Electoral Systems Design and Power-Sharing Regimes

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Electoral systems design is a key mechanism in the broader institutional design approach to the resolution of conflict in multi-ethnic societies. As such, it is closely connected with a long-standing debate on what design of political institutions is best suited to channel inter-communal conflict into peaceful democratic competition. The two predominant schools in conflict resolution today—integrative and consociational power sharing—take very distinct views on which electoral systems stand the best chance of contributing to the successful management of conflict. These two interlocked debates on institutional and electoral system design are the focus of this chapter. In exploring the arguments put forward by integrationists and consociationalists and by advocates of different electoral systems, I examine their theoretical merits and empirical manifestations and argue against rigid divisions between the two approaches to power sharing.

Power sharing in Multi-ethnic Societies and the Significance of the Electoral System

Power sharing in multi-ethnic societies means that institutional arrangements exist that constrain purely majoritarian democracy—a limitation that the majority of political agents in a given society accept in the hope that it will enable the institutions of government to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently and at the same time be recognised as legitimate. The debate on power-sharing, the various

institutional forms it may take and its general suitability for the settlement of ethnic conflicts has been proceeding for many years. At a basic level, two predominant types of power-sharing institutions—integrative and consociational—can be distinguished. Consociational power sharing is most closely associated with the work of Arend Lijphart, who identified four structural features shared by consociational systems – a grand coalition government (between parties from different segments of society), segmental autonomy (in the cultural sector), proportionality (in the voting system and in public sector employment) and minority veto (1977, pp. 25-52). Lijphart argued that these characteristics, more or less prominently, were exhibited by all the classic examples of consociationalism: Lebanon, Cyprus, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Fiji and Malaysia.

Integrative power-sharing, in contrast, emphasises that rather than designing rigid institutions in which elected representatives have to work together *after* elections, political stability is more likely to be achieved if electoral formulas are devised that reward candidates for moderation and cross-communal appeals *before* elections, thus effectively excluding extremists who appeal to a narrow sectarian constituency. This school of thought is most prominently associated with the work of Donald Horowitz (1985), and more lately with that of Timothy D. Sisk (1996) and Benjamin Reilly (2001). Reilly, in particular, has contributed much to a more systematic development and understanding of the theory of centripetalism, 'a normative theory of institutional design designed to encourage three related but distinct phenomena in divided societies: (i) *electoral incentives* for campaigning politicians to reach out to and attract votes from a range of ethnic groups other than their own…; (ii) *arenas of bargaining*, under which political actors from different groups have an incentive to

come together to negotiate and bargain in the search for cross-partisan and cross-ethnic vote-pooling deals…; and (iii) *centrist, aggregative political parties* or coalitions which seek multi-ethnic support…' (Reilly 2001, p. 11; emphasis in original).

From the perspective of consociational power-sharing, post-election institutional design is the more important component, while integrative power sharing stresses that, almost regardless of the design of government institutions, post-election cooperation among the leaders of different ethnic groups is more likely if such cooperation begins before elections actually take place. This does not mean, however, that consociationalists reject the importance of electoral systems choice. On the contrary, Lijphart, for example, has been a long-standing advocate of list-proportional representation (PR) as it ensures representation of a wide range of political parties with different interests and opinions. Integrationists like Horowitz, Sisk and Reilly also advocate PR electoral systems, but tend to favour preferential systems,[2] and especially the alternative vote (AV) and the single transferable vote (STV). This means that in both schools a link is made, correctly, between electoral system design and election result on the one hand, and the feasibility of election results for the stability of post-election power-sharing institutions on the other.

In order to gain acceptance among politicians and their constituents, elections must be perceived as having the potential of resulting in post-election institutions that are broadly representative of the range of interests found in society. This observation is closely related to a second dimension of acceptability, which concerns the actual electoral system according to which the elections themselves are to be conducted. If

electoral systems are adopted that predictably lead to the exclusion or gross under-representation of certain groups, these groups have little incentive to legitimate such elections and their outcomes by participating in them and may instead seek to attain their political goals by the use of violence. For this reason, many leading academic advocates of power sharing emphasise the crucial role that elections play in multi-ethnic societies, both as potential catalysts of conflict and as mechanisms contributing to conflict management and eventual democratic resolution. In other words, elections are considered crucial in determining whether power sharing will work.

