**TRINITARIANISM**

in U.S. History

In trinitarian divine government, a plurality of Persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) shares sovereignty in the Godhead. In constitutional American government, sovereignty is shared to restrain human nature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>deity of Christ</th>
<th>Basically evil human nature requires the divine Jesus Christ to atone for man's sin. — therefore — Liberty requires virtuous citizens and the rule of law, based on laws' original intent.</th>
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<td>deprivatiy of man</td>
<td>The deity of Christ requires government to be trinitarian in structure, to restrain human sovereignty. The Great Awakening led Americans to reaffirm the pessimistic view of human nature in government.</td>
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As political trinitarians, Americans in the American Revolution rejected subordination of the many colonies to the one sovereign king. In the U.S. Constitution, they rejected subordination of the one Articles of Confederation Congress to the many sovereign states. Instead they created a federal system that shared sovereignty between federal and state governments and denied full sovereignty to either.

James Madison, in *Federalist No. 51*, worked from the premise of the pessimistic view of human nature, which is a corollary of the deity of Christ:

*But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.*

Madison wrote this in context of British constitutional history, which drew on Biblical principles and therefore restrained human sovereignty in government.

| separation of powers | "Shared sovereignty" is oxymoronic in human government but inescapable in trinitarianism. |
| mixed government | Restraints on the exercise of popular sovereignty reflect acknowledgment of divine sovereignty. |
| federalism | Trinitarianism meant states' rights, not state sovereignty; and constitutional, not federal, supremacy. |
| delegate powers | The Constitution is silent on the right to secede due to its trinitarian principle of shared sovereignty. |
| reserved powers | If states could secede, they are sovereign; if they could not, the federal government is sovereign. |
| concurrent powers | The Constitution is silent on the right to secede due to its trinitarian principle of shared sovereignty. |

Resolving the right to secede destroys trinitarian shared sovereignty, whichever side wins. The Civil War occurred when the seceding South wrongly equated constitutional states' rights under the Constitution with unconstitutional state sovereignty over the Constitution.

| no right to secede | States and nation are equally ultimate, like the three Persons and the one Godhead. |
| no ban on secession | After 1865 the Union was trinitarian in structure but unitarian in logic. |
| Federal sovereignty over money and banking | Unchecked by the gold standard, welfare-state deficits took hold. |
| developed. | Trinitarianism meant states' rights, not state sovereignty; and constitutional, not federal, supremacy. |
how these Christian school texts might improve:
relate trinitarianism to CONSTITUTIONALISM & unconstitutionality

These views are constitutionally flawed.

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<th>CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY</th>
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The Constitution harmonizes individuality (states) and unity (federal government), both equally vital to liberty.

Liberty required individuality above all. (Romanticism) John C. Calhoun

Jeffersonianism
Jacksonianism
Strict construction
Original intent
States' rights
Tariff for revenue

Hamiltonianism
Clay's "American System"
1860 GOP Platform
Loose construction
National bank
Protective tariff
Federal aid to internal improvements

Liberty required unity above all. (Unitarianism) William Ellery Channing

Nullification
Sovereign states were final judges of constitutionality of federal acts.

States' rights under the Constitution differed from state sovereignty over the Constitution. The Civil War destroyed state sovereignty but not states' rights. States' rights never meant nullification.

No more states' rights
By destroying state sovereignty, the Civil War in effect repealed the 10th Amendment.

Right of secession
Either secession, or its defeat, destroyed a Union where sovereignty was shared. Can a state secede? really asked, Where does sovereignty ultimately lie? If states could secede, they were ultimately sovereign; if they could not, the federal government was ultimately sovereign. The Constitution said nothing of secession because it shared sovereignty: there was no constitutional right to secede, and no constitutional power to stop it.

Defeat of secession "preserved" the Union.

Black codes
Southern states abridged constitutional rights of freedmen.

The 14th Amendment did not restrain the states for the first time. The Constitution had always restrained the states, by prohibiting some state actions, and by delegating certain powers to the federal government alone. But until beginning in 1925, the U.S. Bill of Rights was held to restrain only the federal government, not the states.

Radical Reconstruction
The federal government abridged constitutional rights of southern whites.

State banks could emit bills of credit. (Briscoe v. Bank of Kentucky, 1837)

The Constitution forbids states to emit bills of credit. The Constitutional Convention rejected a bid to let the federal government emit bills of credit.

Federal government could emit bills of credit. (Julliard v. Greenman, 1884)

what it says now:

United States History for Christian Schools
Bob Jones University Press (2001)

Rightly connects the pessimistic view of human nature to checks and balances and separation of powers at the federal level; does not relate that to trinitarian shared sovereignty between federal and state governments, in contrast to nullification and secession; fails to distinguish constitutional states' rights under the Constitution from unconstitutional state sovereignty over the Constitution, which was exactly the South's error in 1861; implication of this confusion is that repudiation of nullification and secession in 1865 effectively repealed the 10th Amendment – the very view that this text properly deplores in judicial activist readings of the 14th Amendment’s due process clause.