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**POWER SHARING AS PEACE STRUCTURE:  
THE CASE OF SRI LANKA**

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## POWER SHARING AS PEACE STRUCTURE: THE CASE OF SRI LANKA

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## 1. On power sharing in general: An overview

Humanity does not come in one package, as one well integrated molecule. Humanity comes as individual atoms, and of different kinds, divided by gender, generation, race, class (political, economic, military, cultural--the four forms of power), normal-deviant, nation, and territorial location (household, local, state, region, world).

We shall define a nation as a group of individuals with four, rather important, characteristics in common, in fact, very much of what gives meaning to life beyond economic necessities:

- language - the source of communication
- religion/ideology - the source of identity
- history - the sense of time, past, present, future
- geography - the sense of space, the "geographical attachment"<sup>i</sup>

The word "community" can be used for a nation with shared location, locally or in a state. The word "ethnic" will not be used as it tends to refer to non-whites and/or distant peoples. But the word "people" is in practice used very much like "nation" is used here.

How does humanity link individuals together when they do come as different types of individuals? And out of all these linkages, "molecules", which ones carry peace and which ones not? Keeping in mind that the simplest, most general necessary condition for peace is equality, meaning also equity, symmetry, reciprocity, etc?

There are two general answers, socially and territorially. And in both cases we can talk about closeness and distance.

Socially the linkage is through interaction, exchange, which may be equitable or inequitable, leading to equality or inequality, inclusion or exclusion; the socially close or socially distant.

Territorially the linkage is vicinity, being territorially close as opposed to territorially distant. Or inclusion/exclusion, with a state border separating the excluded from the included.

Let us now combine these two ways of linking individuals as it has been done until recently, and still is done most places:

	<u>Socially close</u> Equitable interaction INCLUSION	<u>Socially distant</u> Inequity EXCLUSION
<u>Territorially close</u> within the same state INCLUSION	GENERATION (but with ghettos for very young and very old)	GENDER CLASS NATION RACE
<u>Territorially distant</u> separated by borders EXCLUSION	CIVILIZATION	NATION RACE DEVIANT

The six divisions or faultlines above are treated differently. Thus, the deviant are segregated in prisons, clinic and hospitals, and the most cohesive link is between generations--younger, middle, older--in the same household, and relatively equitably for the male lineage.

But for gender and class there is much exclusion, even if men and women, and higher-middle-lower classes are indispensable to each other and for that reason must be territorially close (for gender even in the same bed). Nation and race are socially distant by being low or high, like Chinese in Southeast Asia. But they are often also territorially distant. The territorial distribution of culture and race has actually changed very little, except for Iberian-French-Anglo-American white Christians (and some others) who traveled far, colonized others, and now experience a substantial counterflow into their lands.

Nations can also be integrated across borders if they belong to the same civilization, like Christians, or Muslims. The latter often point to the artificial territorial division of the nation of Islam by Western, Christian powers drawing borders during colonialism.

According to this vision there are two major integrating forces:  
 one is territorial, the state, the other is social, the class. The state includes by vicinity and excludes through borders, the class includes through equity and excludes through social, class, borders.

From now on the major focus will be on nation, state and class. A key distinction is between mononational vs multinational states. The state is a piece of land with a central administration, also often called "the state". The problem is, to whom does the state belong? Easily answered for the mononational state but problematic for the multinational state, and that is the problem to be explored.

There have been four major social forces operating on the interface between nation and state: state formation (also called nation-building), democratization, globalization and equalization. State formation was in most cases a brutal process as the dominant nation took possession of a state as its home. "Building multicultural democracies" in the Human Development Report 2004<sup>ii</sup> offers a survey of methods still being used, not

including killing and expulsion:

- centralization of political power, eliminating local autonomy
- construction of unified legal and judicial systems
- adoption of official-language laws
- construction of nationalized systems of compulsory education
- diffusion of the dominant group's language and culture
- adoption of state symbols celebrating the dominant group
- seizure of land, forests and fisheries from minority groups
- adoption of settlement policies favoring the dominant nation
- adoption of immigration policies favoring the dominant nation

All or most of them are well known in most countries. Thus, in Sri Lanka the sinhala only law in 1956 is at the root of the whole conflict. But the other points also make sense, as they all do in Norway, pitting the dominant Norwegians against the minority Sami nation. Or in Chile pitting the dominant mainly ladino nation against the Aymara, the Mapuche and the Rapa Nui (Ester Island) nations.

