HOW TO SOLVE THE DILEMMA OF POWER SHARING? FORMAL AND INFORMAL PATTERNS OF REPRESENTATION IN THE SWISS MULTILINGUAL CANTONS
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Formal rules for group representation like constitutional quotas or reserved seats are among the most widespread mechanisms of power sharing in culturally heterogeneous countries. Critics, however, consider these tools as counterproductive for the establishment of peace and democracy in such societies. In this paper it is claimed that this 'dilemma of power sharing' can be tackled by focusing upon informal practices for group representation and on less rigid formal rules that indirectly or implicitly ensure power sharing. It illustrates possible institutional solutions by presenting the first comparative exploration of the patterns of group representation in the four Swiss multilingual cantons.

KEYWORDS: POWER SHARING; CONSOCIATIONAL THEORY; QUOTAS; MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES; SWITZERLAND

Introduction

In contemporary literature on democracy in multicultural societies there is a wide consensus that institutions should *not* exclude significant cultural groups from power. Take, for instance, consociational theory (Lijpart 1977). At its very core we find the concept of *power sharing*, that is, the idea that cultural segments of a heterogeneous society need to have a fair share of positions in state institutions, especially in the executive and in parliament (Lijphart 2004).[1] Even scholars who criticise the consociational approach on many points and propose alternative ways of promoting democracy in culturally heterogeneous societies do not question the importance of inclusive institutions (Horowitz 1985; Reilly 2005).

In recent years power sharing has gained important normative support from the field of political theory. Indeed, central to the contemporary normative accounts on multiculturalism is the concept of 'group representation', together with a number of other related notions like 'politics of difference' (Young 1990), 'politics of recognition' (Taylor 1992), 'politics of presence' (Phillips 1995), 'special representation rights' (Kymlicka 1995), and 'descriptive (or mirror) representation' (Mansbridge 1999).

Yet there is a large debate on *how to ensure group representation* (see Kymlicka 1995; Gould 1996, 184; Reilly 2005; Jarstad 2008). The easiest answer is to adopt the tool of 'reserved seats' or 'quotas' (see Reynolds 2006).[2] Through quotas fixed in the constitution or in other legal documents all relevant cultural segments are entitled to a share of seats in

a given institutional body according to their respective share of the population. In certain cases this principle can be reinforced by giving some overrepresentation to the smaller groups (Lijphart 2004, 103).

Quotas: Normative and Empirical Problems

Formal group representation through quotas has been extensively criticised both by political theorists and in empirical studies. To begin with, in political theory quotas are perceived as inimical to some of the basic principles of democratic representation (Pitkin 1967) and, indeed, to the very fundaments of liberal democracy (Barry 2001). Interestingly, the most prominent advocates of group representation like Kymlicka (1995), Phillips (1995), Williams (1998) or Mansbridge (1999) are also sceptical or even overtly opposed to reserved seats for cultural groups. According to Kymlicka 'the idea of mirror representation [to be achieved through reserved seats] should be avoided as a general theory of representation' (Kymlicka 1995, 140). Williams (1998, 214) argues that quotas, as well as other features of rigid power-sharing democracy, violate the *principle of equality* of citizens and the *principle of individual autonomy*.

Political theorists especially point to the *problem of essentialism* (see Gould 1996, 182; Mansbridge 1999, 637–9; Barry 2001, 11, 261). According to the essentialist approach the core of one's identity derives from his or her membership in a group, groups being considered as 'internally homogeneous, clearly bounded, mutually exclusive, and maintaining specific determinate interests' (Jaggar 1999, 314; see also Gould 1996, 182). Although most advocates of group representation subscribe to liberal values and, thus, explicitly repudiate essentialism (Young 1990, 226–36; Kymlicka 1995, 140; Williams 1998, 6; Mansbridge 1999, 638),[3] they still face the objection that the very *logic* of group representation *requires* the essentialist concept of groups and cultures (Jaggar 1999, 314; Barry 2002, 211). Therefore, the problem of essentialism, together with its corollaries (especially the *problem of accountability*)[4], represents a fundamental normative challenge to any policy whose focus is group representation.

