THE LIMITS OF CONSOCIATIONALISM (AS A METHOD OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT): BELGIUM AND CANADA AS CRUCIAL TESTS

By

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Abstract

The thesis offers a critique on consociationalism as a method of ethnic integration. It tests two crucial-cases, Belgium and Canada, which are widely considered as successful consociational cases in the literature. This thesis attempt to demonstrate that internal factors of consociational systems can often become causes of further ethnic fragmentation instead of limiting them. Further, it argues that once consociational institutions are in place, separatist tendencies of ethnic groups are likely to pursue their road. It concludes that states should not put such institutions in place to begin with, because there is little or even nothing to do later to fix the problems they created.

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Introduction

The consociational theory has been in the last decades seen as a successful method to accommodate ethnic groups in ethnically divided societies. Though it has suffered major failures in Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa, several scholars persist to consider consociational arrangements as valid methods to stabilize fragmented societies in the presence of conditions conductive to their success. Therefore, the case-studies around consociational practices concentrated on successful stories to argue in its favor, and on unsuccessful systems to demonstrate its shortcomings.

Hence, I decided in this thesis to test two supposedly successful cases of consociationalism, Belgium and Canada, who both have introduced consociational practices in their political system. Moreover, the fact that they are perceived as ideal-cases is relatively « undisputed »[1] in the literature, since has been recognized that both countries share « consociational histories »[2].

However, despite the progressive elaboration of such systems, Belgium and Canada are still undergoing ethnic fragmentation processes, which are supposed to be limited by consociationalist institutions. Ethnic cleavages with a territorial basis are the strongest and most problematic division lines, which threaten the stability of both countries. For instance, Quebec and Flanders are both hosting strong nationalist and separatist movements. In 1995, Quebec has been very close to make secession after a referendum[3]. Even though Quebec separatist tendencies have remained "peaceful, (…) highly democratic" and the "Canadian

[1] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) as a Method of Ethnic Conflict Regulation », Working paper to be presented at the Conference on 'From Power-Sharing to Democracy : Post-Conflict Institutions in Ethnically Divided Societies' (London, Ontario, November 9-10, 2002), p. 13.
[2] Brendan, O'Leary, « An iron law of nationalism and federation ? A (neo-Diceyian) theory of the necessity of a federal *Staatsvolk*, and of consociational rescue », in *Nations and Nationalism*, (2001 : 7/3), p. 291.
[3] Richard, Simeon, « Canada. Federalism, Language, and Regional Conflict », in Nancy, Bermeo and Ugo M., Amoretti, (eds.) *Federalism and Territorial Cleavages*, (Baltimore, MD, John Hopkins Press, 2004), p. 93.

unity debate conducted with a remarkable civility"[4], such fragmentation process remains and leaves several question marks in terms of the ability of consociationalism to provide a genuine conflict management. In Belgium, the Flemish movement has evolved to such an extent that certain moderate politicians are publicly evoking their wishes for a Belgian *con*federation, showing that separatist themes remain strongly present among Flemish decision-makers.

If linguistic cleavages have remained until today predominant –and problematic- in both cases, we need to search for the reasons thereof. Knowing that Belgium and Canada possess most of the consociational conditions that have been emphazised as 'conductive to success' in the literature on the field, they largely fit their qualification as ideal consociational types. Therefore, I argue that the most important cause of such ongoing fragmentation is to find in these consociational practices and institutions, internal features of consociationalism.

In order to support my argument, I will test both cases –Belgium and Canada-, and see whether their consociational practices and institutions could be the causes of their ethnic fragmentation. I use the comparative method of agreement to see whether these similar factors (consociational institutions, my independent variable) were responsible for similar movement toward separatism (my dependent variable).

My findings are that three of the main consociational characteristics (among group autonomy, grand coalition, proportionality and minority veto) are leading to further ethnic fragmentation in both cases. More importantly, it appears that once consociational institutions are in place, one can not later fix the problems they created.

In the first chapter, I make a review on the relevant literature on consociationalism and ethnofederalism, outlining the debate that opposes the Lijphart school to opponents of consociationalism. In the second chapter, I detail my argument. In the third chapter, I develop my research design, which is composed of on the one hand the justification of my case

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

selection, and on the other of my methodology. In the fourth and last chapter, I test the two crucial-cases Belgium and Canada with my argument, using the method of agreement.

Chapter 1. Literature Review – Theoretical Framework

1.1. Consociationalism

Arend Lijphart has defined consociational democracy as a « government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy »[5]. By « fragmented political culture », Lijphart refers to societies that are divided by sharp cleavages between their subcultures, divisions that present « immobilizing and unstabilizing effects »[6]. Indeed, due to their greater ethnic divisiveness, these « deeply divided societies » [7] are prone to « produc[ing] unstable politics and volatile types of governance »[8], where leaders may behave as competitors with other leaders of subcultures, give priority to their own grievances, and also make use of ethnic outbidding, which ethnically polarizes societies. The terms « divided societies » refer to distinct linguistic, nationalistic, religious, and/or cultural communities. Consociationalism is thus an attempt to explain the stability existing in fragmented polities that have territorially distinct subcultures.

Originally, the consociational model has been imagined as an alternative to majoritarian models, which fail to incorporate minorities into government. It is implemented in polities which usually possess all the ingredients which, without consociationalism, would result in instability: ideologically antagonistic subcultures, lacking social or political consensus as well as cross-cutting cleavages[9], and which compete « for important social, economic and/or political resources »[10]. In order to avoid clashes and limit tensions, consociational systems are developed, consisting of mechanisms of compromise and

[5] Arend, Lijphart, « Consociational Democracy », in *World Politics*, (Jan. 1969 : 21/2), p. 216.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 212.
[7] Eric, Nordlinger, *Conflict Regulation in Deeply Divided Societies*, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Occasional Papers n°29 (Cambridge, 1972).
[8] Hans, Keman, « Political Stability in Divided Societies : A Rational-Institutional Explanation », in *Australian Journal of Political Science*, (1999 : 34/2), p. 249.
[9] Gordon E., Cannon, « Consociationalism vs. Control : Canada as a Casestudy », in *The Western Political Quarterly*, (Mar. 1982 : 35/1), p. 50.
[10] Ian, Lustick, « Stability in Deeply Divided Societies : Consociationalism versus Control », in *World Politics*, (Apr. 1979 : 31/3), p. 325.

accommodation promoted and implemented by the elites of the major segments[11]. Thus, the key element of consociational models is the cooperation between elites, who are committed « to the perpetuation of the political arena within which they operate »[12]. By making all significant leaders stakeholders, the idea is to bind them to constitutional agreements[13].

1.2. The consociational debate

Consociationalism has been the subject of an intense debate between authors close to the « Lijphart school » and its opponents. More precisely, the debate focuses on the effectiveness of ethnofederalism to solve or prevent ethnic conflicts, as well as promote ethnic integration. Proponents of consociationalism[14] argue that the only way to stabilize deeply divide societies is by instituting a political arrangement in which competing groups within a state will share power at the elite level, trying to achieve « the widest consensus among all factions »[15]. Further, they argue that the legitimacy of a state with a deeply divided society can only be realized through the inclusion of all its segments[16]. This vision is accompanied by a rejection of integrationist and/or assimilation objectives of national federalists, who believe in a unique national loyalty[17]. Indeed, proponents of consociationalism believe in the possibility of dual or multiple overlapping national loyalties.

[11] Joseph G., Jabbra, and Nancy W., Jabbra, « Consociational Democracy in Lebanon : A Flawed System of Governance », (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2001), p. 71.
[12] Ian, Lustick, « Stability in Deeply Divided Societies (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 334.
[13] Pippa, Norris, « Stable democracy and good governance in divided societies : Do power-sharing institutions work ? », Faculty Research Working Papers Series (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, February 2005), p. 4.
[14] Contemporary academics who support ethnofederalism/consociationalism are numerous : a.o., Michael, Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000) ; Juan J., Linz, *Democracy, Multinationalism and Federalism*, (Working Paper, 1997 : 103), p. 29-30 ; Michael, Keating, *Nations against the State : the new politics of nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*, (London, MacMillan Press, 1996) ; Will, Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001) ; Ronald L., Watts, « Federalism, Federal Political Systems and Federations », in *Annual Review of Political Science*, (1998 : 1), pp. 117-37.
[15] Pippa, Norris, « Stable democracy and good governance (...), *op. cit.*, p. 2.
[16] Samuel, Issacharoff, « Constitutionalizing Democracy in Fractured Societies », in *Journal of International Affairs*, (Fall 2004 : 58/1), p. 88.
[17] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) as a Method of Ethnic Conflict Regulation »,

Lijphart's consociationalism relies on four crucial elements: government by a « grand coalition » of all significant segments, meaning of the most important ethnic groups ; attribution of group autonomy to the subcultures, in order to let them deal with issues that concern them solely ; proportionality for allocating political representation (and thus fair distribution of public funds and civil service positions) ; minority veto to protect the vital interests of the minorities[18]. Such veto is needed to avoid outvoting or overruling by the majority, and usually consists in a special voting quorum, which has to be reached in certain issues where vital interests of the minority are at stake[19].

The advantages of such systems seem numerous. Consociationalism encourages potentially secessionist groups to feel more confident, due to a higher and guaranteed participation at all levels of decision-making; also, their vital interests are protected by veto mechanisms as well as group autonomy. The aim is to avoid or at least minimize the negative effects of majority rule and thus alleviate the fears of the minorities. These features would on the one hand limit any « impetus for exit », and on the other hand, promote « voice and reasons for loyalty »[20] to the state. The argument that conflict is best contained through top-down ethnic engineering relies on the assumption that « habits, sentiments and loyalties of the followers are difficult to alter in the short run »[21], and thus that the action of the elites is necessary to accommodate the plurality of subidentities.