This **internal colonization** was war, and war by other means. It was a success in creating about 200 states and territories in the world out of which 20 are mononational and 174 are dominated by one nation. Only 6 are symmetric with real power-sharing: Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, Canada<sup>iii</sup>, India and Malaysia. They are all federations. And in all power is shared within one state, and equitably between nations.

## **2. Human Rights:Internal Colonialism = Democracy:External Colonialism**

And it was a failure in the sense that in the 180 multinational states the 180 dominant nations are now under considerable pressure. There are about 2,000 nations in our sense in the world<sup>iv</sup>. Twenty of them, like the Icelanders, Portuguese, Koreans, Italians, Japanese, Norwegians, Finns are basically inhabiting one and only one state so their problem from this point of view is solved. Then there are the 180 dominant nations, under pressure from the remaining  $2,000-(20+180) = 1,800$  nations, meaning an average of 10 potentially irredentist, secessionist nations per multinational country. Thus, German-speaking Swiss, French-speaking Belgians, English-speaking Canadians, Hindi-speaking Indians and Malay-speaking Malaysians and Spanish-speaking Spaniards also feel the heat, even if the language contradictions have been blunted in all six and even with a high level of power-sharing.

Restlessness all over, with potentially 1800 wars of which we have had some, including Sri Lanka, since the end of the Cold War. Why now?

One answer: because human rights have had the same impact on multinational states with one state dominating as democracy had on colonialism. Democracy with one person one vote and majority rule proved very troublesome for colonialism as the colonizers were in a minority in all colonies and in their colonial system as a whole. The system could only be maintained by denying the colonies democracy, in this case also called self-determination as in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 1 (from 1966):

All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Colonialism could not survive the wave of democratization after World War II, fought in its name, and the asymmetric multinational state will not survive the wave of equalization after the Cold War, fought in the name of human rights in general.

Democracy with one person one vote and majority rule was custom-tailored to multinational states with a dominant nation as that nation was usually a majority, sometimes after a long history of ethnic cleansing by various means. Democracy, particularly with "the winner takes all" constituencies, rendered legitimacy to the dominant nations, like in the United Kingdom and the United States who in addition are trend-setting countries in the world. A more absolute, less arithmetic, approach was needed to undo asymmetric multinational states.

That absolute approach was carried by the word "everyone" in the human rights declaration and covenants. And the kind of thing everyone was entitled to very often applied to the dominated nations, like also to the political groups dominated by the institutionalized rule of communist parties in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Cuba.

More particularly, it applied to power. If everyone is entitled to power then power has to be shared, even equalized. And this sharing would apply to the socially excluded everywhere but particularly inside a state as the state has signed the human rights agreement and is responsible for their implementation within the territory of the state.

As pointed out in "Building multicultural democracies" there are two approaches to power-sharing, territorial and social, self-rule and shared rule, federation as a pact between the center and autonomous (self-rule) parts and consociation ("being social together") as shared rule with no territorial divisions. Obviously, the more orderly, the less "entropic", the territorial distribution of the nations the more meaningful a federal approach; the more disorderly, the more "entropic" the distribution the more meaningful a consociational approach.

Consociation also applies to federation, however. There may be self-rule in the parts, but there has to be shared rule in the Center. And the same applies to the parts if they are also mixed, "disorderly".

The wave of globalization is also an important force.

Underlying it is the communication/transportation revolution that has been under way for some time and has made us co-exist synchronically, consociate, across borders to the last corner of the world instead of co-existing with the same people diachronically, through time, at the same place. Of course we do both. But today we are also much more aware of what happens other places. And that does not only apply to awareness of problems, deficits, but also to solutions.

Federalism has now spread to 25 states with 40% of the world population, and consociation is spreading even more over the globe. Whereas federalism can be used for powersharing among nations it makes less sense to allocate two genders and (say) three classes to different and autonomous parts of the country. The entropy is too high. It makes sense for race, though, and more so if race comes with shared language, religion and history, like a history of suffering and redemption.