In *empirical* accounts rigid quotas have been blamed for the collapse of the Lebanese democracy (Lijphart 1985, 12, 61), for the failure of the power-sharing experiment in Cyprus 1960–63 (Jarstad 2001, 163), for creating severe tensions in Burundi (Snyder 2000), or for perpetuating instability in the post-Dayton Bosnia (Stojanovic 2006a; Belloni 2007; Mujkic 2007).

Indeed, in the literature on conflict resolution there is a growing consensus that in the countries which have experienced civil wars, power-sharing institutions may be very useful in the initial phase of *transition to peace*, but may hinder the consolidation phase of *transition to democracy* (Rothchild and Roeder 2005; Bieber 2005; Jarstad 2008).

Finally, common to both normative and theoretical critical accounts of quotas is the *problem of Balkanisation*, that is, the fact that quotas *permanently* entrench social divisions. According to Phillips (1991, 153–4), this is the 'most troubling' problem with quotas, 'for if the hope is that religion or ethnicity will lose their political and economic significance and no longer determine people's income or power, then writing in guarantees is going at some point to become counterproductive' (see also Williams 1998, 211).

The Dilemma of Power Sharing

At this point it is clear that we are faced with a fundamental dilemma. I will call it the *dilemma of power sharing*.[5] On the one hand, we acknowledge the importance of inclusive

power-sharing institutions for establishing peace and democracy in divided societies. On the other, we know that ensuring group representation through legal instruments like formal quotas may be counterproductive for the very goal that we want to achieve: the creation of a stable liberal democracy in a heterogeneous society. As Bieber (2005, 99) puts it: 'On one side, group-based protection and inclusion in the governance of [the countries in the Western Balkans] are necessary, while at the same time the mechanisms appear to exacerbate some of the reasons for the continuing prevalence of confrontational ethno-nationalist politics'.

Is there a way out? One possible solution to this dilemma is to drop *formal* quotas and opt, instead, for *informal* forms of group representation. For example, the representation of minorities in government can be a product of informal elite arrangements or simply of the willingness of the majority to leave a number of cabinet seats to the minority. Consider the Swiss experience. Since 1848 the Swiss federal government has never been composed solely of German speakers – whose share among the Swiss citizens (Table 1), as well as within the electoral body (parliament) that nominates the cabinet members, is 73% – even though no formal constitutional rule guarantees the representation of French (21%), Italian (4%) or Romansh (<1%) speakers.[6] For Lijphart (1984, 23–4) this is an 'informal rule' but it has been 'strictly obeyed' (see also Steiner 2002; Linder 2005).[7] The Swiss constitution is also silent with regard to linguistic representation in parliament.[8]

Informal solutions would allow us to avoid most theoretical objections towards quotas. The problem is that this approach would hardly satisfy scholars of constitutional design and conflict resolution who stress that a common feature of many multicultural societies, and especially of *deeply divided* societies (which is not the case in Switzerland), is the 'lack of trust' (see Jarstad 2001). Minority leaders typically aim to obtain legal guarantees for protection of the groups they represent and, thus, cannot accept that their share of power depends on the mere goodwill of the majority. Moreover, as Bieber (2005,

TABLE 1

Linguistic composition of the four multilingual cantons and of Switzerland (1980–2000; %)

Canton	Language	%
Berne	German speakers	90.5
	French speakers	8.8
Fribourg	French speakers	65.5
	German speakers	33.1
Grisons	German speakers	69.8
	Romansh speakers	20.3
	Italian speakers	8.8
Valais	French speakers	65.2
	German speakers	33.6
Switzerland	**Language**	**%**
	German speakers	73.1
	French speakers	20.5
	Italian speakers	4.3
	Romansh speakers	0.7

Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office.
Note: Swiss citizens only (see Note 10).

98) observes, in such settings the absence of formal quotas could lead to 'informal means of exclusion' of minorities. Therefore, abolishing group representation altogether is seen not only as 'unrealistic', but also as 'potentially dangerous'.[9]

The main argument in this paper is that informal practices of inclusion are preferable to formal and rigid constitutional rules. In contexts where this is not a realistic solution because of the 'lack of trust' between cultural segments, the article claims that we should look at formal rules that *indirectly* and/or *implicitly* ensure group representation and, thus, allow us to avoid the principal shortcomings of formal and rigid quotas of representation.

