in the

institutionalists' assertion that political institutions can shape identities and social groups as well as political dynamics.

Micro-level: Individual identities and liberties

In the context of ethnically or religiously divided societies the power-dividing or multiple-majorities strategy begins from the constructivist view that politicized ethnic identities are often endogenous to the political process (Brass 1991) and in the absence of institutional constraints identities tend to be multiple, situation specific, and fluid over time (Nagel 1994; Waters 1990; Roeder 2007). Situations in which ethnic or religious identities become monopolistic and either crowd out or subsume all other identities in the public space are often pathological situations as existed in Yugoslav or Rwandan communities during ethnic cleansing. In evaluating the alternative strategies we should ask two questions about identities and liberties: First, concerning identities, to what extent do political institutions foster monopolistic ethnic or religious identities rather than permitting identities that cut across these cultural categories to grow? Second, concerning liberties, to what extent do political institutions privilege the rights associated with some identities rather than accord all identities equal rights?

First, by its commitment to extensive and defensible civil liberties, the power-dividing strategy empowers each individual to develop her or his own identities through individual networks of associations and with fewer strong institutional obstacles. Power dividing is more likely to narrow the salience of individuals' identities associated with the one deep cultural divide that is most likely to produce escalating conflict—particularly in politics. When individuals enter politics, it is more likely to be through groups that are associated with one of

the alternative, often cross-cutting identities that are salient only to limited agendas on specific policy issues. In the public sphere, in order to construct a temporary policy majority on most issues, individuals must ally across cultural divides. Yet, unlike the integrative strategy, these are not coalitions among cultural groups, but coalitions of individuals with shared interests on that specific issue, for whom their identity as members of an ethnic or religious group is not the most salient identity they possess on that issue. It is their identities as teachers, down-stream water consumers, or investors. The capacity of governmental institutions to shape the configuration of empowered interests does not disappear under power dividing, but the dispersal of power among separate, independent governmental organs with alternative forms of representation increases the likelihood that individuals will see that their identity that is most salient in each organ is only infrequently their identity as a member of a cultural community. The multiple-majorities strategy seeks to create institutional arrangements in which citizens are more likely to sort themselves into various, cross-cutting, issue-specific configurations of majorities and minorities in civil society.

Alternatively, the power-sharing and centripetal strategies typically privilege one configuration of majority and minorities—and often through pre-determined governmental formulae. Where institutions empower one configuration of ethnic or religious groups, leaders of those groups use their powers inside their autonomous homelands or corporate communities to cultivate monopolistic identities through separate schooling, public celebrations, and a constant din of media propaganda. These leaders make it difficult for other identities to organize and to be invoked in public settings. They convert such decision rights as control over sewage disposal and water delivery into means to buy loyalty and reward loyalists

and thus invest the pork and patronage generated in diverse policy realms to grow ethnic or religious political machines. They convert such decision rights as monopoly control over assembly halls, public squares, printing presses, or broadcasting towers into coercive tools to block the emergence of other identities.

Second, in power dividing, the liberties of every minority are more likely to be secured because the civil rights guaranteed under power dividing are not only rights of minorities against the majority, but also rights of minorities within the minority and majority communities. A recurring problem of power-sharing approaches is that the officially recognized communities are often intolerant of their own minorities. This may be other ethnic groups living in their homelands or members of their own communities with divergent views about ethnicity, religion, or other issues. Indeed, the payoff to unity is so high that politicians leading autonomous regions or communities have strong incentives to force this homogeneity on the population they lead.

In the power-dividing strategy, because the rights of majorities and minorities—and not just cultural majorities and minorities—are identical, these rights are more likely to be secure. In particular in divided societies, power dividing creates conditions in which many members of the cultural majority and minorities are likely to recognize shared interests in defending the institutional order. Attempts by an organ of government to infringe on the rights of cultural minorities are likely to bring defensive alliances with elements within the cultural majority itself. The liberal regime grants the same civil rights of association and expression to all groups—not simply ethnic or cultural groups, but industrial, commercial, labor, and public service groups as well. Many of these groups share an interest with cultural minorities in

preserving these civil rights. However, they do not share an interest in granting cultural groups the type of rights that would threaten the survival of the state. These other groups are likely to join cultural groups in defense of their rights, but they are likely to defend the constitutional order against any challenges that could undo their own civil rights. For example, in the United States when some members of the ethnic majority have attacked the religious rights of ethnic minorities, such as the right of Native Americans to use peyote in religious rituals, other members of the ethnic majority, such as members of mainstream Protestant denominations that share civil liberties with the ethnic minority, have been among the minority's strongest allies (Pevar 1983). These members of the majority fear that their own First Amendment rights would be threatened if the courts decided against Native Americans.

