

Unity in Diversity: Federalism in Multiethnic Country Nepal

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Abstract

Federalism, in general and multiethnic federalism, in particular is supposed to be a device to create unity in diversity in multiethnic country. Multiethnic federalism, a form of federalism, in which the territorial government or state is carved out based on nation or ethnic category to enable national minorities to exercise indigenous and ethnic minority rights like self-rule and autonomy is supposed to be a device to create unity in diversity in multiethnic country like Nepal. In Nepal, indigenous nationalities, and Madhesi communities who, historically, have been excluded in state's institutions, have demanded multiethnic federalism, identity-based federalism on their own term, as an institutional device for their inclusion in the state. They have argued that it is a device to generate unity in diversity through accommodating diversity in the state. But there was no consensus on this issue while making the constitution through the constituent assembly. Some have argued that it would be a 'castist' (Jatiya) state if ethnic-based federalism is adopted. In this article, I have argued that multiethnic federalism is a device to end the nature of the age-old exclusionary Nepali state and an institutional mechanism of healing the inter-ethnic rupture of Nepali society. Indigenous nationalities in Nepal have demanded separation within a state to protect and promote their identity based on democratic values rather than separate from a state of their own. For this purpose, I have reviewed theoretical articles and critically analyze how it creates unity in diversity in a multiethnic country like Nepal.

Key Words: *multiethnic federalism, inclusion, unity in diversity, self-rule and autonomy, identity.*

Introduction

Particular kind of society requires particular form of government for maintaining social harmony. Federalism, in general and multiethnic federalism, in particular is supposed to be a device to create unity in diversity in multiethnic country. According to Livingston (1952), 'federal form of government is a device by which the federal qualities of the society are articulated' (p.82). It is based on the objective of combining unity in

diversity (Watts, 2007). It creates unity in diversity within a larger political union through accommodation, preservation, and promotion of distinct identities (ibid). To accommodate, preserve, and promote distinct identities with right to self-rule, federalism is to be multination (Kymlicka, 2007) or multiethnic in multiethnic country.

There is a great debate on whether multiethnic federalism¹ creates unity in diversity or not. Should multiethnic society, necessarily, adopt a multiethnic federal form of government? It is a political-ideological question. Generally, liberal political ideologists who are in favor of the nation-state have arguments that the state is neutral to ethnicity and nationalities. They have a line of thinking about creating a single national identity for unity even among diversity. The state should create a single national identity to unite diversities. So, there is no need to have multiethnic federalism in a multiethnic country, either. The aim behind the slogan like 'One nation, one language, one costume' is to create a single national identity like Nepali, in our context, to unite a heterogenous population into a single identity. For this purpose, acculturation (Hinduization process for Shrinivas) of distinct identities is adopted as a process (Birch, 1966). But Suresh (2009) argues that stable national identity cannot be created through homogenizing logic of the nation-state.

In many countries, sub-state national groups, indigenous people, and indigenous nationalities have been going to war with the state over issues of political representation/inclusion, language rights, control over resources, and autonomy. For example, sub-state national groups like the Catalans and Basques (in Spain), the Flemish (in Belgium, and Quebecois (in Canada) have been fighting over these issues. Likewise, indigenous peoples like the Sami (In the Scandinavian countries), Inuit (in Canada and Denmark), etc. also have been fighting over the issues. In our context, indigenous nationalities have been fighting for years over these issues (Gurung, 2012, Mabuhang, 2070, Hatchethu, 2070). Since they are underrepresented or excluded, and marginalized, they have been seeking an alternative for their representation and inclusion in the state's institutions forming an umbrella organization like Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN).

There are multiple democratic and undemocratic ways to address such issues of indigenous nationalities and ethnic people practiced in different countries in the world. Suresh (2007) explores three modes: (i) assimilative mode of nation-state, (ii) hegemonic control by the authoritarian / military regimes, and (iii) federal accommodation incorporating the concern for pluralism and multiculturalism. Above all, federal in general and multiethnic federal accommodation, in particular, is a democratic mode.

¹ Multiethnic federalism is a form of federalism in which the territorial government or state (all or some) is carved out on the basis of nation or ethnic category to ensure their self-rule. Such a federalism is known as multination, ethnic-based or ethnic federalism, either.