An argument against the consociational model is that it suffers an « inadequate specification of consequences »[22], which can be (un)desired or (un)intended, depending on the

Working paper to be presented at the Conference on 'From Power-Sharing to Democracy : Post-Conflict Institutions in Ethnically Divided Societies' (London, Ontario, November 9-10, 2002), p. 7.

[18] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », in Joseph Montville (ed.), *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, (Lenxington, MA, Lenxington Books, 1990), pp. 494-495.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 495.

[20] Ian, Lustick, Dan, Miodownik and Roy J. Eidelson, « Secessionism in Multicultural States : Does Sharing Power Prevent or Encourage It ? », in *American Political Science Review*, (May 2004 : 98/2), p. 210.

[21] Donald L., Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2000), p. 569.

[22] Donald, Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

environmental conditions in which the system has to evolve. In other words, this model cannot be applied to many cases, precisely because of unintended consequences that can result from conditions particular to each case. These « environmental conditions »[23] refer to external as well as internal factors.

External factors

Consociationalist theorists have often been criticized for ignoring or minimizing the effect of the regional environment on ethnofederations that can support separatist tendencies of ethnic groups. With the implementation of a consociational system, ethnic groups obtain institutions as well as group autonomy to a certain extent. Svante Cornell has argued that the more autonomy a minority obtains, the more likely external support is to be forthcoming, since funds and other types of support can easier be channeled to the institutions of that minority[24].

Although Lijphart considers that external threats are factors that promote internal unity[25], consociational systems have been seen, on the contrary, as « particularly vulnerable to outside interference »[26], the latter altering the balances of power within the state. For example, Cyprus and Lebanon consociations have been made fragile due to the involvement of Turkey for the first and of Syria and Israel for the second[27]. In addition to these factors, there exist in many cases internal features that severely influence the dynamics of ethnic groups within divided societies.

[23] *Idem.*
[24] Svante E., Cornell, « Autonomy as a Source of Conflict (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 256.
[25] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 498.
[26] Stefan, Wolff, *Disputed Territories : The Transnational Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict Settlement*, (New York and Oxford, Berghahn, 2003), p. 31.
[27] For an overview of the external factors that have threatened Lebanon's stability, please refer to : Joseph G., Jabbra, and Nancy W., Jabbra, « Consociational Democracy in Lebanon : A Flawed System of Governance », *op. cit.* (2001), pp. 80-83.

Internal factors

The internal factors that limit the effectiveness of consociationalism are multiple. For one thing, the devolution of power to regionally concentrated groups offer them the bureaucratic and political resources (among others: « statelike institutions[28] ») for mass mobilization around separatist claims, and hence creates an « incubator [for] new nations »[29]. Skeptics also argue that power-sharing arrangements in ethnically divided societies « encourage ethnic identification and accentuate inter-group differences »[30], especially once federal borders are congruent with ethnic lines, because leaders then feel encouraged to « play the ethnic card »[31] when they seek for popularity. Svante Cornell resumed these claims by stating that « institutionalizing and promoting the separate identity of the titular group increases that group's cohesion and *willingness* to act, and establishing political institutions increases the *capacity* of that group to act »[32]. Moreover, opponents to ethnofederal systems have argued that with consociationalism, subgroups will tend to extract « the highest possible price for any concessions »[33] and will constantly press for further autonomy.

Opponents of ethnofederalism also argue that such system lacks incentives for elites to cooperate, and this holds even more for leaders of the majority group towards leaders of (the) minority group(s). Some have even observed that consociational models, if they succeed in promoting inter-elite cooperation, diminish popular interaction between the segments, and

[28] Svante E., Cornell, « Autonomy as a Source of Conflict : Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective », in *World Politics*, (2002 : 54/2), p. 254.
[29] Ronald G., Suny, « The Revenge of the Past : Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union », (Standford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 87.
[30] Joseph, Siegle and Patrick, O'Mahony, *Assessing the merits of decentralization as a conflict mitigation strategy »*, paper prepared for USAID's Office of Democracy and Governance (2006), p. 7.
[31] Henry E., Hale, and Rein, Taagepera, "Russia: Consolidation or Collapse?", in *Europe-Asia Studies*, (2002: 54/7), p. 1105.
[32] Svante E., Cornell, « Autonomy as a Source of Conflict (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 252.
[33] Richard, Bellamy, « Dealing with Difference : Four Models of Pluralist Politics », in Michael, O'Neill and Dennis, Austin (eds.), *Democracy and Cultural Diversity*, (Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 209.

hence reduce inter-segmental solidarity, providing opportunities for increased separatist tendencies[34].

More precisely, certain authors have argued that ethnofederalism is likely to create tensions in ethnically divided societies in the presence of a « core ethnic region »[35], that is, a region that contains an absolute majority of the population or that « makes up at least 20 percent more of the whole country's population than does the second largest region »[36]. This core ethnic region, coupled with the advantages offered by an ethnodeferal system, possesses sufficient people and resources to organize a potential rival claim to sovereignty[37]. Also, it can exacerbate fears among smaller groups that the central government will be more responsive to core region demands than to theirs[38]. This can happen even and perhaps especially when the central government tries to « avert defection of this most critical [core] group »[39]. From a different angle, one could argue that consociational accommodation reinforces and fuels interethnic competition for state resources (taken broadly: economical, but also political and social) and increases the rivalry between the core ethnic group and the central government. Another claim against consociationalism concerns the inability of states with consociational systems to accommodate minorities, which are smaller in number or dispersed, and thus which cannot control provinces or federal units[40]. Hence, these minorities, which are difficult to accommodate, represent a threat in terms of stability of the concerned region where they live.

Others have also argued against consociationalism, as Rabushka and Shepsle have, because of the high costs of the elaboration of such a system, as well as due to the democratic

[34] Richard, Bellamy, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
[35] Henry E., Hale, « Divided We Stand : Institutional Sources of Ethnofederal State Survival and Collapse », in *World Politics*, (2004 : 56/2), p. 169.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 175.
[39] *Idem.*
[40] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 8.

deficit inherent to a top-bottom approach[41]. Concerning the first objection, consociational systems require important investments since the whole model needs a plurality of institutions to be effective. With the implementation of proportionality, it would mean that larger ethnic groups contribute more to these investments, and such asymmetry could result in instability in inter-ethnic cooperation. Regarding the second objection, the two authors criticize this emphasis on inter-elite cooperation, arguing that elites dealing in secrecy represent a threat to a genuine democracy. These elites would have to make choices destined to satisfy all groups (meaning, to reach a consensus among all ethnic groups), but these choices could not necessarily satisfy the demands of their own groups.

Finally, it has been pointed out that consociationalism, in order to be effective, requires a certain unity and cohesion within the existing subgroups, including a clear leadership and organization[42]. Usually, groups with religious or ideological bases possess developed hierarchies, with a distinct leadership. Ethnicities based only on language, for example, do not always possess such cohesion. Linguistic subgroups may therefore be less easily accommodated through consociationalism, because their elites are not always united[43]. Also, this lack of concrete and unique leadership represents a challenge to consociational characteristics of representation and group autonomy. Indeed, as Donald Horowitz has demonstrated, groups are rarely represented by a single set of leaders, and the divisions within groups often serve as a brake on inter-group cooperation, mainly because ethnic subunits are in constant competition with each other[44]. Further, Horowitz points out that even the concept of grand coalition can be a divisive factor, because it generates, once again, competition among the different leaders of each ethnic group. However, when one takes into consideration

[41] Alvin, Rabushka, and Kenneth A., Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability* (Columbus, OH, Merill, 1972). For a critique of the two latter, see Hans, van Amersfoort, « Institutional Plurality : Problem or Solution », in Sukumar, Periwal (ed.), *Notions of Nationalism,* (Budapest, Central European University Press, 1995), p. 177.
[42] Arend, Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977), p. 25.
[43] Donald, Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 574.
[44] Donald, Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 574.

the concept of « core ethnic region », it has been argued that « institutional *disunity* of dominant groups promotes the *unity* of the ethnofederations they dominate »[45]. But since one of the core objectives of consociationalism is to provide ethnic groups a certain degree of autonomy, one could reasonably argue that the dominant group is likely to be institutionally united, and consequently, is likely to promote the disunity of the ethnofederation that such group dominates.

In sum, internal factors undermining the theory of consociationalism -as a theory promoting ethnic integration- are multiple, and demonstrate the extreme difficulty to accommodate ethnic groups in deeply divided societies, and to ensure stability.

1.3. Contribution to the debate

My objective in this paper is to contribute to the debate outlined above by demonstrating the idea that even in supposedly most successful cases of consociationalism, we can observe an ongoing process of « cultural fragmentation »[46]. This analysis is important because the scholarship on consociationalism suffers greatly from selection bias. Thus, proponents of such models have based their analyses on successful cases to justify the advantages of ethnofederalism (mostly Western cases), while its detractors have used unsuccessful examples to highlight its shortcomings (mostly cases from Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa)[47]. Consequently, rare are the authors who have tried to approach successful or ideal-cases of consociational systems with less optimistic assumptions, meaning considering that such cases could also be leading to fragmentation, even with ideal settings.

[45] Henry E., Hale, « Divided We Stand (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 192.
[46] Arend, Lijphart, « Consociational Democracy », *op. cit.*, p. 220.
[47] Dawn, Brancati, « Decentralization : Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism ? », in *International Organization*, (Summer 2006 : 60), p. 653.

