CHAPTER ONE

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
THEORY OF FEDERALISM: PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

In its broadest and most general sense, the term "federalism" signifies a political movement for which the basis of political order is the principle of union. It is a principle that conceives of the "federation" as the ideal form of social and political life. It is variously employed to indicate a relationship, the process of its establishment or the entirety of a complex organisation that embodies it. The etymological kinship of the word, from Latin "foedus", with ideas of treaty, covenant and of contract illuminates but no longer fixes the meaning of the protean and widely applicable principle. The basic objective of federalism is to reconcile unity and diversity.

The formation of a federal polity reflects a conception of the federal idea; a persuasion or ideology that endorses federal solutions; some particular application of the federal principle; and some kind of federal framework. In modern times, the term is used predominantly to describe the institutions of a federal state. In Western literature, a federation is defined as a voluntary association of sovereign states for some common purpose with limited delegation of powers to a central authority. In particular, federalism has been adopted in various forms by many nations as a way to balance the interest of various ethnic and language groups. In the political theory, the term 'federation' has been variously discussed. It is characterised by a tendency to substitute coordinating for subordinating relationships or at least to restrict the latter as much as possible; to replace compulsion from above with reciprocity, understanding and adjustment; command with persuasion and force with law. In its application to concrete political problems, federation, thus, becomes a relative and dynamic principle.

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The study of federalism is central to political science because of its linking of theoretical and political wisdom. In fact, human concern with politics focuses on three general themes:

1) the pursuit of political justice to achieve political order;

2) the search for understanding of the empirical reality of political power and its exercise; and,

3) the creation of an appropriate civic environment through civil society and civil community capable of integrating the first two themes to produce a good political life.

Political science as a discipline was founded and has developed in pursuit of these three themes. In this pursuit, political scientists have uncovered certain architectonic principles, seminal ideas and plain political truths that capture the reality of political life or some significant segment of it and relate that reality to larger principles of justice and political order and to practical yet normative civic purposes. One of the major recurring principles of political importance which informs and encompasses all three themes is federalism - an idea that defines political justice, shapes political behaviour, and directs humans towards an appropriately civic synthesis of the two.  

The essence of federalism is not to be found in a particular set of institutions but in the institutionalisation of particular relationships among the participants in political life. Consequently, federalism is a phenomenon that provides many options for the organisation of political authority and power: as long as the proper relations are created, a wide variety of structures can be created and developed that are consistent with the federal principle.

The simplest possible definition of federalism is self-rule in addition to shared rules. Federalism, thus defined, involves some kind of contractual linkage of a presumable permanent character that (1) provides for power sharing, (2) cuts around the issues of sovereignty, and (3) supplements but does not seek to replace or diminish prior organic ties where they exist. Federal principle means the method of dividing powers so that the general and regional governments, within a sphere, coordinate and maintain their independence.

Given the contractual linkage in federal relations, it becomes clear that federalism itself, to use a biological analogy, is a genus that includes several species. One, Federation or federalism, which establishes a common general government in which to form a polity, constituent units both govern themselves and share a common constitutional government of the whole. Powers are delegated to the former by the people of all the units. Its dissolution can only come about through the consent of all or majority of its constituent units. The general government has direct access to every citizen and supremacy in those areas in which it is granted authority. Archetypical modern federations include the USA, Switzerland and Canada.

A second, confederation was the form of federalism where the constituent units form a union but retain most sovereign and constituent powers. They establish and maintain continuous control over the general government which must work through them to reach the citizenry. The cession of individual units may be possible by

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5 ibid., p. 12
7 Elazar, n. 4, p. 38.
8 Wheare, n. 6, p. 32 also see, Preston King, Federalism and Federations (Baltimore; John Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 19-21.
prior constitutional agreement without general consent. The best modern example is the European community.\(^9\)

A third species is *federacy*, an asymmetrical relationship between a federated state and a larger federated power, providing for potential union on the basis of the federated state maintaining greater internal autonomy by foregoing certain forms of participation in the governance of the federated power. Both Puerto Rico and the Northern Marianas are federacies of the USA.\(^{10}\)

A fourth species, *associated statehood*, is similar to federacy in the way that confederation is similar to federation. Both are equally asymmetrical, but in associated statehood the federate state is less bound to the federate power, and the constitution which binds them usually has provisions for the severance of ties between the two under certain specified conditions.\(^{11}\) The U.S. has entered into associated state arrangements with the Federal States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands.

A fifth species is *Unions*, where the federal arrangements involve uniting of constituent entities that preserve their integrity primarily through their share of the common government (such as the United Kingdom of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).\(^{12}\)

A sixth is the category of *unitary federal structure* or the federations with relatively little independence for example, Austria, Australia, Canada etc.

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9 Christopher Hughes, *Confederacies* (Leicester; Leicester University Press, 1963), p. 39; also see Elazar, n. 4, pp. 50-51.
12 Elazar, ibid. p. 59.
Next are the federations in the socialist state which until 1989-90, were under the rule of a single party, such as Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia or the USSR.