In stark contrast, the allocation of rights in power sharing (particularly rights to participate in government decision making) privileges ethnic or religious groups over other groups and some of these cultural groups over others, and, as a consequence, the empowered groups become isolated from these 'disfranchised' groups. Both 'non-cultural' groups, such as labor and business, and cultural groups excluded from the power-sharing arrangement have no interest in defending the rules of a game that discriminate against them and, in fact, have an active interest in changing those rules that privilege specific cultural groups at their expense. If the central government seeks to undo the basic agreement and begins to prey upon the special rights of cultural groups, these other elites are unlikely to jump to the defense of the privileged groups and may even press the national government to encroach on these privileges. For example, in the Russian Federation leaders of the Russian provinces (oblasts) have been among

the strongest defenders of Moscow's attempts to encroach on the prerogatives of the non-Russian republics.

Meso-level: Civil vs. pillarized society

Power dividing does more than power-sharing and integrative approaches to reduce the likelihood that the leaders of specific cultural communities will wield powerful institutional weapons to coerce their opponents within their own communities and that these communities will come to 'cartelize' or 'pillarize' society so as to block the emergence of a civil society of many independent associations. In evaluating the alternative strategies, it is important to ask two questions about the distribution of coercive capabilities and the configuration of interests in society: First, concerning capabilities, do political institutions disproportionately empower the leaders of ethnic or religious groups with means to coerce their opponents? Second, concerning society, to what extent do political institutions privilege ethnic or religious groups relative to other groups so that they can cartelize the public space outside the state?

Power dividing leads to the dispersal of coercive capabilities and is less likely to concentrate these in only a few hands, so that leaders of ethnic and religious groups, as only a few out of many empowered leaders, have fewer instruments at their disposal to coerce their competitors into reframing their agendas as demands on behalf of the cultural group. Furthermore, the power-dividing strategy recognizes the resource mobilization school's insight that it is often the relative availability of resources for political action that determines which interests—whether ethnic, religious, or other—get organized and mobilized into political conflicts (McCarthy and Zald 1987; Leites and Wolf 1970). Institutions can shape the distribution of resources, which in turn shape the configuration of interests that are organized

in society and expressed in politics. By empowering not only the ethnic or religious majority and minorities, but also multiple crosscutting majorities and minorities, the power-dividing strategy seeks to foster development of multiple interest groups along multiple dimensions of policy (compare Lipset 1981). In short, as an analyst of political opportunity structures (Tarrow 1989) notes, political institutions constitute an important constraint on whether mobilizing ethnic or religious groups to achieve any particular policy aim is a prudent strategy for ambitious politicians. The divided-powers strategy limits the realms in which it is prudent to make and to escalate ethnic or religious demands and expands the number of realms in which other types of interest groups are more effective. Thus, power dividing is less likely to lead to an organizational cartel or pillarized society and more likely to create conditions for the development of a civil society of many non-governmental organizations.

Alternatively, power sharing tends to privilege cultural communities with resources such as ready-made organizations and hierarchical chains of command, including the governments of autonomous governments, which are not available to other interests; that is, power sharing tends to concentrate coercive capabilities in these hands. Because power-sharing arrangements privilege ethnic or religious groups with unique resources, including access to decision making and pieces of the state to coerce or reward others, politicians with other agendas to press, such as economic reform or labor rights, may find it expedient to frame their agendas in terms of rights of one of the cultural communities so as to gain ready access to the decision center. They may find that their attempts to express independent interests that divide or cross-cut the cultural communities are blocked by the empowered leaders of cultural communities. To illustrate: in the Soviet Union after *perestroika* political institutions gave leaders of homelands

privileged access to central decision-making organs. These homeland leaders used their power to exclude other interests from decision making and to reframe all issues that did get to the central bargaining table in terms of the rights of homeland administration vis-à-vis the central government.