To construct a « crucial-test » for the effectiveness of consociationalism, I therefore examine the effects of this model on ethnic relations in cases that most closely fit conditions identified by Lijphart as conductive to success. These cases include Belgium and Canada, because they seem the most suitable for my analyze. Indeed, both cases have been often declared as successful cases of ethnofederalism, possessing the « conditions (...) conductive to the success of multi-national federations »[48]. Arend Lijphart has identified several of these conditions, but there are other conditions -enjoyed by Belgium and Canada- that reinforce the ideal situation of the two countries in terms of consociationalism.

[48] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 16. See also Pippa, Norris, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Chapter 2. Argument

The core objective of a consociational system is to provide tools which are meant to circumvent separatist tendencies by accommodating ethnic groups in ethnically divided societies. Grand coalition, group autonomy, proportionality and minority veto are designed to facilitate inter-ethnic cooperation and hence limit cultural fragmentation. If Belgium and Canada closely fit the consociational ideal-type, they however show continuous fragmentation in their consociational results, what makes me think that there must be severe shortcomings in the consociational model itself.

In this thesis, my objective is to demonstrate that there are internal features of the consociational system that paradoxically produce fragmentation and promote separatism. On a similar way, I argue that once consociational institutions are in place, separatist tendencies are likely to pursue their road, whether later minority autonomy is increased to appease subgroups or minority autonomy is reversed. In other words, once consociationalism is implemented, it becomes practically impossible to reverse the fragmentation tendency. The policy lesson thereof, is that states should not put such institutions in place to begin with, because there is nothing these states can do later to fix the problems these institutions created.

To test this argument, I compare two ideal-types of consociational models, Belgium and Canada. I want to figure out what is about such systems that prevent « societal conflict[s from turning] into a viable political consensus »[49]. If fragmentation can be seen to be linked to consociationalism in these ideal-cases, one has then all the more reason to doubt efficacy of consociationalism in less ideal-cases.

[49] Hans, Keman, « Political Stability in Divided Societies (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 265.

Chapter 3. Research Design

3.1. Case Selection

Lijphart identified nine –helpful[50]- factors conductive to a well-functioning consociational state[51]. First, a state with power-sharing agreements is more likely to be stable if there are no large socio-economic differences among ethnic groups. Second, the absence of a majority ethnic group is a favorable factor for stability. Third, ethnic groups with a similar size and with a fair balance of power among them are more likely to conduct to a successful consociational system. Other elements favorable to success are : fourth, a relatively small population, to avoid complex decision-making processes ; fifth, the existence of external dangers that promote internal unity ; sixth, the existence of overarching loyalties prevailing on particularistic ethnic loyalties ; seventh, the geographical concentration of ethnic groups, because it facilitates the implementation of group autonomy attributes ; eighth, that the number of groups stays small, facilitating negotiations ; finally, the ninth element contributing to a viable consociational system is the existence of prior traditions of accommodation and compromise[52].

If Belgium and Canada do not fit all these nine criteria's, both states still match several of them. For instance, both enjoy a relatively small population (roughly 10 million inhabitants for Belgium and 32.5 million inhabitants for Canada), geographically concentrated ethnic groups, which are relatively small in number. The balance of power between ethnic groups is relatively fair. For example there are special provisions given to the Francophone minority in Belgium at the governmental level that are called 'the parity of the Council of Ministers', that oblige the Prime Minister to constitute a government with seven Francophones and seven

[50] Lijphart insists on the fact that these factors are not decisive nor sufficient for the success of power-sharing approaches, but rather helpful, meaning that these factors do not guarantee success by no means. Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 498.
[51] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 497.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 498.

Flemish-speaking ministers. In Canada, this fairness in the balance of power is illustrated by the « informal understanding that federal cabinets should contain both Anglophone and Francophone ministers »[53].

Beyond the conditions described by Lijphart, several observations about further elements deserve attention. Belgium and Canada have implemented systems accommodating the plurality of identities, with constitutional settings guaranteeing the attributes of each ethnic group, as well as the sharing of competencies between the central authorities and the federal units. The two states enjoy advantageous economical systems capable of providing a reasonable standard of living for their citizens. Moreover, both political systems are based on the rule of law, and both countries have been able to ensure the promotion of basic individual rights, the development of a stable and sustainable democratic –and authentic[54]- multi-national federations.

Also, none of these countries has been forced to accept the implementation of an ethnofederal system. Canada experienced a « coming together federation » and Belgium a « holding together federation »[55], on the contrary of many multi-national federations which have been imposed –by their dominant group or by an empire- federal structures (such as Nigeria, or the Soviet Union). Indeed, while Canada is a federation that emerged from the « come together » of distinct colonies, Belgium underwent a transformation from a unitary system to a federalization, designed to « hold together »[56] its different communities. Leaders of the different ethnic groups have consented to the establishment of ethnofederal structures, and this is very important since the key of consociationalism is the cooperation between the elites.

[53] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 496.
[54] By opposition to the so-called 'pseudo-federations', like the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia. See John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[55] *Idem.*
[56] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 13.

More importantly, central governments in Canada and Belgium have not only provided self-government attributes to their respective ethnic groups, but also have assured them a genuine consociational system. Such systems, we mentioned, guarantees a crosscutting executive power-sharing (grand coalition), the proportionality, ethnic autonomy in culture, and minority veto rights. These attributes in a federal system aim at combining self-rule *and* shared-rule for ethnic groups, and hence avoid the exclusion of minorities from the center, by guaranteeing a representation at the central level.

The Belgian Constitution formally contains power-sharing principles, as for example the delegation of cultural and linguistic matters to the French, Flemish and Germanophone Communities (group autonomy). Also, the Belgian electoral system is a proportional representation. Further, the Francophone minority obtained a specific veto-right at the Parliamentary level: three quarters of a linguistic group can ask for the reconsideration -by the executive- of a legislative proposal, if the latter seem to harm their interests[57]. Finally, the consociational characteristic of grand coalition is ensured by the parity at the level of the federal Council of Ministers.

Lijphart has described Canada as a « semi-consociational democracy »[58], arguing that it lacks the principle of joint rule by a coalition of political parties, because governments are elected by the British-styled (Westminster) electoral system, which produces single-party governments. Going further than Lijphart, the consociational theorist Robert Presthus even argued that the Canadian political system and the consociational model represent a perfect match[59], and thus that Canada is fully consociational. Such approach seem to be pertinent, because even certain of the four main consociational characteristics, which were seen by Lijphart as absent in the Canadian case, seem however to be present.

[57] Neal A., Carter, « Complexity as a Shock Absorber : the Belgian Social Cube », in *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law*, (2002: 8/3), p. 16.
[58] Arend, Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
[59] Robert, Presthus, *Elite Accomodation in Canadian Politics*, (Cambridge University Press, 1973), quoted by Gordon E., Cannon, « Consociationalism vs. Control (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 53.

Indeed, the 'grand coalition' feature has been assured by a coalition of « independent-minded individuals from an array of political [, cultural] and religious backgrounds, willing to put aside their differences to work on a common goal »[60]. The accommodation of ethnic interests takes place within the governing party itself[61]. It has been admitted that Canada's relative stability over the past hundred years is due to the existence of a « national unified elite that shares a consensus »[62] on common political values (rule of law, freedom of expression, existence of political grievances, etc.). The principle of joint rule is made implicit in Canadian politics, since political actors have informally agreed that federal cabinets should be composed of both Anglophone and Francophone ministers[63]. Such arrangements, made under the Westminster electoral model, are facilitated by the fact that the Francophone minority is territorially concentrated in Quebec. The « single member district plurality vote system » ends up, in sum, in a quasi-proportional election for the Francophone representation in the House of Commons[64].

Beyond the consociational characteristic of grand coalition, Canada also provides an important degree of self-government to its respective subgroups. Quebec, for instance, has a largely assured linguistic autonomy[65]. However, Canada does not have a formal minority veto, since the whole Canadian system is largely based on a majoritarian system. No special quorums have been established, but, as Lijphart argues, there exist an informal veto over decisions concerning vital interests of Francophone Canadians[66]. The fourth core element of the consociational theory, proportionality, has been progressively and informally admitted in the federal cabinets. The action of the « Royal Commission on Bilingualism and

[60] James, Kennedy, « A Switzerland of the north ? The *Nationalistes* and a bi-national Canada », in *Nations and Nationalism* (2004 : 10/4), p. 506.
[61] Martin, Hering, « Consociational Democracy in Canada », in Ahornblätter. Marburger Beitrage zur Kanada-Forschung, (Marburg, Schriften der Universitätsbibliothek Marburg, 1998 : 84), note 3.3.1. URL : http://archiv.ub.uni-marburg.de/sum/84/sum84-6.html.
[62] Gordon E., Cannon, « Consociationalism vs. Control (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 52.
[63] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 496.
[64] Martin, Hering, « Consociational Democracy in Canada », *op. cit.*, note 3.3.1.
[65] Arend, Lijphart, « The Power-Sharing Approach », *op. cit.*, p. 496.
[66] Arend, Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

Biculturalism concerning the civil service »[67] has strengthened this tendency in the three last decades of the twentieth century, once the Commission's recommendations became implemented.

In sum, Belgium and Canada fit, to a large extent, the consociational model. The first has been largely described as one of *the* examples of consociational democracy, while the second possesses many of the characteristics *and* the conditions leading to a genuine consociational model as identified by Arend Lijphart. Also, Canada had already experienced and possessed several consociational features since 1867, strengthening its consociational character. The scholar James Kennedy interestingly resumed this by affirming that "the practice of consociationalism [in Canada] preceded its codification as a political science model"[68]. However, my aim is to demonstrate that even with favorable conditions, consociational democracies fail to block further fragmentation, argument that I elaborate in the following section.