The last species are federations in developing countries where there is an incomplete degree of competition among political parties and power structure (such as the Latin American Federal states of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, as well as United Arab Emirates). 13

In addition, there are other quasi-federal arrangements that should be considered, such as:

a) Leagues, e.g. ASEAN;

b) Condominiums, e.g. Andorra with France and Spain;

c) Constitutional Regionalisation, e.g. Italy; and

d) Constitutional Home Rule, e.g. Japan.\textsuperscript{14}

Some of these models of federal association are not necessarily examples of successful federalism. However, each of these forms or some variants of them solves some specific problem of governance in the world in order to resolve problems of combining a common government for the whole with sufficient self-government for the parts, and/or to establish a system of power-sharing to advance democratic self-government of the whole or in the parts.\textsuperscript{15} The Figure No. 1 portrays schematically through a triangular model the types of federal relations discussed above.

Federalism has developed in response to two different situations. On the one hand, it has been used as a means to unite people already linked by bonds of perceived nationality or common law by constitutionally distributing units so as to secure greater local liberty or national unity. In such cases, the politics that constitute the federal system are unalterably parts of the national whole, and federalism invariably leads to the development of the strong national government operating in direct contact with the people it serves, just as the constituent governments do.

On the other hand, federalism has been used as a means to unify separate people for important but limited purposes without disrupting their primary ties to the individual politics that constitute the basic units of federation. In such cases, the federal government is limited in its scope and powers, functioning through the constituent governments which retain their plenary autonomy and, to a substantial degree, is dependent on them. Federalism has to do with the need of the people and politics

\textsuperscript{14} Elazar, n. 4, pp. 57-64.
to unite for common purposes yet remain separate to preserve their respective integrities.\textsuperscript{16}

More recently, there has been increasing emphasis on the necessity for a structural approach to federalism which was born out of experience, which showed that many politics with federal structures were not truly federal in practice - that the structures masked a centralised concentration of power that stood in direct contradiction to the federal principle.\textsuperscript{17} In the course of identifying the importance of the process, the issue was posed in such a way as to question whether federalism was a matter of structure or process, with the two juxtaposed to make it seem as if an either or proposition was involved. In fact, federalism must combine both structure and process. That combination is what creates a federal system. If a federal structure exists without a correspondingly federal process, there is evidence that though it may have some impact on the process of governance even if the latter are not ultimately federal, in the last analysis, its impact will be secondary. This was the case in the USSR in particular and other socialist federation in general.\textsuperscript{18}

In the past few decades there have been another debate among the students of federalism as to whether federal arrangements in socialist system, which was denoted as totalitarian system by Western political scientists, could honestly claim to be considered federal.

In the twentieth century, beginning with the Russian Revolution, several countries of the Socialist bloc embraced federalism in an effort to consolidate their rule. Some claimed that since federalism is essentially a device to enhance democratic republicanism and requires power sharing, these countries with their inherent


\textsuperscript{17} Wheare, n. 6, p. 119.

\textsuperscript{18} Walter Kolarz, \textit{Russia and Her Colonies} (New York; Praeger, 1953), p. 96.
opposition to power-sharing cannot be honestly federal. Others argued that while this is generally true, the impact of federalism, even that intended to be window dressing, leads to providing a certain kind of institutional - constitutional strength to local ethno-territorial interests enabling them to survive, at least on a limited basis. In the end, both were correct. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, federalism is a matter of relationships. While embodied in constitutions and institutions, structures and functions, in the end it is the relationship that counts.

Modern federalism is the product of the historical development of the society and subject of the politics, and also is the part of the classic terminology of political science. The term emerged in theological and theopolitical usages in the 16th century and was first used as a strictly political term in the 18th century. In the 19th century, federalism was used to abet ethnic nationalism, with demands for the creation or maintenance of federal institutions coming from ethnic groups seeking national unity and political autonomy but not in a position to achieve either in any other way. In the 20th century it has been used as a means to unify multi-ethnic politics. Several of the ethnically heterogenous nations created or reconstructed after World War-I, including the Soviet Union, formally embraced federalism as a nominal solution to their nationality problem. But it has been recognised that ethnic demands are among the most exclusivist in the world, and the same ethnic consciousness that makes federalism in some form necessary, makes it all the more difficult and less likely to succeed.

Among political scientists there are debates and various conceptions about the nature of federalism. One school stresses the amorphous nature of federalism and its operational complexity. It describes federalism as inevitably progressing towards

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22 Stevens, n.11, p.200.
a centralised governmental system. According to this view, federalism is a 'way station' to unitary government.

A second school highlights the distinctive role of regional governments in federal systems, however, designated as state, provinces, republics, etc. It views federalism as cyclical in nature. According to this, the role of the central government tends to expand in liberal periods (that is, periods in which pro-governmental views are strong) and to contract in conservative periods (in which, in turn, the role of the state expands).²³

Federalism is essentially a transitory phenomenon²⁴ and describes a voluntary association of sovereign states for some common purpose with limited delegation of power to a central authority. Essentially, the main characteristics of a federal state are:

1. the supremacy of the constitution defining the rules of the federative relationship and providing legal guarantees for all parties involved;

2. the clear demarcation of powers between the federal government and the member-constituent states guaranteeing a certain degree of sovereignty for the latter (principle of non-centralization);

3. bargaining and arbitration mechanism for resolving constitutional conflicts;

4. a bicameral parliamentary system ensuring direct representation of the constituent states at the federal level; and

²⁴ Wheare, n. 6, pp.153-57.
Though, there is some consensus on the broad features of federalism among the Soviet and Western scholars such as division of powers between the centre and the units and a written constitution, yet, at the same time, the class aims behind the concepts of federalism as perceived in the Soviet Union and in the West are widely divergent. The Soviet concept of federalism was carved out from the ideological basis of the right of nations to self-determination which provided for every nationality to determine its state political form and unite with other nations. Federalism in the Western democracy is based on largely administrative considerations, which was not the case with the Soviet Union, where national-territorial principle and functional inter-dependence had been the strategic factors in working out the form of state construction.