In the next section the paper uses an inductive approach and explores the possible solutions to the dilemma of power sharing by focusing on the Swiss experience. This focus is justified by the fact that Switzerland is one of the classic examples of consociational theory and, arguably, one of Lijphart's few 'prime examples' to which the theory still applies (Lijphart 2002; Stojanovic 2006b, 133). Moreover, Switzerland is the principle example of *stable* multilingual democracy, where there are no secessionist movements, contrary to other multilingual countries such as Canada, Belgium, or Spain.

I have already mentioned that the Swiss constitution does not reserve seats for the linguistic minorities in the government or in parliament. Next, I will look at the sub-state level and explore different institutional means for group representation developed by the four multilingual cantons. They provide some interesting elements for tackling the dilemma of power sharing.

Group Representation in the Four Swiss Multilingual Cantons

Traditional scholarly research on consociational practices, linguistic cleavages and the relations between the linguistic groups in Switzerland typically focused only on the national/federal level (Church 1989; Kriesi et al. 1996; Steiner 2002; Linder 2005).

Although Switzerland is a multilingual country 22 of 26 cantons have just *one* official language. Moreover, the federal structure of Switzerland is very pronounced and the cantons enjoy considerable political, fiscal, and cultural autonomy. Therefore, focusing exclusively upon the national/federal level is not necessarily the most appropriate choice if we wish to fully explore the variety of patterns of power sharing (see also Lijphart 1977, 89).

The real test for consociational theory is the case of the four cantons which are officially multilingual: the bilingual cantons of Berne, Fribourg, and Valais, and the trilingual canton of the Grisons. Each of these cantons has its own linguistic minorities (see Table 1) and has developed different institutional patterns that ensure adequate group representation in the institutions.[10] Interestingly, however, in literature we cannot find comparative studies of the four multilingual cantons which explore consociational institutions and patterns of group representation.[11] This is a task that I want to accomplish here. In this section of the paper my research questions are:

1.   What *solutions* for group representation have been adopted in the four cantons? Formal rules or informal practices? If formal rules: explicit or indirect/implicit solutions?
2.   What *impact* did such solutions have on the numerical representation of the linguistic groups in the institutions of the four cantons? In particular, have linguistic minorities been represented in *proportion* to their share of the population?[12]

Solutions: Patterns of Group Representation

In order to answer the first research question I examined the constitutions and electoral laws of the four multilingual cantons. The following four institutions were considered: (a) cantonal governments, (b) cantonal parliaments, (c) representatives of the multilingual cantons in the lower house of the federal parliament, and (d) representatives of the multilingual cantons in the upper house of the federal parliament. Table 2 gives an overview of the empirical results.

In Table 3 the categories of (1) formal explicit rules, (2) formal indirect/implicit rules, (3) informal practices, and (4) no rules or established practices of inclusion are introduced.

From Table 3 it can be seen that the multilingual cantons have adopted a variety of solutions:

(1) Formal Explicit Quotas. Formal and explicit quotas can be found in the elections to the government of the canton of Berne, where one seat is reserved for a French speaker from the region of Jura bernois.[13] Further, the canton of Berne is also the only canton that since 2006 applies formal and explicit quotas, albeit only for French speakers who live in the linguistically mixed electoral district of Bienne-Seeland.[14]

(2) Formal Indirect/Implicit Rules. In all multilingual cantons the representation of the linguistic groups in respective cantonal *parliaments* has been ensured through electoral districts and geographical concentration of the groups. In the canton of Berne this applies to French speakers from the region of Jura bernois. I consider this solution as a formal indirect/implicit rule for group representation.

At the level of cantonal *governments*, a formal indirect/implicit rule can be found only in the canton of Valais where the constitution stipulates that three out of five cantonal ministers must be from different regions of the canton. Since two of the regions are French-speaking and one is German-speaking, this provision *indirectly/implicitly* guarantees one seat to the German-speaking minority. But the constitution also guarantees two seats to the French-speaking majority and, thus, further justifies the claim that this provision cannot be considered a typical minority quota. Moreover, the constitution does not explicitly say that the representative of the German-speaking region *must* be an (ethnic) German speaker, as is the case with the quota for French speakers in Berne.