Macro-level: Robustness of democratic institutions

Power dividing is more likely to lead to democratic institutions that can weather conflicts. In evaluating the contribution of the three alternative institutional strategies to the survival of democracy in the face of conflict, it is important to ask three questions that bear on issues of opportunities for escalation of cultural conflict and the balance of coercive capabilities among cultural groups and with the central government: First, concerning opportunities, to what extent do political institutions make escalation (or re-escalation) of conflict more or less costly than alternative tactics available to cultural groups to press their interests? This question concerns how institutions shape the relative transaction costs of escalation. Second, also concerning opportunities, to what extent do political institutions afford leaders of cultural groups opportunities to monopolize the political agenda and transform more policy debates into cultural conflicts? Third, concerning the coercive balance, to what extent do political institutions distribute coercive and defensive capabilities to deter escalation of demands and means undertaken by ethnic or religious groups in order to change the existing constitutional arrangement (allocation of decision rights)?

First, by dispersing institutional weapons, power dividing raises the cost of organizing an assault on the constitutional order. Under power-dividing institutions, before a significant assault can be mounted, coalitions must be formed among many groups with independent

control over coercive capabilities. Where society is composed of a multitude of fluid interests arrayed along multiple dimensions rather than pillarized among stable camps, it becomes harder to assemble and hold together a winning coalition of challengers. At the same time it becomes easier to assemble a winning coalition of defenders: If the central government itself challenges the order by predation against the rights of minorities, under power dividing some members of the majority are more likely to desert their own leaders and jump to the defense of the minority, because they share a vested interest in preserving rights of minorities whether within the majority or against it. Alternatively, power sharing lowers the relative transaction costs of escalation, because it concentrates many of the weapons for assaulting the constitutional order in the same few hands. By giving cultural groups vetoes in central government decision making and pieces of the state for self-governance, power sharing also tends to multiply the number of small incremental escalatory options available to these leaders so that they can undertake escalation piecemeal through less costly salami tactics in order to induce others to give them what they demand, but with the consequence of progressively eroding the existing constitutional order. To illustrate: as long as the Soviet Union remained whole, both the central government and the homeland leaders had many escalatory options at their disposal, such as withholding revenues from one another or forcing deadlock in central-government decision making. These were relatively low-cost options in the period of perestroika and so these ploys became a common way for ethnopoliticians to press their demands.

Second, power dividing is more likely to block the monopolization of the policy agenda by cultural groups and prevent the linking of all policy debates to a cultural conflict. As

explained in the discussion of the meso-level, power-dividing institutions in divided societies give politicians fewer capabilities to transform all issues into cultural conflicts; the cultural divide is less likely to color every policy question that reaches the central government. Under power dividing it is less likely that small issues will be either subsumed by the cultural conflict or sidelined; it is less likely that all issues that do reach the central government will become battlegrounds in which larger constitutional issues involving the allocation of decision rights to cultural communities are fought over by the leaders of ethnic or religious groups. Under power dividing it is more likely that many issues will remain small issues not linked to a single overarching divide. Many more decisions are made in highly decentralized centers of civil society or in the diverse centers of state policymaking. Decisions reached in governmental organs are less likely to become linked to the issues in other organs and less likely to raise issues that might produce escalating ethnic or religious conflict. Thus, the issues before the government are less likely to become cumulative.

The combination of power divided among central governmental organs so as to empower multiple majorities and power divided between government and individuals so as to empower civil society is more likely to reduce the stakes in central-government bargaining in two ways that reduce the incentive to link all policy issues to the cultural conflict and to escalate cultural demands on government. It takes many decisions out of the hands of government and trusts to civil society and private initiative to fulfill many of the aspirations of individuals for such things as religious expression. In addition, power dividing lowers the ethnic stakes on issues that do fall within the jurisdiction of the government by making it less likely that winners and losers will correlate with cultural divides and less likely that wins and losses

across issues will be cumulative. A loss as a minority on one issue—such as the allocation of water in river basins—does not jeopardize one's gains as a member of a majority on other issues—such as interest rates. Power dividing gives cultural leaders and their followers less reason to fear tyranny by a single majority across issue areas.