THE THEORY AND SALIENT FEATURES OF FEDERALISM IN THE WESTERN CONCEPT

There was a consistent effort to evolve a suitable definition of federalism, and the classical writers on federalism particularly A.V. Dicey, Lord J. Bryce, Robert Garran and K.C. Wheare were primarily seeking to give the concept a proper dimension and meaning. As Dicey explained the concept, "A federal state is a political contrivance intended to reconcile national unity and power with the maintenance of the state rights". Prof. Dicey further elucidated that from the division of power under a common constitution between the federal and the constituent states, there flows the three leading characteristics of federalism:

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1. the supremacy of the constitution;

2. the distribution among bodies with limited and coordinated authority of the different powers of the government; and,

3. the authority of the courts to act as interpreters of the constitution.  

27 ibid., p. 144.

At the end of the 19th century, Lord Bryce, in his book 'American Commonwealth' described the federal and state government as "distinct and separate in their action". According to Robert Garran, an eminent Australian political scientist, federalism was:

"a form of government in which sovereignty or political power is divided between the central and local governments, so that each of them within its own sphere is independent of the other".  


Whether a constitution is federal or not, K.C. Wheare suggested a test which is as follows:

The test which I apply for the Federal Government is then simply this. Does a system of government embody predominantly a division of power between general and regional authorities, each of which in its own sphere, is coordinated with the other and independent of them? If so, the government is federal.  

29 Wheare, n. 6, p. 33.

Many scholars have criticised this legal institutional approach as suffering from "formalistic fallacy". As a prominent political scientist, Prof. N.G.S. Kini has observed:

"Formalistic fallacy consists in the belief that political behaviour and factual operations of groups and levels within a policy can be adequately understood and explained in terms of formal provisions of law and constitution (political and legal myths) of a political organisation. The conventional model did not go beyond a bare legal description of the formal properties of a federation."  

Another eminent thinker on federalism W.H. Riker is also critical of "the excessive legalism of conventional definitions" while not throwing away the juristic elements entirely. He rejects the traditional definitions which emphasized not only 'independence of constituent and central governments' but more or less 'precise division of functions'. This classical formalism of federalism is also rejected by American political scientists like M.J.C. Vile, and D.J. Elazar.

Vile argued that the interdependence of the constitutional and political levels was as important as their independence, and that more important than the coordinated states of the two levels was the requirement that neither level should be subordinated to the other - a rather different emphasis. Daniel J. Elazar has written that the traditional conception of federalism as evolving a sharp demarcation of responsibilities between two independent sets of sovereignties has never worked in practice in the United States. According to him, "at any given time in American political theory and history the great majority of government activities was shared by all levels of government and that cooperative federalism was the rule in the 19th century as well as in the twentieth".

The convention and usages of extraconstitutional character which shapes and influences the governmental process in a federal system have not been taken into account by the classical approach as it is alleged to be too juristic. As William S. Livingstone, a renowned American scholar on the subject of federalism observes, "the essence of federalism lies not in the institutional structure but in the society itself". Federal government is a device by which the federal qualities of the society are articulated and protected. Extensive theorizing on federalism has

33 Vile, ibid., pp. 198-99.
34 Elazar, n. 32, (emphasis mine), pp. 36-37.
faced serious challenges in the present century. The dramatic transformation in the federal systems, which has tended towards centralisation of power and the variety of forms taken by these changes have complicated the study of federalism. Perhaps this is the indication that federal theorizing has become too static to predict direction of change.36

Federalism was regarded as an ideology by some schools of political thought, elevating the principle of union to the most important structural principle of state and society. Johannes Althusius, one of the first federalists and a member of this school, made the concept of 'union' into a fundamental political principle and conceived the citizen as symbiotic.37 In common with later federalists, who thought in ideological terms, he shared the idea of a government pyramid indirectly built up from the bottom to the top. The union was formed at all levels from units of the levels immediately beyond, from the family up to the empire.38

Of late, federalism as an ideology has been found particularly in connection with conservative thinking in terms of various estates or with 'socialist-syndicalist' views. Federalism in this sense starts from the premise that all social life is federalist in character and proceeds in extreme cases to demand the dissolution of the states. The conservative federalist attitude is frequently combined with catholic social doctrine and the principle of subsidiary:

"Federalism is nothing more than the logical application of the demands of the law of nature to social and political life. A democracy determined in its moral content by the law of nature, a democracy which brings to effect the idea of objective orders as unity in well-coordinated diversity, is therefore necessarily a democracy informed by the spirit of federalism."39

38 Friedrich, n. 10, p. 156.
The socialist-syndicalist version of ideological federalism was intellectually influenced by Proudhon and anarchism. He presented the federative principle as the *reconciliation between authority and freedom.* But whereas he thought in terms of a loose union of territorial units, the left wing in France after 1870 voted increasingly for a functional federation of trade unions and cooperatives, and for the assumption of governmental functions by workers' organisations.