3.2. Methodology

The methodology that I am going to use in the following chapter is the comparative method, between Belgium and Canada. Both can be seen as « crucial case-studies »[69] for consociational theory, meaning « case[s] that *must closely fit* a theory if one is to have confidence in the theory's validity, or, conversely, *must not fit* equally well any rule contrary to that proposed »[70]. In other words, a crucial case study is the ideal-type, which is meant to perfectly apply to the theory, and thus which can serve as a test that the theory must pass if it is an effective method of conflict management.

[67] The « Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism » was a royal Canadian Commission, created in 1963 and destinated to inquire and establish reports on the state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada.
[68] James, Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 504.
[69] Harry, Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science", in F. Greenstein and N. Polsby (eds.), *Handbook of Political Science Vol. 7: Strategies of Inquiry* (Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley, 1975), p. 117
[70] *Ibid.*, p. 119.

To support my argument, I construct a « crucial-test » of consociationalism, meaning that I will test the consociational theory in two cases –Belgium and Canada- that practically meet all the conditions identified by Lijphart as ideal for consociationalism to work. If the theory of consociationalism fails even in the best possible cases, then we cannot expect it to perform any better in cases that are less than ideal.

In order to proceed, I will use the method of agreement. Under this method, « if two or more instances of a phenomenon under investigation have only one of several possible causal circumstances in common, then the circumstance in which all the instances agree is the cause of the phenomenon of interest »[71]. In other words, I want to see whether similar factors such as consociational institutions (my independent variables) were responsible for similar movement toward separatism (my dependent variable) in both cases, while many other factors are different. By applying such method to the two cases, I will be able to see to what extent the establishment of consociational institutions impact on separatist tendencies, a more generally, to test the validity of consociational theory. If I can demonstrate that Belgium and Canada show signs of separatism, although this issue is supposed to be circumvented by consociationalism, and since both cases are quasi-ideal consociational types, then I will be able to generalize to other cases.

More precisely, I will use the « process-tracing »[72] (qualitative) method to track causes of separatism in each case over time. My objective is to discover which are the domestic factors that can have a de-unifying impact on Belgian and Canadian politics. I therefore trace the processes of institutional changes in both countries over the most relevant period that starts around the 1960s. In Belgium, this period shows the beginning of the Belgian

[71] Charles, Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Srategies*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989), p. 65.
[72] For an overview about the process-tracing method, please refer to : Andrew, Bennett, and Alexander L., George, « Process Tracing in Case Study Research », paper presented at the MacArthur Foundation Workshop on Case Study Methods, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (BSCIA), (Harvard University, October 17-19, 1997).

federalization, separation of national political parties and an increasing of the third cleavage's importance (linguistic). In Canada, this decade is marked by an important shift in Canadian politics, when strong divisions between visions of the state appeared, increasing of Francophone grievances and election of the prime minister of Canada Pierre Trudeau who would go on to proceed to important linguistic reforms in the country.

Chapter 4. Cases

In this chapter, I test two crucial cases –Belgium and Canada- to see whether the implementation of consociationalism and consociational institutions in these countries are responsible for ethnic fragmentation. If it is the case, then I will be able to argue that such institutions should not be created in the first place.

In the two first sections (4.1. and 4.2.), I carefully contextualize and retrace the evolution of ethnic cleavages in both countries, so that the reader of my thesis may understand the situation of ethnic relations prior to the important 1960s political turns in both countries. This historical overview allows locating various possible factors that might cause separatism. Then, I introduce my main argument in a third section (4.3.), which consists in the comparison of the factors provoking separatism in Belgium and Canada. Using the method of agreement, I isolate the factors that I estimate as being the most responsible for further fragmentation: consociational institutions, which are common to both –Belgian and Canadian- political systems. In order to proceed, I use the process-tracing method to track the causes of separatism in each case. Correspondingly to my argument, I argue that these causes have their roots in institutional reforms.

4.1. Belgium and its "holding together"[73] system

4.1.1. Belgium in 1830: The choice for the unitary model and the three Belgian cleavages

The ethnic distribution of Belgium comprises 58 percent of Dutch-speakers, 41 percent of Francophones and a small percent of German-speakers[74]. The history of Belgium is

[73] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[74] Since questions about the language have been deleted from population censuses since 1947, a valid mapping of ethnic groups and regional concentration is hard to establish. Nowadays, the Belgian State treats all residents of Flanders as Dutch-speaking and all residents in Wallonia as Francophones. See : David M., Rayside, « The

usually analyzed through the evolution of three cleavages: clerical/anti-clerical, rich/workers and French-speaking/Flemish-speaking. However, the latter is the only one that divides people on a territorial basis, the religious and class ones being spread throughout the country, irrespectively of territoriality[75]. All three divisions have had an impact with a variable intensity on the country, since Belgium acquired its statehood in 1830. The religious concerns dominated the nineteenth century, until class conflict replaced it from the beginning of the twentieth century until the 1960s. From then on, the third cleavage became predominant. The latter source of conflict is at the core of Belgium's federal transformation, replacing the unitary model that had been in force since 1830.

The choice of unitary model in 1830 was the result of several factors. First of all, the European powers did not see Belgian independence as a positive thing, because it was modifying the European equilibrium established during the 1815 Vienna Congress. Therefore, Belgium had to adopt the European model of a strong state, as its European neighbors. Second, the Belgian Revolution for independence (1830) accelerated the strengthening of a common Belgian identity: the choice of a unitary state was seen as logical. Moreover, the French language was at that time dominant among political and economical elites[76], and was established as the only official language, though the Flemish language was the mother tongue of a majority of the Belgian population[77]. Finally, the universal suffrage was absent -the vote was reserved for the elite- and thus elections could not offer (or require) any relevant

Impact of the Linguistic Cleavage on the « Governing » Parties of Belgium and Canada », in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, (1978 : 11/1), p. 62, note 3.

[75] The religious cleavage, although non-territorial, has however a certain form of territoriality since Flanders, in the north, is strongly associated with Catholicism. The class cleavage denotes a certain form of territoriality as well, since Wallonia, in the South, is strongly associated with Socialism. Michael, Whintle, « Pillarisation, Consociation and Vertical Pluralism in the Netherlands Revisited : A European View », in *West European Politics*, (2000 : 23/3), p. 148.

[76] Alexander, Murphy, « Belgium's Regional Divergence: Along the Road to Federation », in *Federalism : the multiethnic challenge*, Graham Smith (ed.), (Longman Group Limited, 1995), p. 79.

[77] James A., Dunn Jr., « The Revision of the Constitution in Belgium : A Study in the Institutionalization of Ethnic Conflict », in *The Western Political Quarterly*, (1974 : 27/1), p. 144.

linguistic population census. For all these reasons, a federal option was not even considered, and the unitary model was implemented.

4.1.2. History of ethnic mobilization in Belgium

4.1.2.1. From 1830 to 1945

The history of ethnic mobilization in Belgium has evolved trough different stages. During the first twenty years of Belgium's history, separatist claims from Flanders were non-existent. However, the period 1850-1945 saw the development of grounds for linguistic grievances, leading to the development of a Flemish movement.

Several factors were at the source of such development. First of all, industrialization led to an economic disequilibrium between the south –Francophone- and a Dutch-speaking north. The Francophone Wallonia was economically growing due to the development of coal and heavy steel industries on its territory, while Flanders was much poorer and dependent on its agriculture and weak textile industry. Second, linguistic laws were at the odds with reality: while promising equality between Flemish and French, in practice, the latter was dominant in all higher spheres of public administration. The linguistic laws of the nineteenth century imposed asymmetrical bilingualism, with a Wallonia unilingual and Flanders bilingual. Later on, in the 1930s, a second round of linguistic laws developed unilinguism in Flanders and bilingualism in Brussels. Language became thus heavily regulated, divided between regions and this provided further incentives to enter a genuine « course for territorial (…) conflict »[78]. Finally, the introduction of universal weighted[79] suffrage in 1893 (which became universal in 1919: one man, one vote) gave the opportunity to Dutch-speakers to make political use of

[78] Liesbet, Hooghe, « Belgium : Hollowing the Center », in Nancy, Bermeo and Ugo M., Amoretti, (eds.) *Federalism and Territorial Cleavages*, (Baltimore, MD, John Hopkins Press, 2004), p. 58.
[79] 'Weighted' means that certain categories of the population (with properties, university degrees, etc.) could benefit of one or two extra votes.

their numerical advantage in the state. Together, these factors opened the way for further contention and intensification of demands against the dominant cultural minority.

4.1.2.1. From 1945 to the 1960s

The post Second World War period saw linguistic and cultural cleavages take priority over the other two -religion and class-. Once again, several important factors facilitated the growth of the Flemish movement and its transformation from a cultural stand to a genuine political one. First of all, the early 1960s experienced a turn between the economic dominance of the South over the North. The gross regional product per capita became for the first time -in the Belgian history- more important in Flanders than in Wallonia. The reasons of this were on the one hand the economical Walloon dependence on heavy industries, which were losing importance, while light industries were moving out of the region, and on the other hand Flanders growing industrial modernization[80]. The consequences of this economical reversal were twofold: the Flemish movement gained political power in the country and Wallonia developed a regional identity attached to socio-economical basis. Both identities were thus polarized[81], but on different levels.

Secondly, the implementation of the 1930s linguistic laws gave the possibility to a Dutch-speaking elite to develop and affirm herself. More importantly, these laws « transformed prior linguistic claims into territorial claims »[82], due to the consequences of the new ten-year population census, introduced by these laws. Indeed, these censuses showed Francophone land-property dominance in areas traditionally belonging to Flanders, especially around Brussels[83]. This increased the Flemish resentment and reinforced their territorial grievances, starting from linguistic issues.