According to the integrative approach, it is crucial that an electoral system is found that establishes the foundations of power-sharing politics through pre-election pacts or incentivising the electorate to vote across communal lines. For the consociational approach it is no less important that elections return representatives of all key groups in a given society, and arguably representatives that are willing and able to work together within a predetermined consociational framework of institutions. Consequently, what is particularly important in societies underpinned by power-sharing is that electoral systems and institutional designs actually 'match', in the sense that electoral systems generate outcomes that enable political institutions to function. This means that electoral processes are crucial factors in determining the degree to which political processes in multi-ethnic societies will be characterised by moderation and inclusiveness as the two key factors of political stability. To explain why this is the case, the electoral process can itself be analysed in terms of four constituent dimensions: election systems, election campaigns, the conduct of elections and election results.

Election Systems

An election system includes a number of different aspects, such as:

- an electoral formula (majority systems, PR systems, mixed systems, etc.);

- regulations on assembly size (number of seats available in the legislature);

- regulations on district magnitude (the number of seats contested per constituency);

- regulations on voting and ballots (blocked versus non-blocked lists; open versus closed lists);

- threshold criteria (minimum share in votes cast to qualify for representation under PR systems; also known as 'quorum').

While the choice of an electoral formula must not be overestimated in its capacity to determine election outcomes, it does have clear and measurable consequences, also known as an electoral system's 'technical effect' (cf., e.g., Lijphart 1994; Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Hartmann 2000; Fraenkel and Grofman 2002; Reilly 2001). The debate in the academic literature is split between advocates of moderation and advocates of inclusiveness. Accordingly, the choice is allegedly either to follow Horowitz and other advocates of the integrative approach to power sharing and opt for an electoral system that encourages and rewards moderation, even at the cost of giving up on the equally important democratic value of inclusion; or to follow Lijphart and adopt the consociational approach and opt for an electoral system that produces highly inclusive outcomes, but does not similarly encourage (or reward) moderation.[3] The difficulty of this choice is that stability in multi-communal societies is often as much a function of moderation as of inclusion. Power sharing can only run smoothly if there is a significant degree of moderation among those who are participating in the political process. Yet, it is also generally accepted that stability

may be increased if all relevant groups are represented (both moderates and extremists).

Majority/plurality systems tend to provide clear majorities in legislative assemblies, while PR systems are more likely not to do so (depending on the threshold, if any, established for parties to win seats) and therefore often result in coalition governments. However, PR systems ensure the representation of party followers at a national level, while majority/plurality systems result in the representation of constituents at the local level. In other words, PR systems are more likely to achieve a perception that all significant political parties and their positions are represented in the elected assembly. Majority/plurality systems, while already generally less inclusive, have the added disadvantage that significant segments of the voting population in each constituency will not regard themselves as represented because 'their' party's candidate did not win the available seat.

A PR list system (in large multi-member constituencies), however, has one crucial element in common with majority/plurality systems: they both fall into the category of non-preferential electoral systems that do not allow voters to rank parties or candidates according a specific preference—that is, voters cannot indicate another choice (or choices) should their preferred (first-ranked) candidate fail to obtain enough votes to win a seat or rank candidates within party lists (under a PR list system). All other things being equal, among non-preferential electoral formulas PR systems are clearly preferable from the perspective of consociational power-sharing as they offer a much greater likelihood of elections delivering results that make the formation of grand coalitions more likely as they virtually guarantee the

representation of different ethnic groups.[4] For majority/plurality systems to perform

the same function, very specific circumstances need to be present, such as a high

degree of compactness of ethnic-group settlements coinciding with electoral district

boundaries. However, some of the disadvantages of majority/plurality systems are

then simply transposed to the level of intra-group political competition. In situations

in which different political parties compete with one another within one ethnic group,

majority/plurality systems may be able to guarantee the political representation of the

ethnic group but not necessarily of all significant *visions* within it. Thus, stable power

sharing would potentially be much more difficult to achieve as the legislature may not

include all key players or at least not in proportion to the support they receive within a

given community.[5]

From the point of view of integrative power-sharing, neither non-preferential PR nor

majority/plurality systems offer any significant opportunities for the formation of

durable pre-election coalitions. Advocates of this type of power sharing have

therefore focussed on the virtues of preferential voting systems, especially the

Alternative Vote (AV), the Supplementary Vote (SV), and the Single Transferable

Vote (STV) (Horowitz 1991; Reilly 2001; cf. Grofman 2002). The strength of

empirical evidence in support of the usefulness of any of these preferential voting

systems in the context of integrative power sharing in multi-ethnic societies, however,

is very thin (Reilly 2001).