Federalism has for a long time provided an alternative to the conception of empire. In the Roman Empire, the federalisation of neighbouring territories was a concealed form of empire-building. In the German Reich of 1871 conquests, the concept of federation and imperial ideals were blended in characteristic fashion. The history of modern federalism is intimately linked with that of the modern nation-state. In a very real sense, the federal principle stands in opposition to the centralised; reified nation-state, which is the principal product of modern nationalism. However, limited rule is a concomitant of federalism because sharing on a federalistic basis necessarily involves limits to preserve liberty *writ large* for all and the specific liberties of the constituents.

**THE CONCEPT OF FEDERALISM IN THE SOCIALIST THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Democratic institutions have sometimes been said to depend upon a federal system of government. The Soviet leaders made much of the fact that the U.S.S.R. was also a federation. They claimed that through the federal form, the various people of the USSR obtained control over their own affairs, and that they had more privileges than states in other federations.

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The status of various Soviet republics, that made up the U.S.S.R. was said to be further proof of the democratic base upon which the Soviet system rested. The Soviet Political Dictionary defines federalism as:

"A union of states, forming a new union state with a single citizenship, entering into a federation the union states retain their legal and administrative organs, the activities of which are limited to specific groups of questions. Side by side, with the organs of the power of the different states belonging to the federation; there are established union (federal), legal, administrative and judicial organs, the acts of which are operative throughout the entire territory of the federal states".  

Judged by this formalistic definition, the concept of federalism appears to be somewhat identical, but in reality there exists sharp differences over the nature of these features and their inter-relationships among Western and Soviet scholars. To Western scholars the institutional aspect is more important. Soviet political scientist, A.Y. Vyshinsky in his book, The Law of the Soviet State, has aptly differentiated the Western and Soviet concepts of federalism. He wrote:

"Its distinguishing feature is the elasticity of its form as applied;

(a) to concrete problems of the socialist state in raising the economic cultural level of each person, and

(b) to the conditions of class-struggle to each historical phase. The forms of federation bonds existing in bourgeois federations are alien to it."  

To determine the nature of federation from whatever point, socialist or western, it is worthwhile to go through the background. Generally, two types of forces bring about a federation namely, centrifugal and centripetal. In the first case, unitary state is broken up into a number of units for a number of administrative purposes. In the second case, the hitherto independent and sovereign states unite to protect their national, economic and other interests by delegating some of its powers to a Central government. Since the forces working behind the formation of a federation, have decisive impact on the nature of federation, it is more appropriate to know the

43 Politicheskiy Slovar (Moscow; Progress, 1958), 2nd Edn., p.507.
theoretical and practical roots from which sprang the Soviet Union, i.e., a federal multinational state.

Federalism is viewed pragmatically in the Marxist theory of government. A distinction is made between the form of government, which is defined according to the supreme organ of the state, the structure of the state which determines the relationship between central and local organs and of which federalism is one possibility, and the political regime which expresses the class-structure. The political regime occupies systematically in every case a higher position than the other two criteria of classification. According to the Marxist doctrine the federalist state structure can have a liberal aspect only in conjunction with "progressive" political regime.

Marxist political theory hypothesizes that 'one day the socialist countries will be organized in a federation'. However, it ventures only very restrained predictions: "History so far knows of no confederations of socialist states, but one should not conclude that this type of union is not possible in the future." Marxian political theory, however, has not departed from the postulate that the prerequisite for a federative world state is the establishment of socialism in all countries of the world. The creation of the federative Soviet Union was intended in the 1920s to facilitate the accession of other socialist states. The preamble of the 1924 constitution of the U.S.S.R. concluded with the assurance "that access to the Union is open to all Republics already existing, as well as those that may be born in the future", and with the declaration that the establishment of the U.S.S.R. represented a "new decisive step towards the union of workers of all countries in one world-wide Socialist Soviet Republic." If the creation of the federative Soviet Union was intended in the 1920s to facilitate the accession of other socialist states. The preamble of the 1924 constitution of the U.S.S.R. concluded with the assurance "that access to the Union is open to all Republics already existing, as well as those that may be born in the future", and with the declaration that the establishment of the U.S.S.R. represented a "new decisive step towards the union of workers of all countries in one world-wide Socialist Soviet Republic."
and the Bolshevik Party. In contrast to the Western views, the possibility of federation was limited to multi-national state. The concept of sovereignty, increasingly recognised as of no relevance in Western studies, had been defended as the important ingredient in the Soviet theories on federalism.

For some Soviet authors the concepts of "autonomy" and "sovereignty" were almost identical. In contradistinction to personal autonomy, as was once demanded by Austro-Marxism, the following characteristics were viewed as decisive for the Soviet forms of autonomy:

1) a basis consisting of Soviets;

2) a national territorial structure; and,

3) a state union of peoples at different levels in which all the organs of state power use the language of the nationality after which the autonomous unit is named.\(^\text{48}\)

A survey of the origin and development of the concept of federalism since the Tsarist period and the scrutiny of the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin brings out the genesis and growth of Soviet thinking on state structure in its proper perspective.