(3) Informal Practices. In two cantonal executives the inclusion of the minorities has been ensured through informal practices of accommodation. In the canton of Fribourg the main parties traditionally present linguistically mixed tickets of candidates for the elections to the government. But there are no reserved seats for the German-speaking minority. In Valais, too, one of the two seats for the German-speaking minority is a product of this kind of informal quota.

Informal practices can also be found in the elections to the two houses of the federal parliament. In the elections to the *lower* federal house informal practices of inclusion can be found in Berne and in Fribourg. In Berne the three main parties often place the candidates of the French-speaking minority at the top of the respective party lists. By virtue of the free list proportional representation (PR) system and the large number (26) of Berne's mandates in this house of the federal parliament, this solution does not permit the party elites to *guarantee* the election of the French-speaking candidates but it significantly improves their

TABLE 2
Electoral systems and reserved seats in the four multilingual cantons

	Berne	Fribourg	Grisons	Valais
Party system				
Number of parties	7–14	5–7	4	8–14
Linguistic fragmentation of the party system	Medium	Low	Very low	High
Cantonal government				
Number of seats	9 (before 1990) 7 (since 1990)	7	5	5
Electoral system	Majority/Plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/Plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/Plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/Plurality (2 rounds)
Electoral districts	1 multi-member	1 multi-member	1 multi-member	1 multi-member
Reserved seats	1 seat reserved for a French speaker from Jura bernois	None	None	1 seat for each region (i.e. 1 for German speakers)
Cantonal parliament				
Number of seats	200 (before 2006) 160 (since 2006)	130 (before 2006) 110 (since 2006)	120	130
Electoral system	PR (free list)	PR (free list)	Majority/Plurality (2 rounds)	PR (free list)
Electoral districts	27 multi-member (before 2006) 8 multi-member (since 2006)	8 multi-member	15 single-, 9 two-, 15 multi-member	14 multi-member
Reserved seats	None before 2006. 12 seats reserved for Jura bernois. Quotas for French speakers from Bienne-Seeland (since 2006)	None	None	None
Lower federal house				
Number of seats	29 (before 1995) 27 (1995–2003) 26 (since 2003)	6 (before 2003) 7 (since 2003)	5	7
Electoral system	PR (free list)	PR (free list)	PR (free list)	PR (free list)
Electoral districts	1 multi-member	1 multi-member	1 multi-member	1 multi-member
Reserved seats	None	None	None	None
Upper federal house				
Number of seats	2	2	2	2
Electoral system	Majority/plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/plurality (2 rounds)	Majority/plurality (2 rounds)
Electoral districts	1 two-member	1 two-member	1 two-member	1 two-member
Reserved seats	None	None	None	None

Table 2. Continued.

Sources: Garrone (1991); personal research.
Notes: The number of parties has been calculated on the basis of the number of parties *and* parliamentary groups [*Fraktionen*] represented in the cantonal legislatures. The linguistic fragmentation of the party system has been defined on the basis of the cantonal party structures. Although we cannot find explicit ethno-linguistic parties in any of the cantons, there are important intercantonal differences. In Valais each of the four four party-families is split into separate monolingual parties (this situation resembles the Belgian party system). In Fribourg the parties are not split along linguistic lines but the main German-speaking sections enjoy considerable organisational autonomy. In the Grisons there is hardly any empirical evidence of the linguistic fragmentation of the party system. Finally, in Berne's region of Jura bernois all parties are French-speaking but can be described as either 'anti-secessionist' or 'secessionist'. Most anti-secessionist parties are the local sections of larger cantonal (and predominantly German-speaking) parties. PR, proportional representation.

chances of getting elected.[15] In Fribourg, with only seven mandates in the lower house, it is easier for the parties to control the outcome of the election. The main parties propose linguistically mixed lists and can ensure a fair representation of the German-speaking minority.