[80] Liesbet, Hooghe, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
[81] Alexander, Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
[82] Liesbet, Hooghe, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.
[83] David M., Rayside, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Finally, three last elements contributed to the rise of linguistic movements: the resolving of the « *Question Royale* » (the Royal Question) and the neutralization of the religious cleavage by the "School Pact". The first issue concerned the contested return of the King Léopold III on the throne, first resolved by a popular referendum in 1950, when a majority of the population voted in favor of the Belgian king[84], and followed by his abdication the next year in favor of his son Baudouin. The School Pact put an end at the tumultuous « school question » of the mid-1950s that concerned issues over the financing of Catholic and public schools[85]. The interesting conclusion that can be drawn about the School and Royal Questions is that, even though both were « inhibiting the discussion on purely linguistic issues »[86], the linguistic contrast between a Catholic Flanders and a Socialist Wallonia became much more visible, « emphasizing the regional duality »[87] of the country. Indeed, the results of the referendum about the 'Royal Question' gave different results at the regional level: if the population in Flanders voted 72% in favor of the King, Walloons and *Bruxellois* voted with respectively 58% and 52% against the return of the King. If the numerical advantage of Flanders decisively contributed to a national positive majority (57%), many tensions remained in Wallonia after the vote[88]. A similar linguistic pattern occurred with the School Question, giving as result a more obvious overlapping of the religious and linguistic cleavages.

[84] The 'Royal Question', opposed proponents of the King's return (Catholics and Liberals) to their opponents (Socialists), from 1945 to 1951. The debate emerged from differing perceptions about the link between the monarch and the German occupation, especially about the King's decision to remain in Belgium after the Belgian's surrender, instead of leaving the country with the government in exile.
[85] The 'School Question' emerged after the electoral defeat of the Catholics in 1954. Once ruling the government, the Socialists and Liberals adopted laws concerning the financing of schools, creating massive movements among the side of the Catholic opposition (Social-Catholic Party and the Church). The extent of the demonstrations pushed the different leaders to sign a Pact in 1958, which ensured the state-financing of public and Catholic schools.
[86] James A., Dunn Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 146.
[87] *Idem.*
[88] For a deeper insight regarding the Royal Question, please refer to: Ramon, Arango, *Leopold III and the Belgian Royal Question*, (Baltimore, MD, John Hopkins Press, 1961).

Facing a growing societal linguistic cleavage, the Belgian authorities began to institutionalize the divisions. During the early 1960s, the Belgian Parliament adopted new linguistic laws, refining and hardening territorial unilinguism by creating four language areas (in 1963): unilingually Dutch-speaking, French-speaking and German-speaking areas, and the bilingually Dutch-French Brussels area[89]. Consequently, a linguistic border was erected, leaving linguistic minorities on both sides. At the level of the political parties, a major shift occurred, called in Flemish « *splitsing* » (separation). The three main national political families (Catholic, Liberal and Socialist) became progressively divided into two distinct branches, Flemish and Francophone. The reason for that was that « Belgium's (…) political, economic and social problems tended to be viewed from the prism of the ethnic problem »[90], creating strong opposition between existing ethnic wings within the national political parties. Moreover, several regional parties were created, as the *Volksunie* (People's Union –Flemish-, 1954), the *Rassemblement Wallon* (Walloonian Gathering, 1965) and the *Front Démocratique des Francophones* (Democratic Front of the Francophones, 1964). The concerns of each of these transformed or new parties shifted to strictly regional matters, and therefore increased their claims for political power and decentralization.

Due to these numerous societal and state factors, Belgium developed a reputation for identity fragmentation, coming from a pan-Belgian identity to a strong Flemish identity based on cultural, linguistic and territorial grounds, and a Walloonian identity with a socio-economical character. In sum, the societal Belgian fragmentation paved the way for state federalization.

[89] Liesbet, Hooghe, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
[90] James A., Dunn Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 150.

4.1.2.3. The Belgian federal reforms

Federalization in Belgium occurred through four[91] main rounds of constitutional reforms[92]: 1970, 1980, 1988-89 and 1993.

In 1970, the first round of reforms formed the basis of federalization. From the very beginning, the process was made complex, because it has to correspond to the demands of Flemish and Walloons, and their grievances were very different. Indeed, both identities were born and evolved from different issues. The Flemish movement was essentially cultural and linguistic, claiming for a cultural autonomy and for the recognition of the Flemish language. The Walloonian movement, since Wallonia experienced deep economic crisis in the 1950s-1960s, was asking for autonomy in economic-related matters. To simplify, Flanders was polarized on cultural issues and Wallonia on socio-economic issues, difference that the Belgian state had to take into account when launching the federalization of the country.

Hence, two[93] cultural *Communities* were established (French and Flemish) to satisfy the Flemish grievances. These institutions obtained legislative power and bodies that have authority over linguistic and cultural matters. Also, *three Regions* dealing essentially with economic affairs were created, accordingly to the Wallonian grievances. Moreover, the Walloonian minority obtained several consociational guarantees in federal institutions, such as linguistic parity at the level of the Council of Ministers[94].

Belgium's federalization was strengthened by a second round of reforms, in 1980. This time, the reform provided an independent executive power to the *Communities*, in order to launch and implement the necessary policies to their -linguistic and cultural- objectives. The reform also further defined the *regional* level (which deals with economic matters). The

[91] Alexander, Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 84-88.
[92] The constitutional reforms are often indicated as « institutional reforms » when approaching the Belgian case.
[93] A third cultural Germanophone community has been also established, but had to wait until 1983 to benefit from equal competences with the two bigger communities.
[94] Also, they obtained the creation of linguistic groups in the Chamber of Representatives and in the Senate, as well as the creation of a protection mechanism called the « alarmbel », foreseeing an appeal if 3/4 of a linguistic group estimate a decision dangerous for their community.

negociators of this reform attributed to the *Regions* legislative and executive powers in matters linked to territory (for example, transport and civilian facilities). Interestingly, the Flemishs then fused the (executive and legislative) organs of their *Community* with the ones of their *Region*. This fusion was important not only because it strengthened the Flemish unit, but also because it gave more strength to their grievances. With the creation of a single institution (instead of having two institutions dealing with separate matters, cultural and economical), they managed to fortify their group autonomy, with the consociational tools provided by the federalization.

In 1988-89, the federal government lauched a third institutional reform. This reform established the institutions of the Brussels-Capital *Region*, and gave a financial autonomy to the six federated units (3 Communities and 3 Regions), which was necessary to implement their policies.

The last federal reform was negociated in 1993. This reform was symbolically very significant, since it put an end to the unitary state, by modifying Article 1 of the Belgian Constitution: “Belgium is a Federal State made up of Communities and Regions”. More practically, the reform gave the right to the six federated institutions to conclude international treaties in the limited frame of their respective competencies (economical for the Regions, and cultural/linguistic for the Communities). This transfer of governmental Foreign Affairs competencies, which were core sovereign powers of the State, even limited, was an important step in the institutionalization of the fragmentation. Finally, on the contrary of the Flemish experience (fusion), the French *Community* started to transfer part of its competencies to the Walloon *Region*. Such transfed was institutionalizing a growing gap between Wallonia and Brussels, both composed by a majority of Francophones (around 98% for Wallonia and 85%

for Brussels). In other words, it meant that there were divisions between Francophones from both Regions, creating an asymmetry between a united Flanders and a divided French group.

The four constitutional reforms respected thus the four characteristics of the consociational theory (See 3.1.): Grand Coalition, proportionality, group autonomy and minority veto. The following section (4.2.) will show that the Canadian experience in ethnic relations is not so different from the Belgian one. Both countries have similar patterns of ethnicity and have undergone similar ethnic fragmentations. However, this section will also show that both countries took different paths to implement a consociational democracy. The parallels between Belgium and Canada will be emphasized in a third section (4.3.).

4.2. Canada and its "coming together"[95] system

4.2.1. The 1867 British North America Act and the federal option

The distribution of ethnic groups in Canada comprises 67 percent of English-speaking inhabitants, 26 percent of Francophones (geographically concentrated in Quebec for most of them) and 7 percent speaking other languages[96]. Canada was founded under the British North America Act (BNAA) of 1867[97], which is very different from the Belgian Constitution of 1830[98]. In Canada, a colonial link with London was still in place; also, a plurality of identities characterized the continent and there was a great need for unity. At the time of the adoption of the BNAA, the Canadian plurality was the result of two cleavages. The first was regional, because the British possessions were divided in distinct politico-administrative units; the

[95] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[96] Actually, this distribution uses the criterion « the language most spoken at home », which consequently hinder the fact that a part of these 'English-speakers' do not have English as their mother tongue, because they are from immigrant origin. When considering the 1971 census, English (mother tongue) speakers represent 60 procent, while Francophones 27 procent and others 13 procent. David M., Rayside, *op. cit.*, p. 62, note 3.
[97] Collin H., Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[98] Belgium was created in 1830.

second was an overlapping of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences between English and French Canadians.

The federal option was thus seen as a way to integrate this double identity fragmentation in a common state. However, the diversity issue was far from resolved with the adoption of the BNAA. Politicians and scholars were interpreting the Act in different ways. The first Canadian Prime Minister, John A. MacDonald, saw the document as predicting the progressive downsizing of particular loyalties and an evolution toward a unitary Canadian state. This vision was challenged by more moderate approaches, that Canada should be a confederation linking ethno-linguistic groups and colonies, and should assist the development of each of them, rather than seek and insist upon their integration in a common federal structure[99]. In sum, the foundation of the Canadian State was controversial from the beginning[100], balancing between the quasi-federalism of MacDonald and the more classical federalism of his opponents. The later view would nevertheless prevail due to strong provincial resistance against quasi-federalism.