**ANALYSIS OF THE STATE STRUCTURE: ELEMENTS OF FEDERALISM IN THE EMPIRE**

**Tsarism and the 'Prison of Nations'**

The Tsars were the first who had to grapple with the issue of Russian domination of a multinational state. The explosive territorial aggrandisement of the Russian state, which averaged fifty square miles a day over four centuries inevitably involved an expanding heterogenous population, which in turn posed a mounting administra-

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With the acquisition of both the Baltic and Black Sea littorals over the eighteenth century, Greater Muscovy became the Russian Empire, assuring responsibilities for a multi-ethnic jurisdiction recognised in its switch of official nomenclature from *russkii* (Russian) to *rossiiskii* (Russian-owned). With the defeat of Napoleon, the ‘Russian’ Empire expanded further into Europe over the early nineteenth century, acquiring Finland, Bessarbia and Georgia, and re-acquiring most of Poland.

Partly to sugar the pill of forcible takeover, newly-acquired non-Russian territories were treated with political circumspection. The Empire was in practice far from ‘unitary’, the realisation of which was patently beyond the limited administrative resources of tsarism, leaving a considerable measure of practical autonomy to non-Russian territories and local elites. Livonia and Estonia after 1795, Finland after 1809 and ‘Congress Poland’ after 1815 all serve as examples of quasi-autonomous territorial concessions permitted within the officially autocratic empire.

The traditional tsarist practice of recognising traditional privileges within an informal Russian-dominated empire was first compromised and then abandoned over the middle decades of the nineteenth century as a politically lethal combination of further territorial aggrandisement. The emergence of nationalism converted the Empire from a multi-ethnic but politically inert agglomeration into a politically-charged, multi-national ‘Prison of Nations’.

**The Origin and Development of Federalism**

The earliest documentation and illustration of the concept of federalism in the imperial Russia can be traced to the complete reinterpretation of early Russian history from a provincial perspective by a Ukrainian called Nikolai Kostomarov. His provincialism grew from a passionate interest in ethnography. This provin-
cialism was fed by the contemporary literature like Nikolai V. Gogol’s Ukrainian tales from which he concluded that the provinces were the measures of public development.

Following this, the societies of St. Cyril and Methodius were founded which boldly advocated that the Russian empire be abolished and a federation established in its place encompassing all the regions of Russia and other Slavic nationalities as well. Kostomarov analysed that Russia, since the fall of Kiev, had been on the wrong course, the course of administrative centralisation and bureaucratization. The fall of independence and freedom was occasioned first by the Mongol invasion but was subsequently pushed to its conclusion by Moscow’s heinous "strangulation", of the Russian city-states.\textsuperscript{50}

The earliest Russian people had been organised not into clans fighting among themselves, but into Slavic tribes. These tribes were sufficiently differentiated among themselves as to constitute distinct nationalities, yet their common origin, language, culture and their Christian faith provided firm bonds among them. On this basis, pre-Mongol Russia existed as a single entity, but one founded on "unity in diversity".

To this pre-Mongolian territorial state system Kostomarov applied the term "federation" which was in essence "proto-federalism" compared to the proto-federalism in the "system of republics of ancient India". Its components were not 'provinces' but 'lands' bound together by geographical contiguity and the need for defence against external foes. The ancient Russian federalism precluded the need for regional or provincial separation and even the idea of Ukrainian independence was rendered unnecessary and undesirable.\textsuperscript{51} Kostomarov believed that the revival of ancient

\textsuperscript{50} N.I. Kostomarov, "Historical Monograph of Nikolai Ivanovich Kostomarov" (St. Petersburg; 1886), as cited in S. Frederick - Starr, Decentralisation and Self-Government in Russia: 1830-1870 (Princeton, New Jersey; Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 100-102.

\textsuperscript{51} N.I. Kostomarov, Thought on Federation in the Beginning of Ancient Russia (Moscow; Progress, 1935), pp. 131-42.
federation of self-governing lands in the 19th century was possible. He applied the practical experiences than the theoretical knowledge and translated historical theories so as to mesh with those of moderate provincial reformers throughout Russia. Kostomarov retained his stance until after the emancipation of the serfs was promulgated. One of the disciples of Kostomarov, Konstantin Bestuzhev-Ruimin, while criticising Chicherin for his centralist ideas, demanded the immediate establishment of administrative decentralisation and provincial self-government within a Russian 'federation'.

Against this backdrop and environment of ideological deliberation on federalism, there arose the constitutional movement in Russia during 1862-1863. At least twenty five reform projects entitled "Constitutions" were penned in the early 1860s, and many of them represented the views of sizeable groups. In addition to those who presented schemes for 'constitutional' government, there were those who wrote counterarguments. Between 1860 and 1863, nearly all of those most active in Russian social thought, both in the public and in the bureaucracy, expressed themselves on the question of constitutionalism.

Of these, the views expressed by brothers Mikhail and Nikolai Bezobarov reflected oligarchic and centralist vision and essence. Their programme included an element of local self-rule. The structural reforms championed by the Bezobarovs had been taken as the very essence of Russian constitutionalism in the 1860s.