Ideas about shared rule are spreading all over among the excluded, the women, the lower classes, the dominated nations. That opens for cooperation within any single state, but also for competition. They are fighting a common "enemy", the upper/middle class dominant-nation male, to obtain parity, shared power. But they are also competing for his attention, or social attention in general, as there are limits to how many contradictions a society can process at the same time. There may also be limited space on the sunny side, like in the shape of reserved seats in parliament. Women have an advantage here as some of them belong to the dominant nation, whereas nation and class tend to be heavily correlated. Women are better positioned for agenda-setting, and they also have direct access. In principle each woman can work on her man. But one social dimension does not exclude the other. Together they can improve consciousness and pry the political space open.

### 3. Consociation as a peace structure

And then what do they do? What is this consociation about anyhow?

Linking together equally and equitably, along the four dimensions of class/power: politically, economically, militarily, culturally.

**Politically:** the basic formula is proportionality, meaning seats in the legislature, positions in the executive and in the judiciary proportionate to the presence in the population. For very small groups reserved seats may be the solution in order to have at least one voice (an obvious idea for Samis in Norway and Easter Islanders in Chile). Quotas for some groups may also be above their population proportion for some period to compensate for underrepresentation in the past, even if that runs contrary to the principle of equality of opportunity. One thing to watch against is gerrymandering of election districts.

**Economically:** the basic formula is equality of opportunity, which may start with overcompensation for opportunity deficits in the past. Some nations some places may also prefer some undercompensation for the opportunity excess of the past to being the target of prejudice, discrimination and aggression. Consociation cuts both up and down.

**Militarily:** two basic formulas would be proportionality in all ranks and equality of opportunity for military careers. But this is not good enough as one part of the military may run away with the other. Some internal checks and balances may be appropriate, with qualified majorities for decision-making, and mutual vetoes, at least suspending action. This is important because military forces in multinational states have mainly been used to silence minorities.

But then there is also a third approach, to abolish the military like about 30 states and territories at present so that there is nothing that could be used by Nation A against Nation B. And there is the approach of bringing in outside, "even-handed", armies, and the UN.

**Culturally:** guaranteed presence in public space as street names, signs, texts on money bills, houses of worship, whatever.

And that brings us to public space, such as streets-places-parks, and print and electronic media. Three classical rule for public space are easy access (affordable for all, plenty parking), that public space is functional (as a market place, a beach) and esthetic (clean, nothing offending, but much pleasing, to the senses). This program can be seen as a reorientation of marxist thinking from socializing the means of production to socializing the means of consumption. And, public space being res publica belongs to the public sector politically and economically, with the understanding that a user's fee may be charged.

To this, however, must be added a fourth rule: national equality, meaning that all nations should feel equally at home in public space. Symbolically the space should accommodate them all as statues, music, texts etc., or be totally neutral with no symbols (easy in a park, but not in a street) or by using symbols from another culture (like street signs in English rather than in both Sinhalese and Tamil - the best would be all three). Once here is sensitivity to the issues a solution can usually be found. And if it cannot, there is the possibility of mutual, suspending veto till a solution has been found given the significance of cultural issues for forming or harming identity.

Sharing of cultural power differs from sharing political, economic and military power. Nations usually do not have a specific polity, economy or military built into them, only norms and inclinations. But they certainly come with a culture. In the asymmetric multinational state one culture dominates, the others are dominated. We are striving for symmetry and compromises are generally out, we cannot use half a culture. Nor do we want to hand the state over to a third nation. So, either coexistence or some kind of both-and, multi-culturalism.

#### **4. Multi-culturalism as cultural consociation**

But how many languages/cultures can we learn? 5 theses:

[1] Children and adolescents have a very high capacity for learning, even mastering languages, with no clear upper limit;

[2] Languages flow along the bonding, making learning from significant others easier than school learning, except when there is bonding to the teacher or to class-mates of that language

[3] Each significant other should talk the same language to the child: unity of person, unity of language, no ambiguity

[4] Do not worry too much about mistakes, repeat sentences slowly and correctly, without too much focus on what was wrong

[5] Give the child the chance to come back to significant others for refresher courses: such roots are deep.

