Relieving Bosnia from the Orbit of Dysfunctional Consociationalism: Reasoning Under the Light of Local Committees Experience in Kosovo and Ethnocomitology

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ABSTRACT

Although power-sharing arrangements are seen as favorable political formulas for the societies divided along ethnic lines, they are problematic in some aspects. Particularly, once put into operation they generate a kind of gravity pull avoiding the self-transformation of polity despite consociational arrangements' visible malfunction because of some reasons. This study essentially tries to point out that power-sharing arrangements are relied upon the consent among the ethnic elite which firmly control their own mono-ethnic patronage networks, thereby sustaining and cementing ethnic segregation. It claims thats that ethnic committees of UNMIK in pre-independence Kosovo may offer a model to solve the problem of mono-ethnic patronage networks in Bosnia in an unconventional way.

Key words: Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, consociations, ethnic patronage, ethnocomitology

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ÖZET

Her ne kadar yetki-paylaşımı sistemleri etnik anlamda bölünmüş toplumlar açısından elverişli siyasal formüllerden biri olarak görülse de sorunsuz da değildirler. Özellikle, uygulamaya konulduklarında söz konusu siyasal yapının çeşitli sorun ve tıkanmalardan kaynaklanan sorunlara rağmen kendisini dönüştürmesini engelleyen bir çekim etkisi yaratmaktadırlar. Bu çalışma yetki paylaşım sistemlerinin özde mono-etnik patronaj şebekelerini sıkı bir biçimde kontrol eden siyasal elit arasındaki uzlaşmayla ayakta durduğunu, dolayısıyla etnik ayrılık ve düşmanlıkların kemikleşerek sürmesine neden olduğunu göstermeyi hedeflemektedir. Burada ki iddia Kosova'daki UNMIK idaresinin oluşturduğu etnik komitelerin Bosna Hersek'teki yetki paylaşım sisteminden kaynaklanan tıkanıklığın aşılması açısından dikkat çekici çözümlere esin vermiş olduğudur.

Anahtar sözcükler: Bosna, Kosova, Makedonya, konsosyonal system, etnik patronaj, etnokomitoloji

Introduction

There are many views supporting or criticizing consociationalist regimes and discussing their fate. In this paper, for the sake of argument I will take consociationalism as the bottom line for a some sort of asymetrical federation which is about to take a full fledged federal form or which is on the brink of a violent conflict, of course by keeping in my mind the case of Bosnia. Without much ado, I believe that the draft constitutions prepared by the outsiders, USAID or Venice Commission are self-delusive since they do not take into account gravity pull effect of consociationalism in such societies to whom a final political show down –a new conflict- is strictly forbidden and totally impossible.

The well-known critiques of consociationalism give us some answers relating why this form of government can not be sustainable in Bosnia. First of all, it formally recognizes the group differences and institutionalizes them –or fossilizes them- thereby weakening the possibility of creating civic identities, independent from ethnic, cultural and religious idiosyncracies. It is depended on the commitment of the communal elite to sustain the established political structure. Hence, particularly in Bosnia, "consociational structures" tailor for the elite the role of its own guard rather than the role of delegate to the communal interests. Briefly, it seems that consociational structures took the political elite hostage. On the other side, in Bosnia there is no serious domestic civil society action against notorious community leaders, yet to the contrary, domestic civil society is instrumental in maintaining political power in their hands, thanks to patronage relations between the political elite and civil society organizations. What makes the case problematic is the fact that these patronage relations are of monoethnic character; another factor that keep the political system in the orbit of consociationalism.

Thirdly, healty operation of consociationalism is overtly subject to segmental autonomy, in other words, clear separation of ethnic/communal segments in political and more significantly in spatial terms. This is a factor forcing toward full-fledged federalism. On the other side, particularly, in plural societies in which specific communities do not densely populate specific part of the country, that is to say, they do not have their own ethnically homogenized spaces, consociationalism can not stamp out ethnic frictions. In this point, one should remind that in Bosnia, one of the indispensible conditions of peace, as stipulated in the Dayton Agreement, is the return of refugees to their own original residents. However, it means return to the ethno-territorial patchwork that was the very reason of conflict in the beginning of the 1990s. *Then welcome to the beginning.*

In addition, consociational theory seriously suffers from the problem of predetermination of the parties who would be the party to power sharing hence ignores the smaller minorities. Fourth, consociationalism envisages extremely complicated decision-making process, even such a way to paralyse state apparatus, hence, it naturally requires simplification, yet it means one side must make concession. On the other side, projects on centralization provoke decentralism. Similarly, decentralization projects alerts the advocators of centralization and drive them to see the consociational structures preferable. This is also a vicious circle.