At the same time, some form of central representative body was the expressed goal of Russia's most articulate writers who could by no means be considered oligarchists but were 'federalists'. For example, Nikolai Turgenev, Peter Dolgorukov, Alexander Koshelev and Nikolai Ogarev, all of whom published tracts demanding the establishment of a popular selective organ in the capital. Like the oligarchists,

52 K. Bestuzhev-Ruimen, "O neobkhodimosti novogo metoda v. nsiukakh gosudarstvennykh", Moskovskoe Obozrenie, no. 2, 1859, pp. 22-23, as cited in S. Frederick-Starr, n. 50, pp. 103-104.
53 Frederick-Starr, n. 50, pp. 259-61.
these four federalists understood the purpose of assembly to be to enact legislation which they thought the government itself would not undertake. At times, they went so far as to equate constitutionalism with the formation of those territorial governments rather than with the establishment of a central elective legislature to institute them:

"it seems to us that under a constitutional order of things, under the decentralization that is desired by all reasonable men, in which the various parts of Russia would be provided with the power to conduct their own affairs and to manage their local interests so long as they do not conflict with the general interest of all Russia, under such conditions it would be beneficial to divide Russia into provinces as is now the case ... but into territories of two, three or even four provinces".54

John Stuart Hill published his 'Considerations on Representative Government' in 1861 in which he posited a system balanced between publicly controlled local organs and a central parliament.55 He accorded the administrative authorities their share of work as well and assumed that bureaucratic agencies and elective assemblies could coexist peacefully within one polity provided their spheres of action were precisely delimited.56

The Russians admired Mill but at the same time upset his delicate balance of central and local powers thus turning his entire parliamentary machinery into a tool for achieving the provincial self-rule they demanded above all else. Dolgorukov scarcely sketched out the organization of the two houses of parliament before turning to the more important territorial council.57 Ogarev passed quickly over the central council to expound on the territorial divisions and local institutions of the future federated state, an emphasis which Mill remarked upon to his Russian disciples. Federalism so dominated Turgenev's constitutional project that it caused even Dolgorukov to fear for its asymmetrical nature and disproportionate features.58

54 Petr Dolgorukov, O peremene obraza pravleniia v Rossii [Of Changing Form of Government in Russia] (Leipzig; 1862), pp. 71-72 as cited in ibid.
56 ibid., pp. 88, 286.
57 Petr Dolgorukov, n. 54, p. 66.
58 Frederick-Starr, n. 50, p. 27.
Thus, emanated from this another concept of constitutionalism which proposed to create a central elective organ which would in turn shift the political centre of gravity from the capital to the provinces. In this respect it was *federative in intent*. Several leading reformers accepted the federative implications of local control of public functions but balked at creating another centralized organ to achieve it. Therefore, the programme of the federalist constitutionalists absorbed the leading tendencies of contemporary reformism, particularly its urge towards the localization of power and its faith in community control of that power. Because of this the federative form of constitutionalism could and did influence the other views and dominated the entire constitutional movement.

The concept of federalism, hitherto in the nascency, was later emphatically and comprehensively developed in the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

**MARX AND ENGELS ON THE STATE STRUCTURE (FEDERATION)**

Marx and Engels studied the unitary and federal forms of state structure and described their positive features and inadequacies under different historical conditions. Discussing the questions of forms and organisation of democratic states, Marx and Engels favoured the centralised - unitary form of states, because they were witness to the accomplishment of the transition from feudal disunity to centralism in Europe, i.e. creation of central or centralised bourgeois states. For that period it was a progressive phenomenon since the centralization of bourgeois state objectively helped to develop society’s productive forces. They preferred the centralised - unitary state against politically disunited states which did not accord with the interests of the proletariat and its task to unite their struggle for socialism. A unitary centralised bourgeois state helped in the then existing conditions, the economic and political cohesion of the working class and the growth of its class-consciousness.

Marx and Engels, in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, observed that:

>"the bourgeois keeps, more and more, doing away with the scattered state of the population of the means of production and property. It has agglomerated population, centralised means of production and has concentrated property in few hands."
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The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent or loosely connected provinces with separate interests, laws, governments and systems of taxation became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class interest, one frontier and one customs tariff. Engels orchestrated the same idea in "The Civil War in Switzerland", he wrote:

"Through the industry, commerce and political institutions, the bourgeois is already working everywhere to drag the small, self-contained localities which only live for themselves out of their isolation, to bring them into contact with one another, to merge their differences, to expand their local horizons, to destroy their common habits, striving and ways of thinking, and to build up great nations with common interests, customs, and ideas out of many hitherto mutually independent localities and provinces. The bourgeoisie is already carrying out considerable centralisation. The proletariat, far from suffering any disadvantage from this, will as a result rather be in a position to unite, to feel itself a class to acquire a political point of view within the democracy and finally to conquer the bourgeoisie." He considered the centralised unity of Germany as a progressive phenomenon which could help to sweep away, "all the historically inherited small states junk", which was blocking the free development of trade and industry.