Interestingly enough, what can be shown empirically is that post-election coalition-

building among parties representing different ethnic communities is possible (if

admittedly rare or unusual) without both consociational institutional designs and

preferential voting systems: Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Slovakia all use PR systems of one type or another and are governed by multi-ethnic coalitions. By the same token, the application of a preferential and proportional voting system (STV) can be combined with a more rigid consociational structure of the institutions of government. Even though, at present, Northern Ireland is not a shining example of success, there is at least a compelling theoretical argument that favours such an approach. For consociational institutions to function and perform well, a (widely representative and therefore necessarily broadly inclusive) grand coalition is required as much as élites willing and able to work together. STV in this context can contribute to achieving both of these aims: its proportional character ensures an inclusive composition of the assembly elected, while its preferential character is at the same time likely to favour the election of moderate politicians and the formation of pre-election coalitions (but see below for specific conditions). By the same token, the application of open-list PR systems, as in South Tyrol, can have similar effects: list-PR guarantees a high degree of inclusiveness while the openness of the lists allows voters to cast preferences for specific politicians thus making it possible that candidates on the lower end of a party list still can be elected, for example, if their personal appeal or that of their agenda attracts a sufficient number of preference votes. In South Tyrol, this combines favourably with regulations that demand a cross-ethnic power-sharing coalition but leave it to the elected parties to determine the modalities of this coalition rather than making participation in the executive a direct function of electoral support, as is the case in Northern Ireland under the arrangements of the 1998 Belfast Agreement.

However, one also needs to bear in mind that the preferential character of STV and open-list PR bears dangers to the extent that it does not guarantee that more moderate politicians will be chosen. From this perspective, Lijphart's insistence that the PR list system is preferable to STV and that closed lists are better than open lists because this asserts the dominance of (party) élites continues to be a credible observation (Lijphart 2002, p. 53). Where Lijphart (2002, p. 44) to some extent misses the point is when he claims that strong incentives—namely, the chance to exercise executive power—exist for political leaders after elections to compromise even if there have been no pre-election pacts. While this may well be the case in many instances, political leaders who gain power on a confrontational election platform in order to maximise votes from within their own ethnic community contribute to the polarisation of society and also create expectations and a climate of adversarial, 'no-compromise' post-electoral politics. Once elected to office, they may opportunistically change their mind, but their electorates are less likely to do so, thus potentially creating a situation in which political constellations within government do not reflect those on the outside, and consequently delegitimise existing institutions and lead to situations of, at best, inclusive institutions which, however lack the necessary degree of moderation to be stable, and, at worst, exclusive instability and violent conflict, that is, situations in which neither inclusiveness nor moderation have been achieved (cf. Norris 2002). In other words, closed-list PR system may ensure that party leaderships obtain a larger degree of autonomy from their party and their constituents, such a system does not necessarily encourage, let alone guarantee elite moderation.

Returning to the issue of the effect that electoral formulas have, apart from the so-called technical effect and its implications, consideration also needs to be given to

their psychological effects on voters, which in turn shape the prospects of success for particular parties. As electoral formulas reward certain voting behaviours while constraining others, voters may opt to vote tactically; they may, that is, try to use the technical effects of the electoral system to effect one outcome and/or prevent another (cf. e.g., Hartmann 2000; Venice Commission 2000). For example, if an electoral formula disadvantages smaller parties, voters who may be ideologically closest to such a small party may decide not to 'waste' their vote on it because it has only a limited chance of success, but instead vote for a larger party as their second-best choice or as the 'lesser of two evils'. Such decisions are more easy to make in majoritarian/plurality systems, while they may not even be necessary in PR systems.[6] The technical effects of wasted votes in preferential systems, especially STV, is more difficult to estimate for the voter, and thus 'strategic voting' is, to some extent, constrained. As Reilly (2001, p. 163) points out, '[i]n enabling all voters to express their preferences, elimination-based systems like AV and STV, inadvertently make some preference orderings count more than others' because 'the *order* of this transfer of preferences from eliminated candidates to those still in the running is essentially arbitrary: the secondary preferences of those who chose a relatively unpopular candidate are counted before the preferences of those who chose a more popular candidate' (emphasis in original).