4.2.2. History of ethnic mobilization in Canada

4.2.2.1. From 1897 to 1945

Until the Second World War, Canada experienced the rise of its two subnationalisms, English and Francophone. During the second part of the nineteenth century, the French language declined outside Quebec, due to the weaknesses of the BNAA legislative protections. As a result, French-Canadians developed a vision of the Canadian State that would favor territorial compartmentalization of national identities.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the English-Canadian nationalism is strongly influenced by the rise of British imperialism, while the French language continues to

[99] Richard, Simeon and Ian, Robinson, *L'Etat, la société et l'évolution du fédéralisme canadien [State, Society and the Evolution of Canadian Federalism]*, (Ottawa, Approvisionnements et Services Canada, 1990), p. 23.
[100] *Idem.*

decline in provinces outside of Quebec. In sum, both nationalisms became progressively exclusive and increasingly territorialized.

4.2.2.2. From 1945 to 1968

However, from 1945 and for more than twenty years after, significant changes occurred, which triggered the late-1960s « transformation of the symbolic Canadian order »[101]. Several factors were at the source of such evolution. On the one hand, this post-war period saw the rise of the American cultural influence in Canada (influence which already started in the interwar period), as well as a massive influx of immigrants who needed to be integrated in the Canadian society. On the other hand, Canada started to operate a further cultural and identity distanciation from London, even though formal independence had already been obtained since 1931. Put together, these elements pushed Canadians, no matter their Anglophone or Francophone ties, to redefine the Canadian societal project.

Similarly, other developments accentuated the division between ethnic groups. Indeed, Quebec (which has an overwhelming majority of Francophones) was also experiencing its own transformations. A growing disagreement over the religious policies of Quebec Prime Minister Maurice Duplessis was taking place. In reaction to his conservative, clerical views, two conception of the national identity came to light. The first stream, antinationalist, appeared and developed itself around the political newspaper 'Cité Libre', very influent in Quebec in the 1950s and 1960s. Its authors firmly believed in the possibility of a pancanadian identity, which would, however, respect differences between ethnicities. The founding members and main editorial office members of this influent newspaper were Pierre Elliott Trudeau (future Canadian Prime Minister) and Gérard Pelletier (future Secretary of State). Firmly anticlerical, antinationalistic and modernist, the newspaper offered radical critiques

[101] Raymond, Breton, « Le multiculturalisme et le développement national au Canada », in *Les dimensions politiques du sexe, de l'ethnie et de la langue au Canada »*, Alan, Cairns and Cynthia, Williams (eds.), (Ottawa, Commission royale sur l'union économique et les perspectives de développement au Canada, 1986), p. 37.

against the Duplessis government policies and against the influence of the Catholic Church on Quebec society. Its influence was such that much of its ideas were at the core of the *Revolution Tranquille* (Quiet Revolution) of the 1960s in Quebec, revolution which led to important transformations in the political orientation taken by Canadian federal policies.

The second stream, neonationalistic, defended the idea that the core of the French-Canadian identity was Quebec, and therefore its civic, linguistic and cultural identities had to be promoted and protected. Also anticlerical, this movement was « based upon economic, language and the power of the state instead of a common religious faith »[102]. The origin of this *neo*-nationalism was a growing contention, during the 1950s, against the conservative values promoted by the Duplessis'government. Intellectuals, workers, women and students did not want to pursue this societal project, which did not match their political and economical concerns. Two emblematic figures of this movement, André Laurendeau and Gérard Filion, were both running the newspaper *Devoir* (Duty) in the 1950s, and started to develop a progressive Quebec nationalism, arguing that such nationalism was the only solution to the problems of Francophones. They advocated for an interventionist Quebec, as the only power able to remedy to the specific socio-economical issues of the Francophone population. This neonationalist stream was thus different from the antinationalist one, since the first defended a modernizing nationalism, while the latter was defending for its suppression[103].

These both streams led to the election of the liberals in 1960, headed by Jean Lesage. Once in the provincial government, the liberals started modernizing Quebec and to agitate for

[102] Michel, Gavreau, « From Rechristianization to Contestation : Catholic Values and Quebec Society, 1931-1970 », (American Society of Church History, 2000). URL : http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_0286-28723815_ITM
[103] Daniel, Moreau, « La Souveraineté, un essai », in *ResPublika* (Undated). URL : http://journalrespublika.iquebec.com/actualit%8E.html

greater autonomy. In the meantime, there was a growing movement for a sovereign Quebec, based on neonationalist arguments.

What can be concluded about the period from the time of state creation in 1867 until 1968 is that the Canadian system was far from ably managing ethnic fragmentation. Canada faced in the 1960s a peak in internal divisions, on both main ethnic sides. On the one hand, the English-Canadian majority was divided between weak regionalisms (and consequently stronger English nationalism), attachment to London, and belief in new Canadian symbols (for example, the new Canadian flag and anthem, adopted in 1965). On the other hand, Francophones-Quebecers tended to promote a separate identity, based on a distinct language and culture. Further, they strengthened the quasi-citizenship of Quebec, by the action and influence of autonomist and sovereignist tendencies.

4.2.2.3. From 1968: Pierre Elliott Trudeau and his federal reforms

In 1968, Pierre Trudeau became the Prime Minister of Canada, inaugurating a period of deep changes: he would go on to have a huge influence on future developments of Canada. In the sixties, Trudeau advocated universalism, considering nationalism (such as Francophone nationalism) as a mere particularism that ought to be incorporated in a broader (Canadian) whole. He considered the nation-state, meaning making the nation the basis for the state, a dangerous path toward division. He therefore pleaded for the promotion of a « juridical nation » based on « rationality ». Following his own words, people must realize that « in the last resort, the mainspring of federalism cannot be emotion but must be reason »[104]. For Trudeau, federalism is, and must remain, a product of reason in politics. Therefore, this juridical nation, entity would encompass different groups and allow for peaceful cohabitation,

104 Pierre E., Trudeau, « Nationalism and Federalism », in Dimitrios, Karmis and Wayne, Norman (eds.), Theories of Federalism : A reader, (Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), p. 223.

was best accomplished with federalism because such model was the most rational means to govern a multinational state. Indeed, other totalitarian or regionalist regimes are embedded with emotional considerations, which are undermining their stability, especially in the case of multinational states.

However, during his mandate as MP (from 1965) he changed his point of view, realizing that the emotions generated by nationalism could not be completely circumvented. He admitted the existence of the power inherent to nationalism, and started to defend the promotion of a nationalism « *at the federal level* »[105], that could have a sufficient appeal « as to make any image of a separatist group unattractive »[106]. Consequently, he started to uphold pancanadian nationalism, grounded on universally accepted values, and tried to promote a shift in popular loyalties, from traditional subgroup affiliations to the (pan-)Canadian nation. He synthesized his position by stating that « the whole citizenry must be made to feel that it is only within the framework of the federal state that their language, culture, institutions, sacred traditions and standard of living can be protected from external attack and internal strife »[107].

Trudeau was a rationalist, individualist and universalist, and these features of his personnality were brought to light by his political action. Once he became Prime Minister of Canada, he (and his government) launched several policies during his tenure that corresponded to his pancanadian objectives. From the end of the 1960s, Trudeau initiated a reform of the Canadian federalism, by creating three new major identity policies. The first consisted of the introduction in the Canadian Constitution of a Charter on Individual Rights and Liberties, but it would not be implemented before the early 1980s, due to provincial opposition on its content and the new distribution of power that the document was introducing. For the second, Trudeau's government adopted the "White Paper" on the Amerindian issue. Amerindians wanted an enlarged collective autonomy, but the White Paper

105 *Ibid.*, p. 222.
106 *Idem.*
107 *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

simply suppressed their previous collective rights by aiming at their transformation in genuine Canadian citizens. The underlying vision of such policy was to force Amerindians to give up their ethnic claims and integrate a pancanadian ideal. More practically, Trudeau was trying to avoid giving them and enlarged collective status that would have served the nationalist cause of Quebecers. But the consequences of the suppression were such that the policy was abandonned two years later. The intensity of the Amerindian claims rised instantly and the Paper became the "single most powerful catalyst of the Indian nationalist movement"[108].

In 1969, the Canadian parliament adopted the third identity policy, which was a law on official languages, based on the work of the "Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism" (RCBB). The Commission, established in 1963 by the federal government, received the mission "to inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada"[109]. The main objective of such law was to promote the use of English and French as official, equal languages, to protect them with a particular status and to promote the development of Anglophone and Francophone minorities. The underlying intention here was to make bilingualism and biculturalism two distinct concepts, so that the linguistic cleavage would not be completely congruent with the cultural one. By separating them, Trudeau wanted to make clear that language was an individual matter that could be protected at the federal level[110]. Once again, this policy was a political tactic to escape Quebec separatist tendencies. Quebecers were indeed rather defending a policy of biculturalism that

[108] Sally M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian policy: the hidden agenda 1968-1970*, in *Studies in the structure of power, decision-making in Canada*, 9 (Toronto, Buffalo, University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 171, quoted by Ravi, de Costa, "States, identities and the extinguishment of Indigenous title: A contrustivist Approach", in *CPSA Papers*, (Canadian Political Science Association, 2006), p. 8.

[109] The Commission had to « inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution ». Website of the Department of Canadian Heritage. (Canada, 2007). URL : http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/offlangoff/perspectives/english/languages/contexte.html

[110] Pierre E., Trudeau, « Nationalism and Federalism », *op. cit.* p. 223.

would insist on the existence of two distinct cultures than a policy of bilingualism that was not matching their expectations.