The views on nationalities conditioned the conceptions of federalism of Marx and Engels. Due to considerations of federation as a survival of feudal particularism and a hindrance to economic and cultural development, they opposed it as a matter of general principle. "The proletariat", wrote Engels, "can use only the form of one indivisible republic." He did not, however, rule it out altogether, believing that in special sets of circumstances federation might be a "step forward", a link toward a centralised, unitary state. Marx and Engels lent their support to federal state structure in such countries where it could historically become the transitional political form, from scatteredness to unity of state power, uniting the small states into one centralised state. For example, Engels supported the struggle of progress-
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sive forces of Switzerland against the Sonderbund for the creation of a federation as a centralised, strong state. His support to the Swiss federation was aimed at liquidating the feudal disunity through the creation of a centralised federal state.

At the same time, he expressed his strong opposition to the German federation. He remarked that in Germany, "federalisation on the Swiss model would be an enormous step backward". In Germany, the Union state was the transition to the completely unified state, and the "revolution from above" of the 1866 and 1870 must not be reversed but supplemented by a "movement from below".63

Thus, Engels tried to analyse the transitional forms with utmost thoroughness, bearing in mind the concrete, historical, specific features of each separate state, "from what and into what the given transitional form is passing."64 Approaching the matter from the point of view of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution, Engels, like Marx, upheld democratic centralism, the republic - one and indivisible. He regarded the federal republics either as an exception and a hindrance to development, or a transition from monarchy to a centralised republic, as a "step forward" under certain special conditions. And among these the national question came to the front.65

Marx and Engels were critical of federalism, but not basically opposed to it. As in the case of Ireland, they supported the separation of oppressed nationalities, but did not exclude the possibility of a federation between the English and Irish at a later stage of association. In a speech to the International Workingmen's Association in 1872 Engels defended the struggles of Ireland for independent national organisation in the following words:

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63 Ibid., p. 122.
64 Ibid., p. 123.
65 Ibid., pp. 124-125.
"In a case like that of the Irish, true internationalism must necessarily be based upon a distinctly national organisation; the Irish, as well as other oppressed nationalities, could enter the Association only as equals with the members of the conquering nations, and under protest against the conquest."\textsuperscript{66}

Marx and Engels formulated the important propositions that there existed a relationship between the federal form of the organisation of the state and the solution of the national question. This thesis was further developed by Lenin. They suggested that the international alliance of the working class and their own social emancipation was impossible without abolishing the wall of enmity and isolation between nations which had been created by bourgeoisie. "Any nation that oppressed another forges its own chains."\textsuperscript{67}

Quoting Marx on the question of Ireland, Lenin in his work "The Right of Nations to Self-determination", wrote, "though in principle an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance of Ireland granted the possibility of federalism".\textsuperscript{68}

Marx and Engels held the view that bourgeois federations were nothing but forcible union of states. They found it a harmful form of state construction for the proletarian state. Marx in his work, Civil War in France, analysing the "Paris Commune of 1872", hailed its centralism and remarked that being in essence the state of proletarian dictatorship, the Paris commune set itself the goal of creating a centralised unitary state and not of substituting it with federal union of small provincial communes. He remarked that:

\begin{quote}
the communal constitutions have been mistaken for an attempt to break up into a federation of small states, as dreamt by Montesquieu and the Girondins, that
\end{quote}


In 1901, Edward Bernstein asserted that Marx’s views on federation were identical with those of Proudhon. Bernstein tried to represent Marx’s criticism of the military, bureaucratic, bourgeois state machine as a departure from the principle of centralism in general, as giving preference to the federal organisation of the proletarian states.

In fact, Marx in his work especially on the commune, clearly opposed the conscious, democratic, proletarian centralism to bourgeois, military bureaucratic centralism.

In the same context Lenin wrote:

"There is no trace of federalism in Marx’s above quoted observations on the experience of the commune. Marx agreed with Proudhon on the very point that opportunist Bernstein failed to see. Marx disagreed both with Proudhon on the very point on which Bernstein found a similarity between them."

Further, "Marx disagreed both with Proudhon and with Bakunin precisely on the question of federalism (not to mention the dictatorship of the proletariat). Federalism as a principle follows logically from the petty bourgeois view of mechanism. Marx was a centralist. There is no departure whatever from centralism in his observation just quoted. Only those who are imbued with the philistine "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake the destruction of the bourgeois state machine for the destruction of centralism."

It is important to conclude, in retrospect, that Marx and Engels favoured federalism either as an exception, or as a transitional form of state construction from feudal scatteredness to centralised strong union state under certain specific historical conditions, and among such special conditions the national question was also included. They approached the national question as part of the general question of the triumph of the proletarian dictatorship. Marx and Engels considered federal

70 Victor Sh'evtsov, The State and Nations in the USSR (Moscow; Progress, 1982), p. 40.
71 Lenin, n.62, pp. 92.
72 ibid., pp. 90-91.
form of state construction justified in cases where it helped the free development of the nations in a system of multi-national bourgeois state.

LENIN’S VIEWS ON FEDERALISM

Lenin’s views on federalism were formed during the conditions of sharp struggle with views opposed to Marxists on the national question and on the state legal form of its solution and their role in the struggle for socialism and socialist revolution. It is well known that in the epoch imperialism and Proletarian revolution the national question became the inseparable part of the question of socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin carefully studied the ideas of Marx and Engels on the said question and stressed that this stand should become a model for proletarian policy fully retaining its enormous practical importance. Hence, analysing the different forms of political construction of socialist Russia, Lenin started from the need for a democratic solution to the national question in the socialist revolution.