As for assembly size and district magnitude, the rule of thumb is that the larger the assembly size and the higher the district magnitude, the more inclusive, from a party representation perspective, the assembly where non-preferential electoral rules are adopted.[7] The high district magnitude requirement favours PR systems[8] applied in a

single state-wide constituency or in several large, multimember constituencies, or integrated mixed-member systems[9] that have the same effect.[10]

The choice between blocked/non-blocked lists and open/closed lists determines the ability of voters to 'personalize' their vote. Closed and blocked lists only offer the choice of voting for a pre-determined party list (that is, the voter chooses a party list on which the ranking of candidates is pre-determined by the party itself—the standard system used in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Slovakia). Closed, non-blocked lists allow the voter to rank individual candidates from one party (that is, they have one vote for a party, but can register a preference as to who they would like to see represent this party in the assembly, as is, for example, the case in elections in South Tyrol). Open and non-blocked lists allow voters to cast their votes across party lines and to express their preference for individual candidates on such lists (the so-called panachage model, used for example in local elections in Poland). In relation to non-blocked lists, it is important to bear in mind that, while these limit the ability of party executives to determine who represents the party in the assembly, they also increase intra-party competition and can encourage factionalization. By the same token, such lists introduce an element of accountability into the PR system and improve the relationship between voter and representative (cf. Hartmann 2000; Venice Commission 2000). Thus, even within PR-list systems, a degree of preferentialism can be introduced which can, theoretically at least, encourage pre-election coalitions and functioning post-election power sharing, and thus have a favourable impact on political stability as it promotes moderation and inclusiveness in post-election political processes in multi-ethnic societies.

Two other issues in relation to election systems are the degree of their complexity and the extent to which voters are familiar with them. Very often in multi-ethnic societies, election systems reflect the complexity of issues that they are intended to address, namely, to contribute to delivering moderate and inclusive government. Unsurprisingly, this implies complex rules and regulations, the practical consequences of which cannot always be accurately predicted by either their designers (e.g., in Fiji as discussed by Fraenkel and Grofman 2002; more generally, Farrell 2001, pp. 193ff.) or by the voters. This is not an argument against complex electoral systems, but rather a reminder that the introduction of new electoral systems (or reforms of existing systems, or the introduction of new ones after prolonged absence of elections) also requires public information and education campaigns to ensure voters properly understand the mechanics of the election ahead and the consequences of their vote. Familiarity with a given electoral system is an equally double-edged sword: on the one hand, familiarity enables voters to make better informed decisions about how to use their vote, while, on the other hand, it can also mean that sections of the electorate are more likely to distrust results, especially if they have experienced discrimination and disadvantage in the past.

Election Campaigns

Election campaigns in many ways reflect the nature of interethnic relations and, by the same token, often foreshadow the nature of post-election politics. This is particularly the case in multi-ethnic societies where the higher the stakes, the more likely the campaign will have a polarizing and radicalizing effect on different groups. This is further exacerbated in situations where ethnically-based party systems exist,

