Theories of Conflict Resolution: Centripetalism and Power Dividing

Examining Arguments for

Power-dividing Settlements

Three types of argument

- Rejecting power sharing
  - On normative grounds
  - On pragmatic grounds
- Establishing choice and flexibility
- Claiming success
  - In comparable cases
  - In 'generic' cases
  - For power-sharing institutions

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Rejecting power sharing

- On normative grounds
  - Limits on democracy
  - Entrenchment of communal identities
  - Rewarding violence
- On pragmatic grounds
  - Institutional weapons
  - Governmental rigidity and inefficiency
  - Inadequate enforcement

Establishing choice and flexibility

- Analytically
  - Cases where only power sharing will work are far fewer than its advocates argue

- Practically
  - Negotiators/constitutional designers can increase number of parties at the bargaining table to 'create' multiple centres of power

Claiming success

- In comparable cases
  - South Africa: successful **transition** from negotiated power-sharing arrangements to non-power-sharing arrangements negotiated under power-sharing rules

- In 'generic' cases
  - United States: presidential system, non-ethnic federalism, limited government in a multi-ethnic/racial society

Claiming success

- For the success of power-sharing settlements
  - Switzerland, Belgium, India
  - Power sharing works best when it is "a smaller part of a larger multiple-majorities institutional arrangement", i.e., when it complements power-dividing institutions

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