Some of the political parties along with the communities from indigenous nationalities and Tarai Madhesh have demanded a multiethnic federation, identity-based federalism/federation² in their own term, in Nepal. They were more vocal about it during the constitution-making process through the constituent assembly. But a consensus could not be made among political parties and other stakeholders on this issue in the first constituent assembly. So, the first historic constituent assembly was dissolved without fulfilling its responsibility of drafting a new constitution of Nepal through a people-elected constituent assembly. The second constituent assembly was formed from the second election of the constituent assembly. A new federal constitution was drafted which is in the process of implementation. The umbrella organization of indigenous nationalities of Nepal, Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) still have been demanding multiethnic federation, and identity-based federalism of their own term (1991). Naming province no. 1 is still pending due to the same reason behind.

Whether multiethnic federalism/ federation would do good for creating unity in diversity or not in multiethnic, multilingual countries like Nepal has been an issue of debate. There are two opposite views on this issue. One of the views insists that multiethnic federalism is an institutional mechanism to deal with ethnic issues. It is a proper institutional way of addressing the identity-related demands of ethnic communities. And, it creates unity in diversity (Kymlicka, 2007, Burgess, 2012, Elazar, 1991). On the other hand, there is another view that multiethnic federalism or multiethnic federation is not an institutional mechanism to address the identity-related demands of indigenous nationalities like that of Nepal. It promotes secession (Hale, 2002, Cornell 2002; Roeder 2009; Anderson 2014). If we do so, Nepal, it becomes a castist state (*Jatiya Rajya*) which results in the country into different small independent sovereign countries. But again, organizations of indigenous nationalities have demanded multiethnic federalism, identity-based federalism in their own term, in Nepal and argue that such federation becomes a device to create unity in diversity.

In this paper, I, therefore, have tried to juxtapose both lines of arguments and contextualize them in the context of Nepal. My foremost argument is that multiethnic federalism can be an institutional mechanism of inclusion to address an identity-based agenda of indigenous nationalities of Nepal. It creates unity in diversity creating an inclusive democratic state. Since it is a theoretical discussion, largely, my arguments are based on secondary information.

² Multiethnic federalism and multiethnic federation are different. A multiethnic federation is a particular kind of state based on the principle of multiethnic federalism. But I use these terms interchangeably here for my purpose.

Federalism: Theory and Practice

Generally, there are two options for heterogeneous countries in terms of ethnicity and language, while dealing with heterogeneity. One, just to ignore or assimilate with the dominant group, and second, to recognize and give them space to flourish. Ignoring them may cause interethnic conflict and giving them space, which is the best way to create unity in diversity, to be protected and promoted needs a particular kind of political mechanism. There are many such mechanisms and one of them is multiethnic federalism.

Federalism, in general, and multiethnic federalism in specific, is the opposite concept of a nation-state. It is defined as a form of federalism in which federated states/provinces are explicitly designated as the ethnic homeland (Hale, 2004), Roeder, 2009, Bunce and Watts, 2007). There may be all, some, or at least one territorial government/state carved out based on nation or ethnic category. The internal boundary is drawn on the ethnic basis to enable minorities to exercise minority rights of self-rule and autonomy. Kymlicka (2007) terms it as multination federalism. According to Kymlicka and Baogang (2005), multination federalism is 'creating a federal or quasi-federal subunit in which the minority group forms a local majority, and so can exercise a meaningful form of self-government and where the group's language is typically recognized as an official state language, at least within their federal subunit, and perhaps throughout the country as a whole' (p.112). Sometimes, for the drawing of internal boundaries, language is the determinant for such federalism. India is an example of it. Hale (2002) terms it as multinational federalism.

Based on the role federalism plays in dealing with ethnic issues, it is categorized into two. The first is mono-national or mono-ethnic and the second is multination/multinational or multi-ethnic federalism. Mono-ethnic federalism, also called territorial, is organized in such a way that the country's national minorities are also minorities within each of the federated units, either. In such federalism, federal states may perfectly well reflect the federal ideal without necessarily being concerned with national or ethnic diversity (Alain-G, 2021). There may be a separation of powers but fail to develop different sorts of policies for different people having different identities. Such federalism is characterized as 'the universal protection of individual rights, the neutrality of the state concerning different ethnic groups, the absence of an internal boundary for ethnic groups, the division and diffusion of power within a single national community, and regions rather than ethnicity being the basic unit of federal polity' (He, 2007, Pp.11). The intention behind it is nation-building, the elimination of internal ethnic or national differences through homogenization process (Hale, 2004). Such federalism is not linked to the ethnic question or ethnic issue. It is used to be a tool to state and build the nation. It does not aim at the protection of minorities through the institutionalization of national-ethnic differences (ibid.).