creating a situation in which elections effectively become censuses and their results predictable. Predictability, in particular, or the assumption thereof, is as Horowitz (2001, pp. 295-308) has shown often linked to three patterns of ethnic violence in electoral contests—pre-emptive strikes, break-outs and lock-ins. Pre-emptive strikes are aimed at enhancing a particular community's chances of electoral success, for example by driving out, intimidating or otherwise influencing voters whose vote is assumed will go to a different political party. Pre-emptive strikes therefore accept ascriptive elements of party affiliation, which is in contrast to break-outs where an effort is made to reduce this ascriptive element in order to overcome a particular electoral disadvantage. Break-outs often happen in the form of attempts to broaden the base of an existing political party to expand beyond its traditional core ethnic constituency; if this is perceived as threatening by other parties and their followers relying on ascriptive elements, violence is a likely result (Horowitz 2001, pp. 295-308, for a more extensive discussion and examples). Pre-emptive strikes and breakouts are both types of pre-election violence, while lock-ins trigger post-election violence, and are thus more relevant in the context of election results, which I discuss below. Campaign-related violence may be locally contained or more widespread, depending on stakes and demographic distribution of groups. Its likelihood will also depend on the general nature of interethnic relations and the legacy of past campaign conducts. Pre-emptive strikes and break-outs both reflect strategic choices made in relation to inclusiveness and moderation of political processes. Pre-emptive strikes signal a move of extremists to limit the inclusiveness of post-election institutions, while break-outs are a reflection of attempts to achieve a greater degree of inclusiveness.

Another dimension of election campaigns which has a bearing on the degree of inclusiveness and moderation in any post-election political process are campaign promises and, more generally speaking, election manifestos. Ruling out certain coalitions or polarizing communities and politicians does not bode well for a post-election process in which a moderate and inclusive government needs to be formed. Either politicians stick to their campaign pledges and the government that emerges in the aftermath of an election is either exclusive and/or extremist, or politicians can falter on their promises and potentially lose the support of their constituencies, which may then be exploited in turn by hardliners within or outside parliament and/or the governing party. On the other hand, campaigns fought on substantive rather than on ethnic issues offer greater promise of post-election political processes that are characterised by moderation and inclusive, as they allow for the formation of government coalitions based on policy overlap, rather than convenience or necessity.

Electoral systems that induce pre-election cooperation and moderation do not necessarily exclude confrontational and even violent election campaigns. Even though Reilly (2001) shows with the example of Papua-New Guinea that a preferential voting system (in this case, AV) does have a positive effect on the conduct of election campaigns, Horowitz's (2001) findings on electoral riots strongly suggest that political parties and their supporters who feel threatened by preferential voting systems—because they are unlikely to be able to gain sufficient cross-communal support to guarantee them a number of seats equal to those they may have achieved under non-preferential systems—may choose violence to 'compensate' for this and, for example, intimidate voters to cast preferences in their favour. Consequently, while preferential voting systems may be beneficial for the longer-term possibility and

stability of power-sharing institutions of both the integrative and consociational type, their influence on the conduct of election campaigns and, as I will show below, on the conduct of elections themselves is more limited and in the short term not necessarily conducive to constructive and peaceful conflict management and settlement.

The above observations also underscore the close relationship that exists between inter-community and intra-community dynamics in the context of election-based political systems. The more vulnerable moderate politicians feel in relation to out-bidding by extremists, the more likely are they to adopt tough stances at election times, and the more they do so, the more vulnerable they will be after elections. Even if they win, moderates may easily lose the support of their voters if extremists can point out that essential campaign promises have been broken. Put another way, where party systems are divided along communal lines, elections can increase intra-community political competition, and make this intra-community political arena more important than the inter-community one. As a consequence, politicians compete for a clearly defined pool of votes in their own community, and in order to win a major share in it, they must prove that they are the best representatives of their community's interests. It is easy to see how such a situation plays into the hands of extremists and disadvantages moderates.

The Conduct of Elections

Similar to campaigns, the conduct of elections often reflects the general state of inter-ethnic relations and can foreshadow the nature of the post-election political process and the feasibility of power sharing. Taagepera and Shugart (1989) identify a number

of 'pathologies': fraud, malapportionment, gerrymander and turnout. While fraud and turnout are pathologies that are not specific to power-sharing contexts, malapportionment and gerrymandering have particular significance, both from a institutional design perspective and from the perspective of practical experiences.

