

## *Small States*

politics means that the other aspect, the symbolic one of parliamentary elections or of referendum, is purely illusory. These more symbolic processes can be extremely important when it is necessary to change some of the ground rules in accordance with which the '*proporz*', consociational or corporatist democracies function daily. The ground rules must be changed when the internal or external situation changes drastically, and these more symbolic types of politics are of crucial importance as possible legitimizers of the ground rules and of possible changes within them.

Insofar as a small state is able to develop and maintain these various mechanisms it can provide enough flexibility in decision-making. The ability to overcome the profound difficulties created by the existence of vertical segmentation and intersegmental cleavages is explained by a conscious effort on the part of the political elites to achieve inter-elites' accommodation. This tends to reverse centrifugal forces at the level of the lower strata of the segments. This inter-elite accommodation is achieved by a combination of institutional and behavioral arrangements which include the formation of an 'elite cartel' and a tradition of highly developed bargaining procedures. From an institutional standpoint, accommodation is achieved through formal or informal proportional representation, which in states with multiple cleavages created the need for coalitions on almost all levels of central and local government. To these institutional and behavioral patterns one should add the continuous attempts of public policymakers at segregating major areas of decision-making, in order to allow the subcultural groups as much autonomy as possible in arranging their own affairs.

## V.

These characteristics of the especially European small states have most fully crystallized in the period of native European modernity, from about the nineteenth century on, and of the crystallization of the European nation states. This period was characterized by several specific ways in which social spaces and institutions were structured. This structuration was characterized by a very peculiar combination on the one hand, of symbolic, ideological distinctions between different arenas of life, a sharp demarcation of the boundaries between such areas, together with the development of very specific symbolic institutional and organizational linkages between them.

Among such major semantic distinctions were those between family and occupation, work, and culture; between public and private realms; between