Generally, the country having a demographically homogenous society adopts such federalism since they do not have to deal with the issues of inclusion based on nation and nationalities, right of language, and demand for self-rule and autonomy of nation and nationalities. Australian federation is an example of such federalism. Whereas, multiethnic federalism is another way of implementing the federal idea which is based on the-regional federal states. It is, generally, adopted in countries that are nationally or ethnically heterogenous and are to deal with the political, social, and cultural issues of ethnicity or nationalities.

Dealing with identity-related issues like language, culture, and demand for self-rule and autonomy, in such federalism some or all of the federated units /states are constructed to follow ethnic boundaries, providing ethnic communities with a measure of autonomy (Yonata, 2012). In the context of Europe, Kymlicka (2007) defines multiethnic federalism, a multination federation in his own term, as 'creating a federal or quasi-federal subunit in which the minority group forms a local majority, and so can exercise meaningful forms of self-government, and where 'the group's language is typically recognized as an official state language, at least within their federal subunit, and perhaps throughout the country as whole' (Kymlicka and Baogang, 2005;23-24).

Multiethnic federalism, in essence, emerges in response to the proclamation of substate national identities, but it also tends to reinforce and institutionalize those identities, as well as to reinforce the sense of geographical and cultural boundaries between groups (Kymlicka, 2007). Such a form of federalism involves a serious redistribution of political power and economic resources with sub-state national groups because the federation remains one state with a certain degree of autonomy. The federalism of Switzerland, Canada, and India are examples of this kind. Particularly, linguistic communities are bases of Indian federal units. Thus, the key distinction of this federalism is whether the boundaries of the internal units are drawn in such a way that at least some of them are controlled by national or ethnic minorities or not. The state recognizes the right to territorial autonomy by ethnonational groups nor not. Therefore, it is an institutional design or political organization of a given society when it is constituted by groups of different nationalities (Alain-G, 2021). Such a form of the federation may be established where ethnic groups are concentrated in geographical localities (Liam, 2013).

Basically, according to Alain-G (2021), in multiethnic, multinational in his term, federalism is adopted for achieving some specific objectives. First, decoupling and distinguishing the notions of 'nation' and 'states', second, strengthening a sense of identity through the implementation of politics of recognition, third, developing a better equilibrium between self-rule and shared rule through the implementation of a multiplicity of collaborative initiatives while valuing the principle of political autonomy. Though David

Brown (Brown,2007) argues that such federalism is unstable and problematic since it may promote contentious violence and is likely, eventually, to break down the nation-state. The provision of ethnic self-rule and autonomy pave the way for secession (ibid.). But opposite to such argument, Alan-G (2021) argues that multiethnic or multinational states, put limits on the domination of the majority nation or dominant ethnic group over other national or ethnic groups whereas Brown (2007) argues that such federalism inhibits the democratization process and promotes secession, ultimately. Self-rule and autonomy (Ghai, 2000) do not promote but prevent secession. There are examples of Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand to support such arguments. But multinational federalism in Canada, Belgium, and India are examples of promoting unity in diversity in multiethnic and multilingual countries.

Multiethnic federalism has occurred as a process of disaggregating the unitary structure of a state into several self-governing territorial units as sub-state national groups or nationalities who wanted to 'express their distinctive identities through smaller, directly accountable self-governing political units able to give expression to historical, social, linguistic or cultural identities' (Watts and Kincaid, 2008:8). According to Kymlicka (2007), many western democracies have contained the desire of self-government of minority groups which describe themselves as 'nations'. Such a desire was suppressed previously as a threat to the state since it is 'the most direct threat to the legitimating ideology of the modern nation-state and to the state's claim to rule over all its citizens and territory' (Kymlicka 2007; 34.). But the ideology of the nation-state has been weakened as a result of the politics of recognition in the democratization process, multi-ethnic federalism has become a paradigm form. A nation-state implies monoculturalism which denies people-hoods to the weak and the minorities; only the hegemonic majority enjoys people-hood (Oommen, 2012), nation and ethnic minorities demand their political rights of self-rule and autonomy through multinational federalism.