To be multi-glot or poly-glot is not only possible, it is simple in a world where nations increasingly inter-marry and live around each other. There are always significant others. And it is rewarding.<sup>v</sup>

But let us broaden from linguistic to cultural competence, using Hawai'i, a place with an extraordinary cultural diversity and symbiosis --all at the expense of the Hawaiians--as an example. There were 800,000 Hawaiians when the white man came (1778), down to 8,000 200 years later, after their land had been taken away, the diseases they got from the white man had been defined as "Acts of God", and English and Christianity had been imposed upon them. But the last twenty years have witnessed an upsurge in Hawaiian consciousness, and also increased interest in genuine, non-commercial Hawaiian culture. An island with Hawaiian culture, US mainland culture (with a mix of first and second generation Europeans, but a higher percentage of people of Portuguese descent), Pacific peoples (particularly Samoans), and East Asians, particularly Koreans, Japanese, Vietnamese and Chinese, and Filipinos.

Even if many no longer talk their languages of origin, they have preserved cultural competence to a considerable extent, for instance with regard to the rites of naming, marriage and burial. All kinds of culinary languages, cooking, are articulated in public restaurants as well as in private homes. And they dish up a linguistic competence which, if not perfect, is impressive.

There is harmony in the sense that violence rarely, if at all, seems to be rooted in inter-nation sentiments. It would be hard not to find patterns of prejudice and discrimination in such a complex society, but relative to other societies around the world the cases are few and far between. And the Hawai'ian sovereignty movement is devoted to nonviolence.

Hawai'i was not designed that way. The take-over in 1893, and the annexation in 1898, were brutal acts of US imperialism, for commercial and military purposes. East Asians and others were brought in as indentured labor. At the top of it all were a handful of white, mainland US families. But as time passed on those laborers used trade unions, the Democratic Party, and education (including the University of Hawai'i) as their stepping stones; and soon found themselves in a comfortable majority.

There may be something to the thesis that "on a small island we all have to learn to live together". But if that is true it should also have been true for those first hundred years, and it definitely was not. A whole people was passing away, with structure and culture, for the eyes of the white conquerors; others were treated not much better than slaves. A better point is probably that Hawai'i is one of the few places on earth where no national group can claim to be the dominant group, numerically or in terms of cultural and/or economic power (militarily there is no doubt as to who runs the game). All are minorities.

But then there is another factor, partly as a cause, partly as a consequence: the way people treat each other on these islands. We are not talking of "tolerance" which certainly is better than intolerance, but far from good enough, in spite of the UN choice of 1995 as the "Year of Tolerance". Tolerance means "you may continue to exist, because I am so generous, even magnanimous, given that I could have unleashed a whole battery of prejudice, discrimination and violence upon you." Passive co-

existence. We are talking about deep consociation at least at the cultural level.

Hawai'i is beyond tolerance with many people broadening their cultural competence. The general theses can be summarized:

[1] People at any age have a high capacity for learning and mastering the essence of other cultures if they want to do so;

[2] Culture flows along ties of vicinity and affinity, neighbors and friends, much better than through school learning;

[3] Each neighbor/friend should be reasonably mono-cultural for the purpose of communication, avoiding too much ambiguity;

[4] Do not worry too much about mistakes, rather, repeat the action correctly without too much focus on what was wrong;

[5] Create the chance to come back to that neighbor/friend once in a while for a refresher course.

Basic codes are transmitted and compared to homologous elements in other cultures: we pray with folded hands to the Lord, they meditate in the position of the Lord Buddha. Like for languages the competence does not have to be active, in speech and writing; passive competence, understanding spoken and written language is also very useful (like in the Swiss National Assembly). Absolutely basic is curiosity and respect, seeing cultural dialogues as a source of mutual growth. A little competence is much better than no competence at all.

In Hawai'i you are supposed to know this minimum, pronounce proper names by and large correctly, have respect for the sacred times and places of Other, know how to eat and enjoy major dishes in other cultures, handle fork/knife and chopsticks correctly (and ketchup vs soy), know how to enter (or not enter) the rooms of Other, how to sit (or not to sit). Above all: you learn to be soft, not to push your own idiom too hard, be open to Other voices and ways.

The experience is that it is entirely possible to be reasonably polyglot and poly-cultural

at the individual level, and at the community level. It is immensely enriching; like living several parallel lives. Some immersion is needed in the significant other and the neighbor/friend. Schooling is a pure substitute for those, but certainly has a role to fill in preparing people for multi-culturalism.