Furthermore, the fifth, elite or grand coalition in the centre may prefer the loose consociational structures as long as they retain their post without any serious opposition from their own constituency. Their constituency prefers the pending structures as long as they continue to enjoy the benefits of monoethnic patronage network. Then, how can we solve this problem of countervailing tendencies of centralism and decentralism without forgetting gravity pull of consociationalism. How can we start some sort of natural evolution toward a more effective state that would leave the entity-based dysfunctional structure in its behind. This study strives to give an unconventional answer to this question.

The Black Hole

Basically, democracy is based on the consent of majority and protection of minority. This sort of conceptualization is completely in line with the prerequisites of modern state which needs at least uniformed means of communication and code of coexistence like language, and in larger form, an instrumentally common culture in which citizenship identity stands as the linchpin. However, modern state has to cope with the problems springing from the fact that societies containing varied cultures encounter with serious difficulties in adapting democratic practices and institutions.

Indeed, there are some examples indicating that if needed, public policy can be formulated in the end of a bargain process between the distinct autonomous communities rather than autonomous individuals. Simply, if (an ethnic) minority considers functional imperatives of modern society as assimilating agents, then a model based on the equality between the communities in terms of bargaining power, and firm control of majorities through the creation of some mechanisms may cushion ethnic tensions. In other words, even in the most deeply divided societies, there is a chance to keep democratic institutions alive while keeping ethnic conflict at bay. Needless to say, the theories of consociational regime have so far championed the idea of democracy within ethnically and linguistically divided societies.

If we follow Lijphart (1997: 277), briefly, consociationalism is based on two major and two supplementary principles; i.e., grand coalition/segmental autonomy, and proportionality/minority veto. According to Ljiphart, a grand coalition is "an executive in which the political leaders of all segments [communities] participate" in other words, is a form of government leaving no opposition at large, whereas, segmental autonomy is "delegation of as much decision-making as possible to the separate segments." As for the supplementary principles, proportionality is "basic standard in the allocation of public posts and funds between the segments" event though it sometimes leads to some troubles relating disproportionality, whereas minority veto is "the ultimate instrument in the hands of outnumbered communities to preserve their distinct identity and cultures," invoking political right to block the will of majority primarily in the legislature.

Of course, consociations are still a subject of discussion. On the one hand, some thinkers resemble consociational regime to a painful state of limbo because they are the product of persisting concern for assimilation and annihilation, and of anxieties regarding political and economic status in a wider society. And on the other some thinkers view it as "the products of resolved struggles or of relatively moderate cleavages" (Horowitz, 2000: 256), rather than the very means of communal survival. However, one must see that consociations are not politically luxurious, and that they have few things to do with the fear of extinction or humiliation also. Beyond it, they have inherent dynamics that keep them intact, or keep the politics in their orbit.

Social rather than Political

Let's look at the Bosnia case. Dayton Agreement of 1995 created a new Bosnia Herzegovina with optimistically temporary asymmetric federal structures under the firm scrutiny of the international community. The agreement envisaged that the parties would amend the constitution –an annex to the main body of the agreement- so as to create a federal state with less powerful entities. However, so far all drafts of amendment have foundered because the elite-led nature of the prevailed regime has rendered them meaningless. According to Bieber (2004: 244-245), that of Bosnia is a process-oriented understanding of power-sharing which allows political or institutional changes when deemed necessary and the office holders in their mood. Furthermore, even those slight touches on the political structure are almost always due to diplomatic demarches from the international community. This inertia may be explained through a different perspective which takes as its locus the

prevailing socio-political structure itself in Galtungian sense, or alternatively by delving into another once-flagrant debate on the nature of consociation between Ljiphart and Elazar.

In the prelude to his text on a comparison between federalism and consociationalism, Elazar pointed out that "federalism relates to the form of a polity, while consociationalism relates to the character of the regime." Classical definitions of consociationalism portray as vital the elite consensus or commitment to sustain the power-sharing. Although Lijphart (1979) takes both consociationalism and federalism as truly constitutional forms, Elazar (1985) contends that there are some outstanding differences between the two in terms of flexibility. Accordingly, "federal systems are more rigid" because federal constitutions very carefully draw the framework of governmental organization, thereby leaving no great space for political maneuver to political elite whereas "consociational arrangements are far more informal" and more independent from constitutional limitations, and rather mostly subject to ad hoc bargaining between the state elite (Elazar, 1985: 17).