In this context, Kymlicka (2005) is right to say that multinational federalism might be more problematic if the country is undemocratic and illiberal. He, in the context of Asia, argues that multinational federalism might be problematic because Asian countries, comparatively, are 'authoritarian or illiberal and some of the minority ethnonational movements have a longer or more mass-based tradition of violent protest in pursuit of their goals. As a result, there is the terror that ethnonational federalism might produce autonomous provinces governed by militant ethnonational elites imposing undemocratic 'islands of local tyranny' (Kymlicka, 2005).

Now, an increasing number of western democracies that contain national minorities or ethnic nationalities accept that they are 'multi-nation' states rather than 'nation-states' (Kymlicka, 2007) since national minorities or ethnic nationalities claim themselves as nation

or nationalities and seek self-rule and autonomy. Multiethnic federation, consequently, became a genuine institutional mechanism, a virtually universal trend in the West, to accommodate such a demand.

Basically, according to Kymlicka (2007), such institutional mechanism has included the following three elements: '(i) territorial autonomy, (b) the minority's language is accorded the status of an official language in the territory, either as a co-equal official language with the majority language or indeed as the primary or sole official language; and (c) the self-governing region exercises control over a broad range of public institutions, reflected most obviously in control over education from primary to post-secondary education, including universities in their own language' (p.36). These elements of multinational federalism address the demands of autonomy and identity-related issues of nationalities. It helps create unity in diversity since it accommodates diversity and ensures the right to self-rule.

Definitely, there are scholars against multiethnic federalism and autonomy either. There are scholars (Cornell 2002; Roeder 2009; Anderson 2014; Hale 2011; Selassie 2003) who argue that ethnic-federalism fundamentally is flawed institutional arrangement for managing diversity since it gives privilege to some identities and interests and excludes others. For them, autonomy is a source of conflict. Roeder (2009), insists that the creation of ethnic federal subunits or autonomous regions is to mount a secessionist challenge since it furnishes ethnic leaders with the institutional resources necessary for the same. He further argues that such subunits are endowed with constitutionally guaranteed competencies and apparatuses of governing institutions to be capable of articulation demands (ibid.). In the same line of thinking, Cornell (2002), argues that 'the institution of autonomous regions is conducive to secessionism because institutionalizing and promoting the separate identity of a titular group increase that group's cohesion and willingness to act, and establishing political institutions increases the capacity that group to act' (p.252). But it is the provision of autonomy not to secede but prevent secession (Ghai, 2000) since it creates an environment to let all identities flourish equally.

Typically, an example of the collapse of Yugoslavia is given to prove that multiethnic federalism is a tool for the secession of the country. But Yugoslavia collapsed not because of a multiethnic federation but because it was not democratic (Malesevic, 2000). Another example of Ethiopia's experiment is given as the greatest risk of failure. But 'Ethiopia's experiment in ethnic federalism is at greatest risk of failure, not because it is too ethnic, but because it is not sufficiently federal' (Turton 2006:29 cited in Bhattachan, 2012).

Similarly, Hale (2011) argues that multiethnic federalism in which components regions are invested with distinct ethnic content is more likely to collapse since a single ethnic region enjoys pronounced superiority in population. So, dividing a dominant group into multiple federal regions reduces these dangers. Thus, ethno-federalism instituted without a core ethnic region avoids ethnic conflict while maintaining state unity in ethnically divided countries. In the same line of thinking, Selassie argues that multiethnic federalism is flawed since it gives rise to two very divergent and potentially conflicting visions of citizenship: national and sub-national. It fosters and reinforces the political, social, and psychological separation of ethnic groups (Selassie, 2003). But against these views, Kymlicka (2007) argues that such federalism promotes equality between the majority and minority groups since there is not one group systematically vulnerable to the domination of another group.

Thus, theoretically, multinational federalism, with some conditions, may be a genuine political device to create unity in diversity in the multiethnic, multilingual country since it assures ethnic and national minority groups the right to self-rule to protect and promote their diversity. One of the essential conditions is democracy and liberal democratic values. Actually, the provision of self-rule and autonomy itself as well as a part of the democratization process.