However, one point cannot be stressed enough: competence is not the same as knowledge. Competence means that you can enter a dialogue with Other, like when for the first time you ask "what time is it?" in a foreign language and get the precise hour! Knowledge is to know that phrase, a good beginning, but not more. Competence is to manage time.

Numerous implications can be drawn from such experiences, shared by millions, for the global citizenship of today and tomorrow. Here are ten, formulated as theses.

[1] Like parents, like children? We have tended to take it for granted that parents have a right to raise their children in their own national culture, including their own language and religion, and in the myths of their own nation; glories as well as traumas. Nobody will deny them their right to do so. But parents will in the future have no right to do only this, given that raising their children only into their own nation is totalitarian and even constitutes a major form of brainwashing.

Of the parents of tomorrow we would expect not only that they do the task of handing over their own culture, but also that they open the windows and doors to other cultures. A foreign movie, a book about a religion not their own, inviting foreign tourists home, whatever form of exposure is better than none at all. To be locked up in one's own idiom is simply not good enough.

[2] We increasingly live multi-culturally. With little contact with other nations and their cultures, mono-cultural education could be excused; chances being that most contact would be with people from the same culture, even from the same local community. Even teaching the national (usually meaning dominant) culture was going far, literally speaking. No longer so, today. Mono-cultural education is insufficient preparation for

life in a multi-cultural reality, not only at the world level but also in the local social practice of an increasing number of people. In the field of language this has been recognized. The foreigner among us, as tourist, worker, refugee has to learn our culture. We do not have to learn his, but if we don't we miss an opportunity as one day we may be that tourist, worker, refugee.

This is what I so often experience in East Asia: a complete stranger comes up to me and says, usually in English: "may I talk some English with you?" He is testing out his book/class knowledge, and you can see the delight in his eyes when it works, when I look at my watch and give the answer to his question.

[3] Time has now come for religion and other aspects of cultures, not only languages. Just like parents, and schools, will have to give children and students knowledge of other languages than their own their task will also be to give them insight in other cultures than their own, including religions (cultures of the spirit) and ways of behaving (cultures of the body). The methods include media, meetings with people from other cultures in the local community, and travel to other parts of one's own country and beyond. Just as we appreciate the polyglot person, we should appreciate the multi-cultural person.

[4] Just as for languages, what is demanded is not to believe in other cultures more than in one's own. What is demanded is competence, respect, understanding; a sense of being familiar with, and at home in, other cultures. As we borrow words and expressions from other languages, we shall borrow from other cultures, and have always done so, in a spirit of exchange. A good example, and a very good beginning, is the culture of food, eating. We go out to eat other nations' food, we learn dishes and mix them with our own, we become eclectic, multi-gusto. We may have norms against mixing cultures in the same meal, but not against doing so during the same week.

Switzerland has actually been doing so for generations. Even if the basic staples are unmistakably German, French, or Italian there are often elements of the other two. We can only gain from such practices, sharing the delights of human creativity.

[5] In this process of multi-culturation tolerance is not good enough. Curiosity should be encouraged, and above all respect: how wonderful that you are different from me! let's learn from each other!! The message from the Hawaiian experience is don't just tolerate, enjoy! Feel how you become another person when you talk another language, feel how sharing the meal of another culture makes you a part of that culture, that culture a part of you, we parts of each other.

The point is to leave the old mind-set that some cultures are better than others and enter a new mind-set of seeing all cultures as depositories of human experience. Human beings are similar so there is something to learn from all depositories. But the condition is contact, respect, curiosity, knowledge.

[6] Ideally, cultural exchange should be mutual; not only X learning about Y but also Y about X (thus, do French Swiss learn as much about German Switzerland as vice versa?). I always think of a story I heard the first day I was in Japan as a UNESCO consultant in 1968. St Francis Xavier, the great missionary, had come to Southern Japan, and the Japanese were enchanted with his stories of the life and death of Christ. They wanted to hear the stories a second day, a third day, and so on. They rather liked the stories, found them simply fascinating. But in the end St Francis felt time had come for the appropriate response, for the Japanese to be baptized. The Japanese, however, were of the opinion that now time had come for the tables to be turned around: for the Japanese to tell their stories, and for the foreigners to listen - - -. Which did not happen.