However, the promotion of bilingualism in Canada had the effect of strengthening nationalism in Quebec[111] and provoking resentments in Western Canada. In Quebec, the situation of the 1960s was already explosive, and separatist claims were rising. Quebecers were aiming at gaining in autonomy or even sovereignty. Francophones were concerned about obtaining a federal asymmetry (meaning a special status for Quebec), not about the Canada to develop a widespread promotion of bilingualism, which was already implemented in Quebec itself. In the western part of the country, the Francophone population was numerically much lower than in the East. As a result, non-Francophone and non-Anglophone citizens judged such policies as discriminatory for their own language and culture. Correspondingly, these "ethnic Canadians" (who were immigrant populations from Ukrainian, German, Asian, and Italian origin) began to ask for more positive discrimination rights and to dispute the national character of these bilingual policies, which were considered as an additional burden to their obligations.

Later on, the government created a policy of multiculturalism (1971), showing increasingly universalist and individualist tendencies of the government, despite the failures of the White Paper and bilingual policies. The new policy were intended to accommodate Canadians of non-Francophone/Anglophone origin (so-called "neo-Canadians"), who were intensely criticizing the action of the RCBB and the recent policy of bilingualism. The policy of multiculturalism was "designed to provide programs and services to encourage the full participation in Canadian society of all of Canada's people, regardless of their background"[112]. According to Will Kymlicka, the purpose of the policy was "to support the cultural development of ethnocultural groups and help them to overcome barriers to full participation

[111] Collin H., Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
[112] Website of the Department of Canadian Heritage. (Canada, 2007) URL: http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann01-2002/part1_e.cfm

in Canadian society, to promote creative encounters and interchange among all ethnocultural groups and to assist new Canadians in acquiring at least one of Canada's official languages."[113] The meaning of this was to make of the ethnic pluralism a key feature of the Canadian identity and avoid assimilationism, by promoting ethnic diversity. Similarly, multiculturalism was a way to guarantee newcomers (immigrants) that Canada was universally tolerant. Multiculturalism was essentially an individualist policy, since it was ascribing more individual rights to members of these various ethnic groups.

Once again, this policy had unintended and undesired consequences. Some authors[114] argued that multiculturalism has created a form of ethnic separatism between immigrant communities, generating their regroupment into ethnic ghettos. This takes place since leaders are encouraged "to keep their members apart from the mainstream"[115].

Similarly, the combination of bilingualism and multiculturalism posed a conceptual problem. Multiculturalism was implemented within a bilingual framework, since this policy recognized French and English as being the two official Canadian languages. However, multiculturalism is in contradiction with the principles of bilingualism, because the former promotes diversity while the latter tends to support a bi-national culture. Further, the policy of multiculturalism was following a much stronger universalist path than bilingualism, creating a supplementary ground of ambiguity. Indeed, while bilingualism would admit the existence of two official languages, and thus implicitly recognize their founding character, multiculturalism was on the contrary opposing the recognition of founding cultures and promoting equality among all individuals no matter their origin[116].

[113] Will, Kymlicka, « The Theory and Practice of Canadian Multiculturalism », Canadian Federation for the Humanities ans Social Sciences, (Nov. 23, 1998). URL : http://www.fedcan.ca/francais/fromold/breakfast-kymlicka1198.cfm
[114] See for example Neil, Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, (Toronto, Penguin Books, 1994), and Richard, Gwyn, *Nationalism Without Walls: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian*, (Toronto, McLelland and Stewart, 1995).
[115] Will,Kymlicka, « The Theory and Practice (...) », *op. cit.*
[116] Guy, Rocher, *Le Québec en Mutation*, (Montréal, Hurtubise, 1973), p. 100.

The early 1980s led to further fragmentation along ethnofederal lines. In 1982, the Charter on Individual Rights and Liberties was adopted. This project was one of Trudeau's most important. It corresponded to the direction taken by the previous federal reforms of his government. The Charter affirmed the equality of the provinces and rejected an asymmetrical federalism by denying any province to be granted a special status. Also, this law confirmed the previous policies on bilingualism and multiculturalism. Believed by Trudeau's government to be the best means of minimizing Quebec separatism pursuant to pancanadianism, the consequences were disastrous. The adoption of the Charter served to fuel Francophone and provincial oppositions to the governmental policies. The main reason of the Francophone opposition was due to the fact that Quebecers did not consent to the adoption of these constitutional amendments and thus considered them as illegitimate. The Agreement of Meech (1987) and Charlottetown (1992) tried to push Quebecers to accept the constitutional changes, but ended in failure. Provincial opposition was mostly coming from larger provinces, which were disapproving the primacy of individual rights on collective rights, and more importantly were discontented with the provincial equality policy, which was replacing the previous principle of proportionality.

In sum, the homogenizing federal policies of Trudeau increased the autonomist and separatist tendencies of Quebecers, and created division among the English majority in other provinces. Pancanadianism was perceived as negative for the Francophones and was thus strongly opposed. The Canadian experience shows that policies of pancanadianism failed to establish a stable balance between unity and diversity, between Francophones aspirations, provincial concerns and the pancanadian ideals of the Prime Minister Trudeau.

Canadian governmental policies were relatively successful in terms of regionalism, meaning that through "a broad range of provincial diversity in politics and policy"[117], they have been able to consistently reduce conflict. However, these policies did not obtain the support of Quebecers, Amerindian populations and cultural minorities (of the so-called neo-Canadians). Governmental policies were sometimes and even often going at the odds of the objectives of these ethnic groups. Nowadays, the accommodation of this plurality of conflictual identities still represents a burden for Canada, and this difficulty continues to threaten the stability of the country, principally along the lines of the linguistic cleavage between Francophones and English-speakers.

In the following section, I will put both cases –Canada and Belgium- into comparison. I will explain that these two countries, that are quasi ideal-types of consociationalism, possess in many respects similarities in the evolution of their ethnic cleavages. I will also show that Canada and Belgium took different paths to accommodate their ethnic groups, but that the itinerary taken by ethnic fragmentation remains similar.

4.3. Comparative evaluation

Canada presents thus many comparable features with Belgium. First of all, both countries have similar patterns of ethnicity and a quite similar history of ethnic tensions. Both have two strong separatist movements, Francophone with the Quebec issue and Flemish for the Flanders issue. These movements have progressively acquired strength and a genuine political organization, which made them able to obtain important concessions from the central (or federal) government. The Quebecers have obtained a considerable degree of asymmetry,

[117] Richard, Simeon, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

with separate legislative and tax systems of the rest of the country[118]. Flanders has obtained greater autonomy in cultural and linguistic matters with the creation of cultural communities dealing with autonomy from the federal institutions (See 4.3.).

Similarly, Belgium and Canada have grown with a dominant language and elite, French for the former and English for the latter. The result of linguistic claims from less dominant languages has been a territorialization of ethnic conflicts, expressed by an increasing geographic concentration of linguistic groups. Such overlapping between territory and language has made the linguistic cleavage dominating all other cleavages. The linguistic cleavage has entered various tensions, even if these had little to do with language issues, or at least where language was not the principal issue (See the Royal and School Questions in Belgium or the multiculturalism policy in Canada). Consequently, both contemporary political party systems have experienced "the triumph of regionalism"[119] in the 1960s-1970s.

However, when the Belgian consociational evolution is put into perspective with the Canadian experience, it appears that the Belgian government approached the problem of fragmentation differently. Indeed, the Belgian institutional reforms were not the outcome of a clear general vision, as was the case with Canada. Ethnofederalization in Belgium was seen a mean of pacification, rather than a coherent political project. The Belgian federalization was aiming at preserving the Belgian unity by instutitionalizing differences and accommodating ethnic groups, following a "holding together"[120] path transforming the unitary state into a federal one, on the contrary of the Canadian system which was the outcome of a political project meant to accommodate ethnic groups *since the beginning.* Moreover, the Belgian consociational approach led to the recognition and institutionalization of the characteristics of

[118] *Idem.*
[119] Brian, Tanguay, "Canada's Political Parties in the 1990s", in Harvey, Lazar and Tom, McIntosh (eds.), *The State of the Federation 1998-1999. How Canadians Connect*, (Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), pp. 217-244, quoted by Richard, Simeon, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
[120] John, McGarry, « Federalism (Federation) (...) », *op. cit.*, p. 12.

the territorial entities, rather than a continuous promotion of an upper state-national identity, peaking with Prime Minister Trudeau's identity policies of the 1960s-1970s.

When one considers the impact of the Belgian institutional reforms on the linguistic cleavage, it has been observed that the complexity of the 4 rounds was such that it did not immediately created movements of support or disapproval. Two supplementary elements were seemingly responsible for further fragmentation.

On the one hand, the progressive devolution of power to federated units emptied several sovereign competencies of the state, and hence gave important group autonomy rights to these units. The attribution of such level of autonomy gave incentives to the respective linguistic groups to claim for competencies in cognate sectors, creating a sort of neofunctionalist effect of spill-over. For example, once the Walloon Region obtained important competencies in the economic field, the government of the Walloon Region started to claim for a transfer (from the federal to the federated level) of competencies in the transport sector. And these transfers are probably one of the most effective factors that promote separatism, if we accept that they function on the model of a spill-over and also knowing that such transfers in Belgium always occurred from the federal to the federated level, not reversely. Indeed, these transfers go in the direction of a weakening of the federal institutions in favor of a strengthening of Communities and Regions. And such statement is perhaps even stronger if we consider the Flemish issue, were both Community and Region have fused. If such devolution of power did not immediately amplify genuine separatist tendencies of linguistic groups, it certainly downsized inter-group solidarities, because ethnic groups are increasingly being governed separately. Now, I argue that such solidarity is primordial for the stability of ethnofederations, because it creates ties that lower the incentives for separatism.