Besides, "while federalism involves both structures and processes of government, consociationalism involves processes only" (Elazar, 1985: 23). It does not necessarily mean that in consociationalism processes are not stipulated in the constitution and the relevant body of law, yet according to Elazar (1985: 23), "the closest they come to being embodied in formal structures is through the party system, which is rarely constitutionalized." In other words, determination of processes is highly politicized and still subject to the elite bargaining despite the laws delimiting them. Lastly, Elazar (1985: 25-26) adds, "both federalism and consociationalism are political and social phenomena, with consociationalism perhaps even more of a social phenomenon than federalism."

It follows from the remarks of Elazar that consociationalism should be understood as a political mean rather than a political end. While federalism invokes political design that aim at achieving some goals like political unification, democracy, popular self-government, accommodation of diversities and so forth, consociational arrangement is mostly the result of a compromise between the parties who otherwise would seek dominating or eliminating each other, "if they had their way." With this shape, consociational regime is simply a means of reconciliation that would inevitably become dysfunctional once the parties begin to perceive it as having frustrated the prospect of equality and fair representation (Elazar, 1985: 27-28). [2]

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[2] To avoid misunderstanding, I should mention right here that I am concerned with "structure" as handled by Galtung. For a critique of Elazar advocating the presence of a reciprocal relationships between structure and process see Herman Bakvis, "Structure and Process in Federal and Consociational Arrangements," *Publius*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Federalism and Consociationalism: A Symposium, (Spring, 1985), pp. 57-69.

On the other hand, ironically, a consociation may be the victim of its own success. According to Ljiphart consociations are functional in creating a new segment, a new pillar, a growing group which recruits its members from both antagonist segments, and ties them each other across similar social cleavages. Yet, this new segment may also oppose to the established consociational structure that takes ethnic enrollment as the sole criterion in the distribution of public good, and bargain for a "proportionate stake in the system" (O'Leary,2005: 16). Consequently, a growing number of voters may no longer vote for ethnocentric political parties and in their stead, they may opt for the others politicizing the matter of assimilation –in other words, opening the most undesirable possibility to public deliberation. If all happens, consociation is doomed.

Hence, it follows that once established, consociation reproduces itself unless the parties are very resolved to do their own way against all odds. In Bosnia case, the parties are not allowed to solve the problem on their own; albeit they are endorsed to do so, yet under the political rules determined from outside; i.e. through the Dayton structures. In reality, for a realist the solution is quite simple; for instance Mearsheimer (2008) argued that the Bosnian issue may be settled once and for all by leaving a coastal strip and a port by the Adriatic Sea to the Muslims, redrawing the map, and providing all parties with guarantees for their territorial integrity.

Probably, the parties may be forced to forget repatriation process and sign population exchange agreements that will create demographically homogenous mini states in the region. However, as Noel (2005: IX) underlines, consociationalism has gained a common parlance nowadays in the making of modern peace accords; yet, in my opinion, not only to serve to the future growth of democratic institutions, but also because of some credible reasons like the possibility of proliferation of bloody self-determination wars throughout the world, preserving the current status quo among the rising powers and so forth, or due to intellectual instrumentality which found a decisive academic interest in delving into the dynamic matters of consociationalism. Besides, one should remind the fact that the end of the Cold War prepared a fertile ground in a certain extent for the politicians and academicians to come together and run their abstract social engineering projects in the post-conflict societies; needless to say, the very reason behind why consociation is now a celebrity.

The Crux of the Matter: Ethnic Patronage

However, besides external factors, I believe also that consociations have their own unique socio-economic dynamics that keep them essentially non-substitutable. This characteristic is very explicit particularly in the Bosnia case where constitutional and relevant political reforms can not take off because of the strong gravity pull effect of the established structures and their social, economic and psychological extensions. In reality, it is quite easy to trail the reasons behind; nothing new, just the well-known critiques; first of all, it formally recognizes the group differences and institutionalizes –or fossilizes- them thereby weakening the possibility of creating civic identities relieved of primordial bonds; it suffers from the dilemma between idealized segmental autonomy and lack of demographically homogenous segments and their relevant problems like minorities in the wrong place, repatriation etc; it is mostly flawy in determining the groups to power-sharing, for it turns a blind eye to demographic proportionality and rewards the troublemaker and neglects the silent and so forth.