Malapportionment occurs when electoral systems violate the norm of equal representation, that is, when the value of votes in one or more constituencies differs from that in others. Put differently, malapportionment means that voters living in significantly larger constiuencies are represented by the same or even fewer number in parliament than those of significantly smaller constituencies. The first implication of this is that malapportionment is only possible in electoral systems that have at least two constituencies. Malapportionment can be a consequence of population movement (for example, voluntary segregation or ethnic cleansing), which diminishes or increases the number of voters in existing, territorially-defined constituencies, or of unequal population growth (for example, due to higher birth rates, emigration or immigration) which diminishes or increases the number of voters in existing communally-defined constituencies. It can also be a deliberate strategy to increase or decrease the representation of a particular segment of a given population (cf. the pre-1974 Lebanon experience). Thus, the 1960 constitution of Cyprus pre-determined the number of members of parliament to be elected within each of the two major communities—Greek and Turkish Cypriots—but gave Turkish Cypriots a higher share of seats in parliament than they would have been entitled to under an exactly proportional system. In both instances, malapportionment was a factor that contributed to the breakdown of established consociational power-sharing systems. While malapportionment is not specific to consociations, but can, in principle, also

occur in integrative power-sharing regimes, its use is more likely in the former as the stronger need to ensure inclusive representation, even at the cost of over-representation is a particular requirement of consociational regimes.

Gerrymandering, in contrast, does not primarily concern the equality of voter and seat proportions across all constituencies, but constituency boundaries. While malapportionment can be a consequence (or aim) of gerrymandering, the latter is more concerned with the voter composition of particular constituencies. Gerrymandering seeks to create as many majorities for a particular party or community as possible by drawing constituency boundaries in such a way that in each constituency a small majority is feasible and/or by concentrating as many voters of opposing parties in one constituency in order to eliminate them from the electorate in others which would then fall to the party that re-drew boundaries. In Northern Ireland, for example, the Unionist Party government in the 1950s and 1960s drew electoral boundaries for local councils in such as way that unionist candidates in electoral areas with nationalist majorities could still obtain a majority of seats. To ensure the 'sustainability' of this system, the allocation of public housing followed the same prerogative of guaranteeing unionist control of electoral wards.

Proportional representation systems and electoral formulae based on multi-member districts are generally less prone to gerrymandering than majority/plurality systems where there is normally only one 'winner' per constituency. Hence, gerrymandering can be used, and may in fact be required, for the operation of an integrative power-sharing regime: the AV system, favoured by Horowitz, requires ethnically heterogeneous constituencies, which may have to be created through changing

constituency boundaries. This is not a problem in itself, but in the context of deeply-divided societies it once again raises the issue to what extent electoral engineering undermines its own intentions by encouraging perceptions of unfairness and manipulation at the expense of particular parties which will have significantly reduced opportunities of having their candidates elected. While it may be possible to achieve moderation among those elected to office, by reducing inclusiveness such techniques are more likely to increase polarisation and extremism among those excluded from the process of government. STV also requires multi-ethnic constituencies, but as a proportional electoral system, the effects of gerrymandering are less likely to be perceived as unfair as it is less likely that specific parties will be completely excluded; and as a preferential system, STV makes it possible for voters to see themselves still represented even if their top choice of candidate does not win a seat.

Integrative and consociational power-sharing regimes both rely on so-called pathologies of electoral systems to increase the chances of election results that fit the underlying assumptions of both models—moderation and inclusiveness. Yet, clearly, the more they depend on this kind of manipulation, that is, the more serious these pathologies, the more they will send a signal to voters and politicians that elections are unfair; that their rivals seek, in the guise of democracy, to obtain or retain control of society; and the less likely will those who feel they are at the receiving end of these pathologies be willing to accept election results and, more worryingly in the long term, elections and democratic politics in general. On the other hand, if electoral engineering goes hand-in-hand with broad public consultation and information exercises and if it can produce more inclusive and moderate power-sharing, it remains a valuable and legitimate tool of conflict resolution and institutional design in deeply

divided societies. In addition, proper judicial and administrative processes can go a long way not only to ensure that pathologies are minimised, but also that election outcomes are accepted, even if they do not reflect each community's/party's aspirations (Lyons 2002; Venice Commission 1991). Thus, while the proper use gerrymandering and malapportionment cannot guarantee fully inclusive and moderate assemblies and post-election governments, it process can, nevertheless, contribute to a more stable post-election political process.