Finally, in the elections to the federal *upper* house two cantons use informal practices of inclusion of linguistic minorities. The task is rather easy in Valais, since the parties belonging to the Christian Democratic party family represent approximately half the electorate and, thus, have always managed to occupy both Valais' mandates in this house of the parliament. The linguistic balance is usually decided before the election: one of the two Christian Democratic candidates is German-speaking, the other one is French-speaking. In Fribourg the linguistic balance is more difficult to achieve because since the 1970s the Christian Democrats have gradually lost their position of dominance and need to share power with the Social Democrats or the Liberals ('Radical Democrats'). Nevertheless, the parties take care of the linguistic balance in the course of the nomination of candidates and the empirical results show that in Fribourg, too, the German-speaking minority has had a fair share of seats in the upper federal house (see Table 4).

All these examples of informal practices belong to the type 'quotas as party decisions' that Williams (1998) and Mansbridge (1999) have identified. However, the examples show that such solutions can work only if (a) party elites of the majority group recognise the necessity to accommodate the minority linguistic group and coordinate their strategy before the elections, and (b) political elites of the majority group have the power to nominate candidates belonging to minority linguistic groups.[16]

TABLE 3
Patterns of group representation in the multilingual cantons

Rule/practice	Cantonal government	Cantonal parliament	Lower federal house	Upper federal house
Formal explicit	Berne	Berne	–	–
Formal indirect/implicit	Valais	Berne, Fribourg, Grisons, Valais	–	–
Informal	Valais, Fribourg	–	Berne, Fribourg Grisons, Valais	Fribourg, Valais
None	Grisons	–		Berne, Grisons

TABLE 4

Numerical representation of the linguistic groups in the four multilingual cantons

		Berne			Fribourg			Grisons			Valais	
		%	A-ratio		%	A-ratio		%	A-ratio		%	A-ratio
Cantonal government	G	84.8	0.94	F	71.4	1.09	G	55.7	0.80	F	60.0	0.92
	F	15.2	1.73	G	28.6	0.86	R	32.9	1.62	G	40.0	1.19
							I	11.4	1.30			
Cantonal parliament	G	90.6	1.00	F	72.3	1.10	G	56.6	0.81	F	66.6	1.02
	F	9.4	1.07	G	27.7	0.84	R	34.2	1.68	G	33.3	0.99
							I	9.2	1.05			
Lower federal house	G	90.5	1.00	F	67.0	1.02	G	42.5	0.61	F	66.1	1.01
	F	9.5	1.08	G	33.0	1.00	R	55.0	2.71	G	33.9	1.01
							I	2.5	0.28			
Upper federal house	G	100.0	1.10	F	50.0	0.76	G	50.0	0.72	F	50.0	0.77
	F	0.00	0.00	G	50.0	1.51	R	50.0	2.46	G	50.0	1.49
							I	0.00	0.00			

Sources: Table 1; www.parlament.ch; Swiss Federal Statistical Office. One part of the data on the linguistic composition of the governments of Berne, Fribourg, and Valais stem from Weibel (1996). All other data stem from an ad hoc database created by the author. I am indebted to Vincent Augustin, Men Bischoff and Daniele Papacella for their kind assistance in assessing the number of Romansh representatives in the institutions of the canton of Grisons.
Notes: G, German speakers; F, French speakers; I, Italian speakers; R, Romansh speakers. Cantonal executive elections considered: Berne (1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006), Fribourg (1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006), Grisons (1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006), Valais (1981, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005). Cantonal parliamentary elections considered: Berne (2006), Fribourg (2002), Grisons (2002, 2006), Valais (2005). Federal elections considered: from 1979 to 2007.

(4) No Rules or Practices of Inclusion. The Grisons is the only multilingual canton in which the linguistic composition of the government is not a salient political issue. For this reason there are no formal or informal rules of group representation. However, this does not mean that the linguistic minorities are not represented in the cantonal government and in the two houses of the federal parliament (see Table 4). Indeed, Romansh speakers have been overrepresented in all these institutions. Italian speakers from the Grisons, however, have been adequately represented only in the cantonal government, not so in the federal parliament.