Big cultural powers often see no need for major cultures to master minor cultures. While they find it entirely appropriate that others master their idioms, reciprocity is not called for. Succumbing to this rationale for own grandeur and laziness they deprive themselves of sources of own enrichment. They could study a minor culture within their own lands, another major culture, or a foreign minor culture. The reward is obvious: not eternal life, but parallel lives, reincarnation in another culture - -

[7] In some years the mono-cultural person will be regarded like the mono-glot person today: human, but unfit for this world.

In ever-widening circles in the world to be mono-glot is like being illiterate, a condition to do something about. So the guess is that this attitude will generalize to culture. To be not only disrespectful but without any knowledge of the basics of other cultures will simply be regarded as "bad manners", as something to be corrected, starting with knowledge of religions.

[8] Teaching other cultures, like other languages, can best be done by those who have the culture as their mother culture. The culture as seen by them, not by "our people", who will tend to teach foreign cultures like foreign languages, with an accent. This is basic in the field of religion. Nobody except the true believers will demand, or even hope for, a convert just because somebody studies another religion. But what can be demanded is the effort to understand that other religion as believers in that religion do themselves. This is not a question of what is good or what is bad, and everybody is entitled to make comparisons; indeed, that is one of the many purposes of multiculturalism. The problem is how to make sure that one has really understood; and the guideline suggested here is to start by understanding the way they themselves understand; and then build your own understanding.

[9] The best way to learn foreign languages is through language dialogue, also known as conversation; the best way to learn foreign cultures is to engage in action dialogue. As mentioned several times: through conversation theoretical knowledge becomes practical knowledge, being tested out at every turn of the dialogue. The same applies to culture in a general sense. "When in a Buddhist temple do as the Buddhists do", and having done that some times Buddhism creeps into the mind and the body, supplementing the knowledge derived from reading and conversation. "Learning by doing" is the general rule, as applicable to culture as to anything else. And this is where museums can be dangerous: they encourage an observer, peeping-Tom attitude to other cultures rather than a participatory approach. But, from there a path may lead via participant observer to participant. Food should preferably be enjoyed, not be preserved in a glass monster. And the same applies to clothing, body language, any aspect of culture.

[10] The goal is not one single world culture, but softer cultures, more capable of learning and absorbing from others, for world peace. So far the discourse chosen here has been very neutral: all cultures have been seen as equally good, all cultures have something to offer, all cultures give us food for thought (and thoughts about food), all cultures can be a source of dialogues for mutual enrichment.

This may hold for cultures as a whole. But not all aspects of all cultures are worth learning. Rationalizations of violence, repression and exploitation are also parts of cultures. Maybe those who dwell in these cultures have become so used to these aspects that they no longer sense them? And, maybe the foreigner with a fresh look may have an important task in asking questions unasked in and by the culture itself? Do you really mean that?, the outsider may ask of the more violent parts of the Torah, the New Testament, the Qur'an. And the believer may be hard pressed for an answer that convinces himself, let alone the outsider.

Underlying this is an attitude to culture very different from the classical student of culture, be that as a cultural anthropologist, a theologian, an historian (of ideas), a philosopher: culture as something static to know and understand up till the way it is today, not as something dynamic that can be shaped, also by studying and mastering it. Again, the key word is dialogue, the "dialogue des civilizations", and beyond that mutual learning, not as something carried out for mutual information, or once and for all by some key spokes-persons, but for everybody on earth to participate in, shaping cultures fit for active co-existence. Asking not only what cultures do we have, but what cultures do we want, adequate for environment, for development and peace. In a multi-cultural country, regional or even global culture.

## 5. Power-sharing: Federalism, Consociation, Both-And, Neither-Nor?

The point of departure is a state with internal colonization by the dominant nation, whether as minority dictatorship or the dictatorship of the democratic majority. There has been resistance. The methods available in the political system, including the use of free speech, have been used. Nonviolent resistance has been tried, maybe not the whole range for lack of knowledge. The resistance then became violent, as ugly as violence is, against an army commanded by the dominant nation. Both parties are supported from abroad, the dominant nation from countries with the same problem who would hate to see any change in the status quo, the dominated nation by their own nation abroad (including the diaspora) and others with their problems.

The struggle is becoming globalized, or at least regionalized. People lay down their lives for basic change: what do they get in return? How do the leaders justify the call to arms and the struggle with the final settlement? And, even more problematic, how do the leaders of the dominant nation justify their call to arms for a status quo against human rights? That it was their duty, "theirs but to do and die"? As self-defense? That any basic change would insult human rights even more? Or simply by hoping that time will heal all wounds?