Election Results

Election results, especially the composition of an elected assembly and the subsequent stability of power-sharing regimes, are particularly important in two ways. Firstly, they determine the extent to which political institutions obtain or retain sufficient levels of authority and legitimacy. Secondly, they decide on the composition of a legislature and an executive, and as such can often determine whether compromise and coalescent government will prevail, or whether the political process will stagnate and in the worst case scenario collapse, perhaps into violence.

On the surface, both of these points seem to be related primarily to the stability of any post-election political process, but especially in multi-ethnic societies they inevitably also raise issues of inclusiveness. Election results that do not broadly reflect the diversity of a given society *and* within its constituent communities are unlikely to be acceptable to those who do not feel that they are adequately represented. This brings me back to the third pattern of violence in electoral contests identified by Horowitz (2001), namely, the lock-in situation. He distinguishes pure lock-in, which occurs

when elections confirm the continuation of dominant, demographic majorities, from an artificial lock-in. In the latter situation, elections result in a victory of the minority (an artificial lock-in caused by a party-political split of the majority or an election system that translates a majority of votes into a minority of seats). Consequently, violence has different points of origin: the minority in case of a pure lock-in (such as in Northern Ireland in the 1960s), while the violent backlash is likely to come from the majority in cases of artificial lock-in (such as in Fiji after the 1999 elections—cf. Fraenkel and Grofman [2002]). Neither situation, however, is conducive to moderation and inclusiveness, and thus to stability.

However, the acceptability of election results also depends on the conduct of election campaigns and the elections themselves, on the stakes in elections and, more generally speaking, on the state of inter-ethnic relations in a given society. In 'normal' democracies, the right to vote must not be confused with the right to representation (Grofman et al. 1992, pp. 129f.), and especially not to have one's interests represented by the party one has voted for and/or in that party's anticipated strength. Power-sharing institutional designs seek to address this point by providing mechanisms in which all significant groups in a multi-ethnic society see their interests represented and aspirations reflected in post-election political processes. As already explored, different approaches to power sharing seek to achieve this in different ways—through specific electoral systems that strengthen a moderate middle ground in a given society which can ideally lay claim to representing the views of larger sections of different ethnic communities or by designing institutions in which representatives of these groups have to cooperate after elections. Hybrid versions that combine elements of both approaches have significant theoretical appeal, even though the empirical ground

on which this assertion rests remains thin. In other words, election results that produce broadly acceptable moderate politicians in the institutions of government and institutions that regulate their participation and include safeguards against the exploitation of minorities combine the most appealing elements of both approaches to power sharing without compromising the integrity of an overall institutional design aimed at non-violent, democratic conflict management in multi-ethnic societies.

Electoral Systems Design and Power-Sharing Regimes: Some Conclusions

Channelling conflict in multi-ethnic societies into non-violent, democratic processes is a difficult endeavour at best. Apart from the often immensely complex environments of conflicting claims and political strategies of internal and external conflict parties, divisions among scholars on how best to address often protracted and emotionally and symbolically highly charged conflicts in multi-ethnic societies have not helped the practical business of conflict management either. The two predominant approaches of integrative and consociational power-sharing, for example, are themselves deeply divided over how best to achieve political processes that are stable (that is, the capacity of a system of political institutions to command authority, pass and implement legislation, maintain public order and security, and respond to changes in public opinion), because they are based on inclusiveness. I have argued that the often-posited choice between inclusiveness and moderation—as exemplified in the two basic models of integrative and consociational power sharing—is a wrong one, because the stability political processes in deeply-divided societies is as much a function of inclusiveness as it is of moderation. Therefore, hybrid systems combining elements of both consociational and integrative power sharing may be best equipped

to achieve moderation and inclusiveness. Despite some reservations, especially because of the shaky empirical basis for such a 'mixed' approach, I have tried to show that there is significant theoretical appeal in an approach that combines preferential voting with elements of consociational institutional structures.

Electoral and post-electoral politics in multi-ethnic societies with power-sharing institutions are not only determined by factors exclusively related to the electoral contest. Elections are only one in a much broader spectrum of factors that have an impact on moderation and inclusiveness (some of which are discussed by the contributors of this volume) in the political process and more generally on inter-ethnic relations. While the design of the election system, the conduct of electoral campaigns and of the elections themselves, and the results that elections yield and the way in which these results are interpreted and acted upon are significant in shaping electoral and post-electoral politics in multi-ethnic societies, a more general, context-setting factor—the nature of ethnic politics—must naturally be taken into account.