In the elections to the lower federal house no rules or practices of inclusion can be found in Valais, albeit for very different reasons. Contrary to the Grisons – where the linguistic fragmentation of the party system is very low (Table 2) and, generally speaking, language is hardly a factor of division –, in Valais the linguistic fragmentation of the parties is high. All parties are divided along linguistic lines and present their candidates on separate lists. Therefore, they do not need to look for solutions like 'quotas as party decisions' as is the case for the parties in Berne and Fribourg where the linguistic fragmentation is medium or low.[17]

No practices or rules of inclusion exist in Berne in the elections to the upper federal house. Again, the reasons are very different from those in the Grisons. In Berne the absence of rules or practices of inclusion is closely related to demography. French speakers are considered too small a minority (9%) to receive one of Berne's two seats (50%) in the upper

house of the federal parliament. In the late 1980s there were proposals to establish a formal quota that would guarantee one seat to French speakers but these were rejected.[18]

Impact: Numerical Representation of the Groups in the Institutions

The answer to the second research question has required a detailed analysis of the linguistic composition in all four institutional bodies of every multilingual canton.[19] The results are displayed in Table 4. In order to facilitate the interpretation of the results I have calculated the average ratio (A-ratio = seats in per cent / population share in per cent) for each canton and for each institutional level. A group can be either adequately, under- or overrepresented in a given body with regard to its share of the population. I propose to speak of *underrepresentation* when the A-ratio is below 0.8 and of *overrepresentation* when it is above 1.2. As a consequence, I speak of *adequate representation* when the A-ratio is between 0.8 and 1.2.[20]

Table 4 shows that we cannot establish a clear link between formal explicit, formal indirect/implicit, informal and no rules and the effective representation of the groups in the different institutional bodies of the four cantons. This is particularly visible if we combine the results displayed in Tables 3 and 4 (Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows that an adequate representation of the minority groups has been achieved in those cantons where no rules or practices of inclusion exist (the Valais' mandates in the lower house), as well as where informal practices (Berne's and Fribourg's mandates in the lower house; Fribourg's government) or formal indirect/implicit rules have been applied (the cantonal parliaments in Fribourg, Grisons, and Valais; the Valais' government).
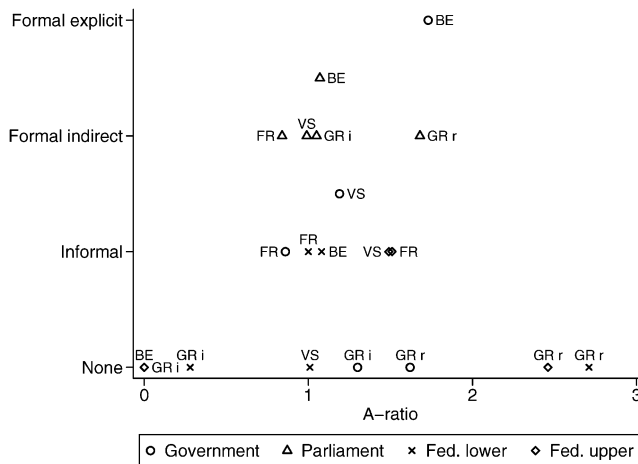
FIGURE 1
Patterns of group representation and the effective numerical presence of the linguistic minorities in the multilingual cantons.
Source: Tables 4 and Table 5.
Note: BE (Berne, French-speaking minority), FR (Fribourg, German-speaking minority), GRi (Grisons, Italian-speaking minority), GRr (Grisons, Romansh-speaking minority), VS (Valais, German-speaking minority).

But we can see that, generally speaking, all groups have been adequately represented in the four cantons, at one or another institutional level. There are only a few cases of underrepresentation of linguistic minorities (French speakers among Berne's representatives in the upper federal house, Italian speakers among Grisons' representatives in both federal houses).

There are also a few cases of overrepresentation. Romansh speakers are overrepresented in *all* institutions of the Grisons. French speakers are overrepresented in Berne's government. German speakers from Fribourg and Valais are also clearly overrepresented in the upper house of the federal parliament. In some cases overrepresentation of one group does not necessarily entail underrepresentation of other groups. In Berne the French-speaking minority is overrepresented in the government and yet German speakers have an adequate presence in that institution. And in Valais the German-speaking minority is slightly overrepresented in the government, but not at the cost of the French-speaking majority.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to look at a little explored aspect of consociational theory, that is, the distinction between formal and informal rules for group representation in culturally heterogeneous societies. The main thesis of the article has been that instead of formal and explicit group quotas we should consider the advantages of informal practices of inclusion. But this can hardly satisfy constitutional designers who claim that in severely divided societies mutual trust and spirit of accommodation are lacking and, therefore, more formal rules for group representation are needed in order to achieve peace and democratic stability. For this reason the article suggests to look at formal but indirect and/or implicit rules that may ensure group representation without the disadvantages of rigid quotas.