Alternatively, power sharing not only gives the major empowered politicians means to transform issues into cultural conflicts, but it encourages them to reframe their demands as constitutional issues in which allocation of decision rights is constantly contested. Power sharing increases the incentives to escalate demands by subsuming all policy issues under a central cultural conflict and institutionalizes a contagion of escalating demands among empowered cultural leaders. Any claim by one cultural-group leader to specific policies, such as control over natural resources as a cultural right must be matched by the leaders of other cultural groups. This makes it tempting for all leaders of cultural groups empowered by the power-sharing arrangement to challenge the current constitutional arrangements and demand a greater share of the state. This also raises the probability that other empowered cultural-group leaders who make no such demands will end up being suckers who receive a diminished share of state powers and decision making and must contribute a larger share to the maintenance of the central government. Thus, preemptive constitutional claims become a dominant strategy for all cultural-group leaders empowered by the power-sharing arrangement as soon as they fear that others might defect. Power sharing may unravel through a domino effect of cascading defections. Each demand by an empowered cultural-group leader for greater rights at the expense of the central government inspires others to make similar or greater demands, because being left behind will leave them worse off. For example, in late

1991, as Russia's reformist leaders demanded a larger voice in the governing of the Soviet Union, and actually began making decisions for the whole union unilaterally, leaders of other republics like Belarus and Ukraine followed suit to demand an expanded voice and then decided to leave the union altogether. Similarly, in the former Yugoslavia, Serbia's attempt to expand its power within the federal government led Slovenia and Croatia to secede (Gagnon 1994/95). Once Slovenia and Croatia indicated they would pull out, Macedonia and Bosnia felt they could not remain behind as junior partners in a Yugoslavia soon to be thoroughly dominated by Serbia.

Third, power dividing is more likely to create a robust balance of coercive capabilities in which the existing institutional order has more powerful defenders than challengers. This responds to a central dilemma in power sharing when attempting to balance coercive capabilities among empowered groups that are divided along a single dimension—such as ethnicity or religion. On one side of this dilemma, if the initial distribution of power favors one party to power sharing, there is little to prevent centralization or devolution of still more powers into its hands at the expense of the rights of other groups. This change may even be peaceful if the preponderance of power is known to all sides, because the weaker side will know that resistance is futile. Thus, designers of stable one-dimensional power sharing typically try to design an initial equal distribution of power. But this is where the other side of the dilemma arises: At the point of relative equality of coercive capabilities among groups, the likelihood of escalation of means, including violence, is highest (Wittman 2001; Benson and

Kugler 1998).³ That is, insofar as estimates of the likelihood of victory in a showdown of coercion and counter-coercion are derived from the balance of capabilities, it is at the point of equal power that the parties are most likely to hold incompatible expectations of victory and conclude that escalation will pay off.

The power-dividing strategy is more likely to avoid this dilemma. On one hand, by dispersing powers among central-government organs and among sub-national jurisdictions, power dividing limits the coercive levers (institutional weapons) in the hands of any group in control of one of these organs or jurisdictions. That is, power dividing avoids the concentration of institutional weapons in the hands of any office holders. Philip Selznick (1960, 2) notes that control over governmental decision rights can become institutional weapons 'used by a power-seeking elite in a manner unrestrained by the constitutional order' and that these decision rights can be used to challenge that constitutional order. In divided societies, the incentive for the leaders of ethnic or religious groups to escalate demands on the central government or against other groups increases when these leaders have the means to back their demands by inflicting losses (or threatening to inflict such losses) on the others. Power dividing does create institutional weapons, but power dividing disperses institutional weapons, so that leaders of ethnic groups and religious communities, as only one of many empowered leaders, have fewer institutional weapons at their disposal. By dispersing rather than concentrating institutional weapons among many countrywide and local majorities, the power-dividing strategy reduces the incentives to escalate stakes and means in bargaining over cultural or other issues.

³ A significant body of theory and evidence in international relations also supports the contention that power parity increases the likelihood of violence while preponderance decreases this; see Organski 1958; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; and Kugler and Lemke 1996.