Federalism in Multiethnic Nepal: Unity in Diversity

Essentially, there are two options that it might wish to follow if a state is heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity, language, and religion. One is to transcend ethnic differences disregarding heterogeneity and attempt to develop a single national identity along a single culture or ideology. This approach is to create a single national identity – a mono-cultural society. And the other option is to accommodate the ethnic diversity of the state. In this option, the state can choose to promote a harmonious coexistence of separate ethnic groups. It may not be possible to create a harmonious society transcending ethnic differences and attempting to create a mono-cultural society in a heterogeneous society (Khanal, 2078). In creating harmony in society there must be harmonious coexistence of separate identities. So, embracing diversities is an apt option for this. In the context of Nepal, multiethnic federalism is supposed to be taken as one of the mechanisms of accommodating diversity in terms of ethnicity, language, and culture (Bhattachan, 2012, Hatchethu, 2070, Mabuhang, 2070, Gurung, 2012, Thapa, 2011). For a long period of time, Nepal has promoted the process of Sanskritization (Sharma, 2004) and acculturation policy to create harmony in the society under unitary state. And, indigenous nationalities have raised voice against this process historically (Sharma, 2004). Therefore, multination rather than mono-national federalism may be an institutional mechanism to create unity in diversity in Nepali society.

Actually, the acculturation policy threatened the identities of many ethnic groups. According to Suhrke (2014), 'it also alienated groups, notably in the Easter Hills, who had historical memories of power and high status in the earlier period before the formation of the Nepali state in the 19th century' (p.11). According to Fessha (2012), a multiethnic state has to recognize its ethnic diversity to build unity in diversity. If a multiethnic state suppresses diversity and attempts to build a common national identity based on the core culture of a particular ethnic group, there may be a violent ethnic nationalist movement (ibid.). Therefore, a multiethnic state is to avoid an attempt to homogenize its ethnically diverse population and transform it into a nation-state so as to create unity in diversity.

Though Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual, multireligious country, certain caste groups (Brahman and Chhetri), certain language speaking groups (Khas Nepali), certain religious groups (Hindu), and certain region's people (Hill) have occupied the important state's institutions and the rest like indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, Dalits are excluded and marginalized. They have been excluded not only politically but also economically, culturally, and linguistically. Therefore, the excluded and marginalized groups are in a state of statelessness in their own country. By the end of the 20th century, the Nepali state was in the grip of one social segment-the Brahmin-Chhetri from the hill region. Though they constituted about 30 percent of the total population, they held 80 percent of the office-level entry positions in the government service (Thapa, 2011;6). The report published by World Bank and DFID shows that these groups are economically as well more privileged (World Bank and DFID 2006). Likewise, discriminatory practices were visible in government jobs: Madhesi filled only 5% of the government jobs (International crisis group, 2007). They are inadequately represented in Army, Police, and other institutions of the state compared to other ethnic communities. Thus, the sharp, systemic inequalities among castes and ethnic groups have prevailed. Such a condition of inequality is one of the reasons for the Maoist insurgency launched in 1996.

The excluded groups like indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, Dalits, and religious minority groups were demanding to end such conditions of the state and create an inclusive state. They want to end the state of statelessness in their own country. In this context, to address such conditions, federalism is adopted in Nepal. Recognition of ethnic diversity in the federation is taken as an important element of building an inclusive state. But the federalism adopted in Nepal does not address the issue of identity and proportionate inclusion raised by excluded communities through self-rule and autonomy.

Though there was a broader consensus, theoretically, on restructuring and creating an inclusive state among political parties, there was no congruence on a new form of government to be adopted. The interim constitution of Nepal 2007 had provisions for restructuring the state and making Nepal new but there was no clear picture of a new form

of state. People from Tarai Madhesh and indigenous nationalities from the hill demanded with fierce agitation for federalism as a new form of state. In response to the fierce agitation that took place in Tarai Madhesh. Federalism was incorporated in the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, formally. So, federalism is inseparably linked to resistance against political and economic exclusion on the basis of caste, ethnicity, and regional identity in Nepal (Khanal 2014). But the federalism we adopted is not as their desire of a 'New Nepal' based on proportionately inclusive state.

The discussion on what kind of federalism is appropriate to Nepal took place during the constitution writing process in the constituent assembly. The indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, and other ethnic and religious minority groups demanded ethnic-based federalism, and identity-based federalism in their own version whereas other groups demanded territorial or non-ethnic-based federalism. They demanded self-rule and autonomy through identity-based small states. For them, autonomy is a device that allows indigenous nationalities to exercise direct control over their affairs and special concerns (Gurung, 2012).

Such identity-based small states would become a mechanism of accommodating diversities in terms of ethnicity and language. It would become not only the mechanism of inclusion but also recognition of their distinct identities. It would become an institutional apparatus to protect and promote their identities, either (NEFIN). Of course, indigenous nationalities took it as a device to end their decades-long exclusion. According to them, it is the democratic right of indigenous nationalities. But unlike their demand, Nepal adopted non-ethnic, non-ethnic-identity-based or mono-national federalism which is indifferent to identity-related issues. It is argued that multiethnic federalism is supposed to be castist and undemocratic. Mishra (2012) argues that ethnicity may not be the basis of the federation since it is fluid; it does not enable democracy to function.

On the other hand, the voice was raised against identity-based federalism. Such a federal state would be castist (jatiya) which gives privilege to a certain group only and deprives rights of others. The political parties as well were /are divided into for and against this issue. Nepali Congress and CPN(UML), the two largest parties in Nepal, were/are against identity-based federalism whereas CPN(Maoist), a proponent of this issue, is in favor of such federalism.

In the context of Nepal, multiethnic federalism may help to address two historically pending issues raised by indigenous nationalities and Madhesi communities: an issue of self-rule or autonomy and inclusion since such federalism creates condition of self-rule and shared-rule (Elazar, 1991). Self-rule is to address the issues of autonomy and recognition/identity and share-rule is to address an issue of participating in decision making level of

national issue. It may be truly a device to address other identity-related issues either as issues of language and culture through accommodation so as to promote equality and coexistence. Accommodating diversity deepens democratic values and heals interethnic rupture in a multiethnic state. As it is argued that federalism arises from its potential as a way of peacefully reconciling unity and diversity within a single political system, it is possible from multiethnic federalism in a multiethnic state. Such federalism becomes truly a function of society through self-rule and autonomy not of the constitution only as Livingston (1952) argues. Thus, multiethnic federalism is a genuine device to generate unity in diversity in a multiethnic country like Nepal.

The indigenous nationalities and Madhesi communities are not asking for the recognition of their identity; they are asking for 'separateness' within the state rather than separate from the state as Burgess (2012), claims that it is also the sense of multinational federalism. Gurung (2012) argues that indigenous nationalities in Nepal have demanded not a separate state but their accommodation through identity-based federalism. Not exclusion but accommodation of diversity generates unity in diversity. Thus, multiethnic federalism can be an instrument to engender unity in diversity in the heterogenous country of Nepal.

Conclusion

Federalism, in general, and multiethnic federalism, in specific, is the opposite concept of a nation-state. Such federalism is supposed to be genuine device to create unity in diversity through self-rule and shared rule. The demand for self-rule and inclusion of indigenous nationalities and Madhesi people in Nepal can be addressed such federalism. Federalism in India, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland are some examples. It seeks unity in diversity by ensuring the democratic right of self-rule and autonomy of indigenous nationalities in a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country like Nepal. It is a practical institutional device for accommodating diversity as well in terms of ethnicity, language, and culture so as to create unity in diversity. Mono-ethnic federalism does not address the issues of autonomy and recognition of identity based on ethnicity and language. Driving force for changing unitary state Nepal to federal is discrimination based on caste, ethnicity, language, culture, and region. Ending such a discrimination, therefore, is an essence of federalism in Nepal. But federalism adopted in Nepal is more or less mono-national. Therefore, the Madhes-based political parties, indigenous nationalities have not entirely accepted this constitution. They have still demanded multiethnic federalism for their right to self-rule and recognition. Thus, multiethnic federalism can be a genuine institutional mechanism not only to address the demands of historically excluded communities but also to create unity in diversity in the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual country Nepal in the context of the age-long demand for self-rule and inclusion ending the condition of severe exclusion of indigenous nationalities, Madhesi people created by the nation-state building process in Nepal.

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