These are among the many problems that come in the wake of violence. Violence has to be justified, and sacrifice even more so because it hits one's own kind, dominated or dominant. On the other hand, like there is a certain symmetry to violence there is also a certain symmetry to the need to justify its use, and the sacrifice. It is in the interest of both sides to recognize that need in the other if peace is the goal. Unconditional capitulation does not build peace. There must be something for all parties in any final settlement, beyond addressing the grievances of the dominated nation.

Thus, of the four alternatives, power-sharing by self-rule, by shared rule, both-and or neither-nor, the "neither-nor" option can be left out. Something has to happen. If nothing happens, meaning that the conditions that produced the violence are still there,

violence will in all likelihood be reproduced. And all has been in vain.

"Federalism only" can also be left out. As long as there is a Center and some mix of nations in some or all of the Parts there will be a need for some consociation, for equitably shared rule. We cannot go on subdividing territorially for ever with one Chinese box/Matrushka inside one Chinese Box/Matrushka inside one Chinese Box/Matrushka and so on, ad inf. Except, that is, when all the Parts are practically speaking nationally homogeneous, no "disorder" anywhere, and the Center is down to as minimum like an annual meeting of the national leaders.

But in that case we no longer have a federation, but a confederation.

There are also heavy arguments against "consociation only".

One line of argument would be that it is difficult to understand why Tamils in Sri Lanka cannot have a Tamil Eelam when Tamils in India can have a Tamil Nadu inside an Indian Union which, in fact, is a federation, and a very imaginative one. And it is not obvious that India has any right to demand "so far but not further" lest that might encourage "unrest" in Tamil Nadu. They should rather be grateful if something new and creative could come out of the Sri Lanka process.

Another line of argument would be that federal political autonomy is a condition for real cultural autonomy, for living the Tamil cultural idiom fully, holistically, with no compromise. Why should the Tamils not have that opportunity? Consociation is good in bringing cultures together, even creating a space to go further, being syncretic, going beyond existing, to some extent frozen, cultures. But is not the way to realize one's own nation's potential to grow further.

That leaves us with the both-and option and the effort to combine the good sides of federalism, autonomy, self-rule, realizing oneself with the good sides of consociationism, sharing responsibility, growing together, also with the Muslim part, and the Christian part. On the basis of equality culturally and militarily, including the right of veto, and on the basis of proportionality politically and economically. But that very proportionality at the federal, Center, level is also an argument in favor of autonomy in

some Part. Tamils and Muslims should also have the right to build polities and economies their way and not always submit to the rules of arithmetic.

There is also another line of argument in favor of both-and. No doubt some peace can be built by "federalism only" and by "consociation" only as long as the principles of equality and equity are respected. But, if there are two approaches to peace, why not use both? If one fails there is still the other, the argument of diversity. But there is also the argument of symbiosis, that the two approaches tie in with each other in a synergistic way. Federalism makes it easier for each community to focus on its own development along its own line. But consociationism makes it easier through shared rule to have shared concerns and responsibilities. The North is concerned with itself, so is the South. Through consociation in the Center of the federation, and elsewhere, the North will also be concerned with the South, the South with the North, and both with Muslim part of the East and vice versa. Countless synergies could be expected like those spelt out in the culture section above. And Sri Lanka could regain its position as a developmental model.

Ecologists use the terms maturity and robustness for eco-systems that are high on diversity and symbiosis.

Combining federation and consociation would make Sri Lanka a very mature and robust country.

## NOTES

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- i. In the UNESCO definition of "nation".
  - ii. Oxford University Press, for United Nations Development Programme, New York, p. 48.
  - iii. When Canada is mentioned linguistic parity English-French comes up. But equally o more important is the move towards autonomy for the First Nations, like in the self-governing territory arrangement for the Nunavut in 1999.
  - iv. The number of cultures is, of course, much higher. Thus, there are 6,000 languages with one country, Papua New Guinea, being host to 1,000 of them, teaching 369 of them in 3,600 schools. On the other hand, 85% of Africans speak 15 core languages (Building - - pp. 61-63).
  - v. Thus, polyglots tend to outperform others in other fields, see UNDP op. cit, p. 61.