I wish to bring to the fore one specific point, among the others, the crux of the matter; i.e. it is utterly based on elite consensus and commitment; furthermore, it is oligarchic in nature. I believe that consociations can remain non-substitutable as long as they maintain unique socio-economic structures in which the ruling elite, with the words of O'Leary, "entrenches itself at the peaks of spoils and patronage hierarchies" (O'Leary, 2005: 6). In consociations political elite is supreme, because consociational structures depart and isolate ethnic groups, limit inter-ethnic contact to the level of elite, in an optimistic anticipation, who will steer its respective flock and transform them into constructive elements of a stable democracy (Pickering, 2003: 256-257). Yet, in practice, of course due to some factors, like the protracted conflict's itself or elite's origin, even the mediators' themselves, elites' oligarchic consensus works in utterly contradicting way by protecting patron client relationship in rigidly separated ethno-economic spaces they control, and by endorsing unique civil-society which entrenches mono-ethnic patronage in a strange pluralistic fashion (Belloni, 2001).

Accordingly, we have two important samples from the region, Kosovo and Macedonia, proving that ethnic patronage plays a rather constructive role in the prevention of violent ethnic conflict. After the usurpation of their political rights by Milosevic in 1989, Kosovar Albanians created their own shadow governmental agencies under the leadership of Rugova. Although both moderate Rugova and Belgrade authorities eschewed from giving way to violence for a while, of course for different reasons, their inter-elite consensus had

been without popular support. In Kosovo, the outcome was the bankruptcy of Rugova politics and the rise of the UCK. Because for decades this already poor province saw a gradual process of ethnic homogenization while the Serbian population either took its leave to try its chance in the Serbia proper or Europe or aggregated at the north thereby isolating itself from the Albanian majority (Mertus, 1999). There was no economic interaction, no interethnic patronage network benefiting all, so nothing that could not be afforded.

As for Macedonia, situation was different. Despite their boycott in the beginning of the 1990s, ethnic Albanians of Macedonia founded their political parties and took their places in the multiparty elections. The political division between the Slav nationalists and former communists made their parties indispensible part of parliamentarian arithmetic and finally junior partners of the subsequent coalition governments. While the country underwent a painful transition into market economy, widespread corruption assumed an important function in cushioning the ethnic tensions. Thanks to their key place in the coalitions, ethnic Albanian parties could severely bargain with their Slav partners for getting their constituency benefited from public patronage. Furthermore, the cost of remaining outside the government became so high that finally the Albanian parties were at loggerheads (Mandaci, 2003). Ironically, domestic peace was broken in the beginning of 2001 when an armed group of Albanian mutineers proclaimed that the corrupted Albanian politicians were equally responsible for the unsolved problem of the ethnic Albanians in Macedonia. Furthermore, the leader of the group, Ali Ahmeti, called Albanians to cease to vote for those political dinosaurs and give a chance to new and clean cadres to deal with problems congesting the country's path toward the European Union.

We can extract some lessons for Bosnia from the recent cries in Kosovo and Macedonia. In Kosovo international community created by and large a classical democratic parliamentarian system with limited means of power-sharing. In Macedonia, no suspect the constitutional amendments went further by consecrating the Albanian vote in the parliament. In Kosovo reintegration of the Serbian minority has remained problematical whereas in Macedonia, the constitutional babble did not abate until heyday of Ahmeti's "clean-hands" passed over (Mandaci, 207: 19-21). Finally, the dinosaurs returned and so-called "Badinter principles" became a sort of political trump card in old-fashioned inter-ethnic patronage bargaining. *I believe that this setting is preferable to a manifest conflict yet.* Hence, it follows that elite or grand coalition in the centre may prefer to keep the established consociational structures loose as long as they retain their post without any serious opposition from their own

constituency. On the other side, their constituency may prefer the pending setting as long as they continue to enjoy the benefits of patronage network.