The empirical analysis of the four Swiss multilingual cantons has shown that the cantons use various solutions. Adequate group representation has been achieved through *formal* quotas as well as *informal* practices, through *formal explicit* as well as *formal indirect/implicit* rules. In some cases adequate group representation was reached even in the absence of rules or practices of inclusion.

In this paper it has been shown that the use of formal indirect and/or implicit rules such as electoral districting can be a good instrument for achieving proportional representation of groups in the institutions. The important precondition is that groups are geographically concentrated and that it is possible to design electoral districts that follow geographical patterns.

position on formal and informal patterns of group representation and for the permission to publish some of his remarks here. Any errors are mine.

NOTES

1. Lijphart considers the concepts of consociationalism and power sharing as synonyms (Lijphart 2004, 97). Not everyone agrees with this equation. According to Bogaards (2000) only the consociational model presupposes the existence of a truly heterogeneous ('plural') society, whereas power sharing applies to more homogenous countries.

2. The term 'quota' is usually employed in the discussions on political (under)representation of women (see Dahlerup 2007). But it can also be used to describe the share of power of cultural or 'ethnic' groups in a culturally heterogeneous society (see Jarstad 2001).

3. 'No defensible claim for group representation can rest on assertions of the essential identity of women or minorities; such assertions do violence to the empirical facts of diversity as well as to the agency of individuals to define the meaning of their social and biological traits' (Williams 1998, 6).

4. '[I]t would be absurd to claim that [...] an African American representative is automatically representative of all African Americans' (Williams 1998, 6).

5. I do not advance copyright on this phrasing. For instance, Rothchild and Roeder (2005, 12) or Jarstad (2008) also speak of 'dilemma(s) of power sharing', albeit with a different meaning.

6. Since 1999 an article of the Swiss constitution recommends to the parliament to 'take into consideration' the linguistic and regional balance in the election of the government members but does not oblige the parliament to do so.

7. The position of formal versus informal rules in Lijphart's consociational theory is all but clear. In some texts the author expresses preference for informal rules and 'self-representation' instead of 'pre-determination' (i.e., formal quotas) (Lijphart 1986, 1995 [1991]). Elsewhere he seems to prefer rigid constitutional quotas like those existing in Belgium (Lijphart 2004). On this apparent confusion he states: 'I do not express a preference for pre-determination at all. In fact, overall I still prefer self-determination. What I do say is that there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. [...] I state a condition [for preferring pre-determination] very clearly: namely that (as in Belgium) there is no fundamental disagreement on what the constituent segments of the society are' (Lijphart; personal communication by e-mail, 18 June 2007).

8. The proportional representation of the linguistic groups in the Swiss parliament is, nonetheless, ensured through territoriality, that is, via electoral districts. Since all groups are territorially concentrated this can be considered a *formal* rule that *indirectly* and *implicitly* guarantees linguistic representation (Stojanovic 2006b; for other democracies where proportionality is achieved through territoriality see Lijphart 1986).

9. This was the case, for example, of Republika Srpska, one of the two Bosnian entities. Between 1992 and 2002 it had no formal rules for group representation but Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Bosnian Croats were de facto discriminated against in the institutions by the overwhelming Bosnian Serb majority (Bieber 2005, 98; Stojanovic 2006a).

10. Here I refer only to autochthonous linguistic groups, that is, I do not take into consideration the languages of the immigrant population (20.7% of the Swiss population

in 2005). There are a number of normative and analytical reasons that justify this choice (see, e.g., Kymlicka 1995).

11. An exception is a research note by Keech (1972).

12. A full analysis of the impact of these solutions would need to include other important features that usually accompany the very concept of representation, such as accountability, policy outcome (for example, concrete policies in favour of minorities), public acceptance of the system (especially among the minorities), etc. (I thank an anonymous reviewer for this remark.) In fact, Horowitz (2003, 199) rightly cautions that 'proportionate minority office-holding does not guarantee that minority interests will receive attention in the legislative process'. In this article, however, I focus exclusively on the numerical representation of groups in the institutions of the four multilingual cantons. The task is, by itself, not an easy one since there are no official data or secondary sources that provide these numbers.