The most important direct consequences of elections are obviously their results. While it is true that the choice of electoral systems and the fine-tuning of specific rules can shape election outcomes, it is ultimately the will of the voter that determines the overall composition of assemblies and/or governments (Venice Commission 2000). However, in the same way in which polarization and extremism are courses of action that can be chosen or avoided, so are post-electoral political processes not foregone conclusions based purely on election results. Parliaments and governments have, and make, choices as to how to conduct politics. Clear, absolute majorities do not have to

lead to the neglect of minority interests; multiparty coalition governments do not have to be unstable and to collapse at the first difficult decision.

Apart from the role of politicians, another qualification of the direct impact of elections on moderation and inclusiveness in political processes in multi-ethnic societies is the broader design of political institutions. Recent scholarship and political practice have developed a wide range of power-sharing mechanisms that can be usefully employed in the process of state construction and consolidation in multi-ethnic societies: consociations, ethno-federalism, territorial autonomy, etc., are all designs that can mitigate electoral outcomes that would otherwise have 'complicated' interethnic relations. Careful institutional design is, therefore, an important component in all efforts to achieve moderate and inclusive political processes in multi-ethnic societies, and as such a useful complement to the design of electoral systems. The key to success is to make sure that electoral systems fit in the more general institutional design of a given polity and that 'mismatches' between the two, which might easily exacerbate existing inter-ethnic tensions and steer multi-ethnic societies away from moderation and inclusiveness, are avoided through careful institutional design. To take these precautions may complicate electoral processes, but it is necessary in order to ensure that elections in multi-ethnic societies lead to moderate and inclusive government that allows for stable, non-violent and democratic political processes in which conflicts can be managed peacefully.

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a paper entitled 'The Ethnopolitical Dynamics of Elections' at the Annual World Convention of the Association of Nationality Studies in April 2003 in New York and subsequently published as ECMI Working Paper No. 17 (Wolff 2003).

[2] Preferential systems allow the voter to rank candidates according to preference, thus enabling him/her to express further choices if the preferred candidate does not obtain enough votes to be elected. This is meant to encourage candidates to broaden their appeal (i.e., moderate their policies) beyond their own ethnic constituency.

[3] I am grateful to the editors of this volume for helping me clarify my own thinking on this particular aspect.

[4] Executive power sharing is not an exclusive feature of consociational designs. Integrationist designs, too, essentially allow for, and to some extent encourage, executive power sharing, but on a voluntary basis and between moderate representatives of relevant communities.

[5] This point applies equally to integrative power-sharing models as electoral systems that reward cross-communal, pre-election deals do not in themselves guarantee a stable political process overall.

[6] Vote wastage in PR systems does, however, become relevant where thresholds apply. If a particular party does not have a great chance of acquiring enough votes to pass this threshold, voters may decide, just as in majority/plurality systems, to case their ballot for their second or third best choice.

[7] Large assemblies mean either more constituencies or higher district magnitude, thus decreasing the number of votes required for election. Same-size assemblies can also become more representative by increasing the number of candidates electable from each constituency. For example, a particular population group may not be strong enough to elect a single candidate while it remains split across ten single-seat constituencies, it may have enough votes to elect one candidate in an enlarged ten-seat constituency.

[8] Majority/plurality systems are mostly applied in low-magnitude districts, the one round single-seat constituency (Westminster model) and the two-round single-seat constituency (French model) being the most common examples.

[9] In the *integrated model* of the mixed-member system (used in Germany and Hungary), the two components (single-member majority/plurality constituency and multimember PR constiuency) are meant to reciprocally mitigate possible disproportionate outcomes in any one component. Its counterpart—the *parallel model*, in which the two components operate alongside each other—does not have any such direct compensatory effect. This model is currently used in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Russia and Ukraine.

[10] In PR systems, high thresholds, however, can cancel out the benefits of PR systems, making election results sometimes even less inclusive than if the same election had been conducted under a majority/plurality system (e.g., Turkey's 10% threshold completely distorts election results, allowing parties with about 30% of the vote to obtain more than 50% of the seats).