Bosnia differs from Macedonia in that in Bosnia widespread patronage which is in reality a structural defect is not of multiethnic nature. As Belloni (2001: 168) argued in Bosnia even civil society has assumed a function utterly contradicting with what theoretically envisaged; i.e., instead of "a sphere where the power of state is limited by the capacity of individuals to organize themselves collectively", "a space where ethnic elites maintain their domination by fostering social fragmentation and insecurity" (Belloni, 2001: 164). Ironically, the civil society is seen as the linchpin of the project of creating an effective BiH state, the nexus of the third pillar which is expected to resist the established structures. However, in reality, in Bosnia no civil reaction to notorious community leaders has been reported so far, furthermore, civil society seems instrumental for the latter to retain political power. The basic reason why Bosnian civil society malfunctions, Belloni holds, is the fact that it is the product of the failure rather than the success of economic and political incentives to achieve reconciliation (Belloni, 2001: 164), subsequently, as reported by several NGOs in the region, it is a large area where cliental relations remained intact under firm control of the hierarchy of communal leaders, ranging from low profile, ex-war hero/mafia-like local gatekeepers to those who have seat in the Presidential Council.

Ethnocomitology?

So how can we break this vicious circle? There available many opinions to make Bosnia normal state whose citizens would identify themselves primarily as Bosnian. These opinions are changing from reform in electoral system to the establishment of some community councils (Stroschein, 2003) –resembling to those founded in Cyprus, which would have the ultimate say over religious and cultural affairs of respective communities, particularly to override the problem of minority in wrong location. However, it is impossible to avoid ethnic political parties in a regime entrenching itself with constitutional regulations which distributes public sources on the basis of ethnic belonging, and obliges every citizen to register one of ethnic electoral rolls (Boogards, 2004: 263). On the other side, albeit credible, community councils will inevitably suffer from extremely overloaded agendas unless they share their burden with some local committees. In this context, Kosovo is a very suitable case from which one can extract some important lessons.

Before independence, the interim administration in Kosovo, UNMIK, preferred to consolidate a democratic regime with its well-known classical institutions. What made the case problematic was the fact that such a democratic regime in Kosovo, naturally based on the will of majority might generate conflicts between the communities which had long been in hostilities. On the other side, a clear cut power-sharing model which would contain political procedures like ethnic veto was not preferred lest it should deepen the Albanian recalcitrance and exasperate ethnic conflict again. Hence, the Framework Constitution of Kosovo introduced a political representation structure in which primarily Serbian minority in the province positively discriminated. The UNMIK regulations also created local governments, municipalities with remarkable competences thereby driving smaller minorities to see their stake in municipal bodies rather than national political institutions. On the other side, UNMIK abstained from forming national-level interethnic relations committee, like in Macedonia, in which all minorities would be represented and would have a decisive right to say on ethnic, cultural matters (Mandaci: 2005). So what can we do in Bosnia in parallel with Kosovo?

Firstly, we can afford consociationalism in the national level whilst giving way to some of its basic mechanisms –particularly ethnic/communal veto- but this time in a limited fashion in the local level. Secondly, we can amend constitution so as to permit in considerable extent devolution of power from center to local units, but not to the entities. In other words, we can maintain consociational structures i.e., segmental autonomy, grand coalition even proportionality in the centre and introduce a new form of local representation operating in a new logic; a complex network of local committees where ethnic/mutual veto is the crux of politics. I humbly call it *ethnocomitology* instead of the rule of committees or comitocracy, because of its stall effect on democratic decision-making naturally relied on the might of majority over minority. Very roughly, it implies introduction of ethnic/communal veto mechanism in a liquidated way in the local government structures. It envisages the setting up of committees at the local level, in municipalities, which would function as platforms where ethnic communities bargain over their respective problems regarding language, religion, culture and so forth.

In Kosovo, on the national level, decision-making process was so designed as to prevent legislatives that may influence negatively the interests of the communities of Kosovo. The Framework Constitution introduced another barrier, another committee, -so-called Panel- before the majority –read Albanians- of the assembly to avoid violation of the rights of smaller minorities. Yet, this committee would and could be operational only under the

cooptation of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG).[3] However, UNMIK did something revolutionary by setting up some special committees under the Municipal Assembly mandating with the task of ensuring the protection of minorities and prevention of discrimination. The UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 stipulated that the municipal assemblies would establish their own *Communities Committees and Mediation Committees* which would consist of the both the members of the assemblies and representatives of communities.

The regulation conditioned that at least one member of the communities residing within the borders of that municipality take place in the Communities Committees. On the other side, the representatives of the majority community residing in the municipality should constitute at least one half of the membership of the Communities. As for Mediation Committees, it would consist of *the equal numbers* of members of the Municipal Assembly who were not member of the Communities Committee and representatives of the smaller communities within the borders of that municipality. The Mediation Committee should scrutinize that no person undertaking public duties or holding public office discriminates against any person on any ground such as language, religion, ethnic origin, or association with a community; all persons enjoy, on an equal basis, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and fair and equal employment opportunities in municipality service at all levels; and the municipal civil service reflects a fair proportion of qualified representatives of communities at all levels.