13. Berne, indeed, is the only canton where linguistic diversity caused tensions and even some small-scale violence in the 1960s and 1970s (Keech 1972). These tensions eventually led to the secession of the French-speaking region of northern Jura in 1979 from the canton of Berne. However, the majority of the French speakers from southern Jura (*Jura bernois*) decided to remain a part of the canton of Berne, together with a French-speaking minority in the bilingual town of Bienne/Biel.

14. In the early 2000s Berne's political authorities undertook a reform of the cantonal parliament. Its main goal was to improve the efficiency of the parliament by reducing the number of legislators from 200 to 160 as well as the number of electoral districts from 27 to 8 (see Table 2). It was soon realised, however, that without corrections the reform would have reduced the numerical representation of French speakers in parliament. In fact, the members of parliament from Jura bernois would have been reduced from 12 to 8 or 9. Further, French speakers from the then bilingual electoral district of Bienne (with a population share of approximately one third) feared to lose 'their' representatives if they were to merge into a larger district of Bienne-Seeland, where their population share would have been of only 5%. In order to avoid the negative impact of the reform on the representation of French speakers, the parliament decided (i) to keep unchanged the number of representatives from Jura bernois, and (ii) to ensure an adequate representation of French speakers from Bienne through reserved seats. A qualitative analysis of the debates in the cantonal parliament shows that this decision was at least partly influenced by the fact that the reform had to pass through an obligatory referendum. The pro-reform German speakers apparently feared a negative result of the popular vote if the anti-reform German speakers were joined by French speakers. For that reason they had an interest in avoiding a clash with the French-speaking minority (Stojanovic 2006c, 197–8). (The positive role of direct democracy on consociational accommodation is, indeed, a well-known thesis in the Swiss political science. See, e.g., Vatter 1997; Sciarini and Hug 1999, 138–40). The referendum was held in 2002 and it was approved by 84% of the voters at the level of the canton. The share of 'yes' votes was not significantly lower in the region of Jura bernois (81%) or in the town of Bienne (79%). The reform was applied for the first time in the 2006 cantonal elections. It shall be stressed that this example further illustrates the crucial role of electoral districts as a formal rule that indirectly and/or implicitly ensures representation of linguistic minorities, provided their geographical concentration.

15. In the 2003 elections Berne's three largest parties adopted this solution. Yet only one – the Swiss People's party – succeeded in electing one French-speaking representative to the lower house of the federal parliament.

16. For the importance of party elites in divided societies see the volume edited by Luther and Deschouwer (1999). For their role in Switzerland see Sciarini and Hug (1999) in the same volume. The authors, however, did not explore the behaviour of the Swiss elites with regard to the accommodation of the linguistic minorities in the multilingual cantons.

17. According to the theory (Mansbridge 1999, 653) PR should be classified in the category of formal indirect/implicit rules. The problem is that in Valais there are indications that the German-speaking minority does not consider PR as a solution that ensures their fair representation (Stojanovic 2006c, 195–7). For this reason I propose to classify the elections to the lower federal house in Valais in the category of 'no rules or practices of inclusion.'

18. However, an informal practice of inclusion existed before 1979, that is, before the secession of northern Jura from Berne, when the proportion of French speakers in Berne was higher (around 15%). In fact, between 1948 and 1979 French speakers from Berne always had one representative in the upper federal house.

19. Official statistics about the linguistic composition of the cantonal and federal institutions do not exist. Only a small quantity of the data could be collated through secondary sources. Most of the material stems from personal research.

20. It does not make sense to speak of over- or under-representation when the A-Ratio is above or under 1.0, which would indicate a perfect proportionality. In fact, eleven out of sixteen institutions examined have a very small n (i.e., only two, five or seven members). Thus, a perfect proportionality is impossible to achieve. I have only partially resolved this problem by increasing the number of cases for all small n institutions (i.e., by looking at more than one election; see Notes in Table 4).

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