Alternatively, the ethnofederalism and ethnocorporatism under power sharing can be particularly destabilizing in ethnically divided societies (Roeder 2009). In these arrangements decision rights tend to accumulate in two foci—the central government and the ethnic governments. Not only does this tend to define all policy disputes as majority-center versus minority-periphery, but it tends to concentrate the means to back up demands in the hands of the leaders of these two decision-making foci.

In particular, power dividing decreases the likelihood that cultural leaders can coerce the central government or other cultural leaders by threatening or creating governmental deadlock. By creating independent organs with specialized decision authority, power dividing protects efficient decision making in specific areas against one of the greatest threats to government in divided societies—a stalemate that paralyzes all decision making. In addition to the main general-purpose decision-making bodies of the central government such as national assemblies, power-dividing arrangements include independent special-purpose administrations with countrywide jurisdiction, like the Federal Reserve Board. At the regional level, alongside independent multi-purpose administrations such as provincial governments, power-dividing arrangements establish independent special-purpose administrations with cross-cutting jurisdictions like the Tennessee Valley Authority. At the local level, city and county governments exist alongside independent administrations for school boards, water districts, and so forth. Without minority vetoes on unrelated issues such as distributing water, community leaders are less able to threaten deadlock on these issues until leaders deliver on core ethnic demands. Alternatively, in power sharing, particularly where consensual decision making places vetoes in the hands of cultural-group leaders, deadlock represents a constant threat to the legitimacy

and stability of democracy. A veto in decisions of a grand coalition of the central government may give ethnic or religious leaders the power to paralyze the national decision-making process. These leaders can use this veto to threaten mutual disaster until the central government or the leaders of other ethnic or religious groups give in.

On the other hand, any claim that the power of one organ or type of jurisdiction should be increased is likely to inspire a defensive coalition of other organs and jurisdictions that see this reallocation of decision-making authority as a diminution of their own place in the government. Because power dividing disperses institutional weapons, a challenge by one organ or jurisdiction (or coalition of these) is likely to be limited due to the transaction costs of organizing an effective challenge. The ability to threaten further escalation is limited by the limited means at the challengers' disposal. And so the coalition in defense of the status quo need mobilize only a small effort to turn back this challenge, even if most other members of organs sit on their hands and do nothing on behalf of the constitutional order.

In short, the leaders of majorities in different governmental organs that control institutional weapons estimate the outcome of escalation of demands and escalation of means by measuring the relative leverage they have to induce others to act in desired ways. This leverage is measured by their ability to back their demands with action that is costly to other government leaders, such as delivering votes to the opposition, delaying decision making at the center through vetoes, embargoing national taxes collected in their jurisdictions, initiating campaigns of terrorist violence, or conducting warfare. For central-government leaders in particular this leverage is measured by their ability to deprive their opponents of public venues for assembly and expression, to withhold funds, to remove opponents from political office, or

to punish, intimidate, and suppress their supporters with physical coercion. They must also consider their ability to withstand such coercion by others. Mutual deterrence and stability at any level of conflict and, thus, the limitation of conflicts so that they do not escalate into more severe crises, depend on the balance of leverage that each side has over the other. This balance of leverage, in turn, depends to a significant extent on political institutions. That is, in divided societies the causal chain consists of, first, political institutions, such as power-sharing and power-dividing institutions, that affect the balance of leverage; second, this balance affects expectations about the outcome of escalation; and third, these expectations in turn affect whether the leaders of the central government and cultural communities choose to escalate the stakes and means of conflict. The dispersion of institutional weapons more successfully deters escalation of core cultural conflicts because there is less reason to expect success and more likely to prevent an erosion of democracy by cultural challenges to the constitutional order.

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Colleagues in the enterprise: In addition to advice on changes in the previous text in order to clarify or rectify this narrative, I need advice on issues that should be added to this discussion, bearing in mind that the text is already over the 7,000 word limit. Among the issues I might add:

[1] The down side of power dividing: Inefficiency (the cost of multiple organs of power) and the malintegration of policy when it is made by independent organs

[2] The empirical record of power dividing versus power sharing:

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