On other side, the Communities Committee was designed to observe the decisions of Municipal Assembly, and to bring any violation of the rights of community members before the Mediation Committee in which each ethnic group is represented on equal basis. Accordingly, the Mediation Committee should examine the matters in a specific period (28 days) and to prepare a report finally for the Communities Committee, then the municipal assembly. If Communities Committee found the municipal assembly's final decision on the matter unfair it would refer the matter to the SRSG. In my opinion, Community Councils in Bosnia may replace SRSG.

Another important administrative body was the <u>*Community Office*</u> which was to be established in municipalities where the non-Albanian communities in substantial number

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[3] Accordingly, the regulation envisaged that in 48 hours from the approval of the law by the assembly, any member of the assembly, supported by five additional members, could submit a motion to the Presidency by claiming that the law or its provisions violated the vital interests of the community to which he/she belonged. Yet, this committee would be formed by the SRSG and consist of the representatives of the two sides —the complaining and the representative of the supporters of the draft law. This panel would recommend the assembly the required corrections.

resided. These bodies were considered as temporary, and they could exist only for so long as the SRSG considered them as necessary to comply with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 invoking fair representation and equal participation of minority communities in the administrative structure. This Office would be responsible for enhancing the protection of community rights and ensuring access of communities to public services at municipal level. It was stipulated that this body would also regularly report to the Communities Committee of the municipality. Furthermore, UNMIK announced some sub-offices of might be set up in the future. Accordingly, the Community Office would be responsible in ensuring the equal access of the minorities to the public services in municipalities where they live in "a substantial number."

But there were some serious problems. As mentioned before, the abolishment of cooptation which allowed the SRSG to dismiss any elected member of the municipal assembly changed the composition of the municipal assemblies in Kosovo. Hence, the committees remained marginal once the member of the majority community mostly did not attend the committees' regular sessions and for that reason committees could not be convened. The progress was not promising while I was about to finalize my study on the Turks of Macedonia and Kosovo by the end of 2003. In the majority of the municipalities those committees were either not formed or not convened. However, the involved committees have survived so far interestingly as some sorts of problem-solving workshop platforms. Probably, the problem of institutionalization was derived from the gradually shrinking competences of the UNMIK head in Kosovo. In addition, the UNMIK also abstained from issuing required regulations to make them effective institutions.

As a conclusion

Even though they remained dysfunctional, those committees have some advantages for those who carry out mediation between the communities in Bosnia. If they are institutionalized of course after proper regulation, they may contribute in considerable extent to the reconciliation between the parties, because they would fulfill an important function; namely communication at the micro level, by opening deliberation channels between the localities, providing them with the opportunities for face to face contact, and to develop sense of empathy, and at last, a very dynamic civil society extending its support to those who think politics vertically rather than horizontally.

Secondly, and most significantly, they may help to creation of a large patronage network gradually relieving the communal interactions from the grip of ethnic frictions. They may provide opportunities for trade-offs between ethnical and non-ethnical matters. Due to its highly probable complexities, primarily to political immobilism, ethnocomitology may urge the parties to bypass the committee system and to establish complex, even illegal but inevitably multiethnic patronage bonds. As mentioned above, patronage relations worked well in Macedonia after the crisis in the beginning of the 1990s. Two grand Albanian parties that took their place within a larger patronage network along with the Macedonians, and succeeded in cushioning the ethnic tensions along about a decade. Probably, Kosovo crisis triggered the ethnic frictions, and this special incident led to the developments ended with the Ohrid Agreement.

Thirdly, ethnocomitology may weaken the monopoly of the political elite playing consociationalism in the capital city, in their play garden. At least it may provide them with more time and resources to deal with the more serious problem like infrastructure. On the other side, the localities may learn to sort out practically their problems in the spot without waiting for the directions that may come from above thereby breaking ethnic elite's supremacy. Lastly, ethnocomitology may capture the attention of the students of conflict resolution because it can contribute into the studies of grass-root conflict resolution, or Track III level problem solving. I believe that committees as platforms where the parties may actively bargain on the spot over their problems may provide the parties with open channels for communication, conditions favorable for non-ethnic alliances and opportunity to settle their problems in non-official ways.

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