Also, the Belgian devolution of power increased the atmosphere of confrontation[121], because the grievances of both Flemish and Walloon groups are attached to different issues. Consequently, a grievance from one side can be source of conflict for the other. Furthermore, we can consider that Flanders is a "core ethnic region" and take Hale's argument that central government is more likely to respond to the demands of such group *especially* if the government tries to « avert defection of this most critical [core] group »[122]. I would then argue that Flanders, which is a core ethnic group *and* which has separatist tendencies, is more likely pursue them in a consociational model. And this is because Flemish-speakers *know* that they are in the even stronger position of core ethnic group, and hence, can obtain more concessions from the federal government.

Put into comparison with the Canadian case, it seems striking that the attribution of autonomy rights to Quebecers has favorished their separatist tendencies, since they progressively possessed statelike institutions[123], increasing their *capacity* to act in this direction[124]. Also, as for the Belgian case (particularly on the Flemish issue, closely related to culture and language), the attribution of important group autonomy rights in the field of language, culture and education to Quebecers has provided significant tools to reinforce their substate identity. And again, as Svante Cornell argued, "institutionalizing and promoting the separate identity of the titular group increases that group's cohesion and *willingness* to act"[125].

On the other hand, a second factor can be pointed out as being partly responsible for further fragmentation: the lack of promotion of a pan-Belgian identity. Surveys have shown that the attachment to the Belgian identity is rather low, compared to regional ties[126].

[121] David M., Rayside, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
[122] *Idem.*
[123] Svante E., Cornell, « Autonomy as a Source of Conflict (…), *op. cit.*, p. 254.
[124] *Ibid.*, p. 252.
[125] *Idem.*
[126] Philip, Resnick, "Recognition & Ressentiment: On Accommodating National Differences within Multinational States", in *Notes pour une conférence prononcée à l'Université Libre de Bruxelles [Notes for a conference given at the Free University of Brussels]*, (ULB, Centre d'études Canadiennes, Nov. 2002). URL: http://www.ulb.ac.be/philo/cec/pages/D_zconf_nov2002_resnick.html

However, the Canadian experience shows us that the promotion of a national-federal identity does not necessarily downsize fragmentation, on the contrary. The policies developed by Prime Minister Trudeau have obviously failed to counter the separatist tendencies of Quebecers that led to the 1995 referendum on Quebec secession. Accordingly to the method of agreement, this issue is probably not as relevant in terms of the causes of fragmentation, since it differs in both cases that experience similar identity fragmentation.

Until here, I argued that one of the four main institutional features of consociationalism, group autonomy, is strongly related to fragmentation, in Belgium and in Canada. If we now take the three other consociational features, it looks as if certain of them are also partly responsible for separatist tendencies.

Lijphart himself argued that "leaders of rival subcultures may engage in competitive behavior and thus further aggravate mutual tensions and political instability"[127] when advocating for elite cooperation as key element for consociationalism to work. He therefore pleaded for these elites to make grand coalitions in deeply divided societies, in order to lower the negative destabilizing consequences of this competitive behavior. Now, this argument can be challenged by the fact that the leaders of subgroups are rarely united and that there often exist division within these subunits[128]. If we take a look at the Belgian experience, we can observe a growing autonomist and separatist tendency of the general political goals (meaning of most of the political parties) in Flanders. The reason of this is that even if there are strong political divisions between political parties in Flanders, the "autonomy" issue remains popular for all of them. This is probably due to the strength of the *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest), far-right and nationalist-regionalist party which advocates for a complete Flemish independence. Since it conquered an important part of the Flemish electorate in the last couple of elections, other political parties are adopting stronger autonomist objectives to reconquer

[127] Arend, Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy", *op. cit.*, pp. 211-212
[128] Donald, Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 574.

part of their lost electorate. Hence, even with a grand coalition including Francophones and Flemish-speakers at the federal government, autonomist issues still remain strong. Thus, even if a grand coalition is not likely to provoke separatist tendencies, it is not likely to lower them as well.

On a similar way, the consociational characteristic of proportionality presents some difficulties in avoiding fragmentation. Back at our Belgian example with the "autonomist issue", one can argue that if proportionality allows all segments to be represented at the federal level, it allows far-right nationalist parties to be represented as well, and thus to shift the political discourse toward more separatist issues. With a majoritarian system, such parties could have been escaped and thus their ideas underrepresented. However, a look at the Canadian experience shows that their majoritarian system has not been able to diminish the strong separatist tendencies of Quebecers. But it seems that since Quebecers are geographically concentrated, the majoritarian system allows a certain part of proportionality in the facts, thus the ability for more separatist opinions to be represented at the federal Parliament. Also, since there is this informal rule to have Francophone and Anglophone ministers at the federal government, one can argue that there is an effective proportionality, and thus, that more separatist tendencies, once again, are likely to be represented. And such statement holds thus for the grand coalition principle. Both proportionality and grand coalition, hence, can be designed as institutional facilitators of separatism

On the contrary, if we test the minority veto characteristic with the method of agreement, we can conclude that it has not really provoked further separatism. In Belgium, the "alarmbel" veto has been used one time only by Francophone MP's, for a relatively low important issue. Quebecers do not formally possess such tool, but as Lijphart argued, Quebec

has an informal veto on certain issues[129]. Thus it remains difficult to argue that minority veto really fuels separatist tendencies.

[129] Arend, Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

Conclusion

The Canadian and Belgian cases have demonstrated that the introduction of consociational practices and institutions (internal features of concociational systems) does not prevent further ethnic fragmentation. In Canada, several attempts (mostly pancanadian identity policies aiming at accommodating ethnic groups) have been made to control the plurality and asymmetry of the ethnic groups. However, the centennial domination of English-speaking policies since 1867 has led to frustrations among Canadian-Francophones. Therefore, Quebecers have rejected the policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism in pushing for further asymmetry. They considered that the latter was the only remedy to protect their language and culture.

In Belgium, on the contrary, decision-makers have supported asymmetrical tendencies, but through *cloisonnement* (dividing up), without demanding genuine loyalties to the central institutions[130]. Indeed, with on the one hand strong economic growth and on the other resentment[131] against the French domination of the country, Flanders could, under such federal arrangements, accentuate the division between Flemishs and Francophones, because they were not constrained by necessary institutional loyalties to the central state.

As I demonstrated, Canada and Belgium are crucial-cases of consociationalism, since they both fit to a large extent the characteristics of consociationalism. Both have been so many times declared as successful consociational cases, able to accommodate their ethnic groups and reasonably prevent further ethnic fragmentation. But by analyzing the historical evolution of ethnic cleavages in each country, and by taking a closer look to the subsequent policies adopted by both states to deal with such cleavages, I realized that identity

[130] Hugues, Dumont, «Etat, Nation,et Constitution. De la théorie du droit public aux conditions de viabilité de 1'Etat belge », in *Belgitude et crise de l'Etat belge*, Hugues Dumont, (ed.) (Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis, Bruxelles, 1989), p. 108.
[131] Alexander, Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

fragmentation is still deepening in the two cases. I thus decided in this thesis to test their policies, which were (and are) closely related to the consociational theory, and consequently to test the theory itself.

I argued that even in ideal-types of consociationalism, further fragmentation is still going on. To support my argument, I used the example of these two countries, which were interestingly having two different approaches that led them adopting a consociational democracy. And this difference between Belgium and Canada, in parallel to their both fragmentation tendencies, made their comparison ideal to be tested with the method of agreement. With such method, I was able to trace the causal link between consociational institutions (independent variable) and fragmentation (dependent variable), although both States had different approaches to consociationalism.

With the method of agreement, I was able to neutralize the fact that both states had different itineraries to consociationalism. Indeed, I demonstrated that the Belgian "holding together" method and the pan-Canadian "coming together" approach did not crucially impact on fragmentation, which occurred in both cases.

With the crucial test of both cases, I discovered that three of the main consociational characteristics link to further fragmentation. Group autonomy, the main common consociational feature that share Belgium and Canada, is obviously giving supplementary tools to communities to pursue their separatist tendencies. In Belgium, the "core ethnic group" characteristic of Flanders increases the separatist character of its autonomy, by providing to Flemish the consciousness of not only their numerical advantage, but also of their particular relation to the central Belgian government. In Canada, Quebec has been able to pursue its separatist path no matter the consociational efforts of group autonomy. On the contrary, Quebecers have used such tool to strengthen their autonomy, even in areas that were not

directly related to the initial constitutional provisions of their autonomy rights[132]. In both cases, one can observe an effect of unilateral "spill-over" of ethnic group grievances and transfers of competencies from the federal state to the federated entities, inevitably leading to further fragmentation and melting the cement of inter-ethnic solidarities.

Put together, proportionality and grand coalition are also causes of identity fragmentation in Belgium and Canada. These two consociational characteristics let the possibility for separatist opinions to enter governmental policies and parliamentary debates, with again, fragmentation consequences.

In sum, I demonstrated that consociational practices are sometimes, or even often, catalysts for further ethnic fragmentation in ethnically divided societies, even in those who possess the supposedly most successful consociational models. Consequently, I argue that once consociational institutions are in place, they trigger a process that can not be reversed or can have unintended consequences that can not be corrected.

My contribution to the literature in the field is that by operating a crucial test of two cases, I demonstrated that the theory had serious shortcomings, and maybe more strikingly, that the effective practice of the theory goes at the odds of its initial objectives. The policy lesson thereof is that states should not put such institutions in place to begin with, because there is nothing to do later to fix the problems these institutions created.

[132] Richard, Simeon, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

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