Developing this idea further, Lenin advanced the idea of right of nations to self-determination, including secession and formation of an independent state. Since then this programmatic point on the national question had been repeatedly included in all the important documents of the party Congresses. Lenin, nevertheless, did not at any time totally and unconditionally reject federation. He took account of: (a) the stage of social development reached by the nation seeking political separation, and (b) which of its various classes express its will. However, in principle Lenin opposed a federal state system. He opposed the idea of establishing a federation in Russia but supported the establishment of the federal Balkan Republic in 1912-14, a situation which he had foreseen in 1903, and considered to be a step forward.

73 Lenin, n. 68, p. 442.
Lenin's later work written in 1916, *The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed-Up* paid special attention to the criticism of the "errors" of Rosa Luxemburg on the national question. Rosa had opposed the right to self-determination. The *Polish Social Democrats* went a step further, they *did not recognise the right of the nation to self-determination even in socialist conditions*. Lenin also favoured the "Great Centralised State" which was a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the further "socialist unity of the whole world". He further noted that "*Via such a state (inseparably connected with capitalism) can there be any road to socialism*". This meant that, firstly, Marxists always admit situations in which it is possible and necessary to support federalism. Secondly, it is the presence or absence of nationalities problems which play an important role in determining the most progressive state structure.

So far as Russia was concerned, Lenin and the *Bolsheviks* considered non-federal centralised state to be the most expedient. Approaching the problem from the standpoint of concrete historical conditions then prevailing in the Russian empire, Lenin came out decisively against the substitution of the already emerging Russian centralised unitary state by a federation. The first opinion against the federal form of state construction in Russia was reflected in his work, *"On the Manifesto of the Armenian Social Democrats"* (1903). Here Lenin noted that federation is a two-fold agreement. Hence, without the existence of political autonomy federation would in fact be a fiction. He further wrote, *"The League should delete the demand for a federative republic from its programme, conflicting itself to the demand for a democratic republic in general"*. The objection to constitutional federalism was most distinctly expressed in his work *Critical Remarks on the National Question* (1913).

He wrote,

"Marxists are of course opposed to federation and decentralisation, for the simple reason that capitalism requires for its development the largest and the most centralised possible states ... But while, and in so far as different nations constitute a single state, Marxists will never, under any circumstances, advocate either the federal principle or decentralisation."

How firmly he held this principle is evident from his letter to Shaumyan in 1913:

"We are opposed to federalism in principle. It loosens economic ties, and is unsuitable for a simple state. You want to secede? All right, go to the devil, if you can break economic bonds, or rather, if the oppression and friction of "Co-existence" dispute and ruin economic bonds. You do not want to secede? In that case, excuse me, but do not decide for me, do not think that you have a "right to federation.""

It should be noted that in the resolution on the National Question adopted by the April Conference of the Party in 1917, the question of federal structure was not even mentioned and the resolution spoke of the nation’s right to secession, of autonomy for national regions within the framework of the integral (unitary) state, and lastly of the enactment of a fundamental law prohibiting all rational privileges whatsoever, but not a word was said about the permissibility of a federal structure of the states. Thus, Lenin and Engels supported the strong centralised, unitary democratic state and expressed opposition on principle to federal form of state construction. They regarded federalism as a transitional form applicable in certain circumstances.

It is thus evident that Lenin did not put forth the task of formation of a federal state before the party until the October Revolution. In his work, National Question in Our Programme, Lenin opposed the demand of social revolutionaries for creation of federation in Russia. Lenin also rejected federalism in Party construction, as suggested by the Bund and other parties. He gave importance to democratic

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78 Lenin, n. 75, pp. 45-46.
organisation of a unitary state and advanced the plan for National Territorial Autonomy of those nations which by their own free will chose to remain in the system of a unitary democratic republic. He favoured wide autonomy inside the state and wrote:

"We are in favour of autonomy for all parts; we are in favour of the right to secession (and not in favour of everyone's seceding). Autonomy is our plan for organising a democratic state."\(^\text{81}\)

**LENIN : RECOGNITION OF FEDERALISM AS A FORM OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION**

On the question as to when Lenin recognised federation as possible and subsequently a historically necessary form of state construction in Russia, there is no unanimity of views even among Soviet scholars. Some of them for example, G.C. Gurvich and I.I. Kopylov consider that Lenin's general endorsement of the federal form of state as an exception in certain historical condition in his work *The National Question in our Programme* (1903) amounts to his support of the federal form of state construction in socialist Russia. A.E. Kailkhanidi, G.V. Aliksandrek and A. Spasov assert unconvincingly that Lenin always preferred the state federation as one of the means of democratic solution to the nationality problem.\(^\text{82}\)

According to another view, Lenin began to accept the permissibility of federalism only in August 1917, and merely as a transitional form, S.B. Batyrov being the most outspoken defender of this view. A.I. Lepeshkin agrees that Lenin was emphatically against a federal form of state system for Russia upto April 1917, but claims that, while Lenin in principle always favoured a unitary state even before April 1917, he was not against federation in all circumstances. After the *February Revolution*, Lenin concluded that Soviet Russia needed a federal form of state system and this was adopted in January 1918. S.S. Galatio, