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**Title:** Federalism, Ethnic Question and Nation-Building in Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Comparative Study

*Abstract*

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Federalism in modern times has emerged and developed by and largely successful in most parts of the world. In recent times federalism has been implemented in Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina to manage conflicts in these two countries which have ethnically diverse populations. In both the countries the United States, the lone superpower in the post-Cold War world had intervened directly and engineered state-building process through federal arrangements in post-conflict situations. This thesis addresses an important question in the study of federalism in international relations in which it envisages how much capabilities it has to explain the success of ethnically divided societies in generating a feasible answer to the conflict ridden states.

The concept of federalism in academic and popular literature implies that it is a grand compromise between diverse groups of people or between state and different units to share power among them. Many subject experts see federalism as the only tool that can mitigate age-old conflict and provide a viable solution to the ethnic question and nation-building. In this context, it is significant to gauge the viability of federalism in Iraq and BiH where the ethnic question and ensuing conflict have posed dangerous threat to peace and stability and the very integrity of their territories. This thesis explores one of the important aspects of the debate about federalism through an exploration of the case of Iraq and BiH. By exploring the features of federalism in the two case studies, the study endeavours to provide some

directions in resolving the contradiction of federalism, two contrasting as well as similar contradictory finding that federalism has only answer to ethnic question and nation-building issues that have been questioned and contested throughout nation-building projects.

It is to be noted that since the twentieth century, ethnicity has assumed a prominent place as an identity marker as the western concept of nation-state failed to address ethnic question. The right of self-determination have often been defined in a limited manner by the nation-states. The nation-states have sought to establish a homogenous nationalist culture based on dominant communities. A forceful imposition of one community on other ethnic communities, in many cases ethnic identity became prominent for the exclusion or inclusion in nation-building. In both Iraq and BiH one can fins question of ethnic identity and challenges for nation-building. The political formations of both Iraq and BiH have inherited inherent discord among various ethnic communities. Moreover, both are struggling to overcome their past turbulence.

The thesis addresses the issues and problems of the study areas by examining the political system of governance through exploring the political arrangements and look more closely at the territorial demographic dynamics. The analysis of role of federalism, ethnic question and nation-building combine several aspects through which one can gauge federalism's potentiality as a stabilizing or destabilizing force in the context of Iraq and BiH. This thesis aims to contribute to International Studies by reinterpreting the conceptual analysis of federalism specifically concerning two case studies. It explains the success of federalism as a model for moulding the fragmented state into consolidation. It is intended through this work to contribute to the exiting literatures by applying a comparative approach. For understanding the federal governance in Iraq and BiH, a systematic and eclectic theoretical and analytical approach has been employed by using new and fresh literature.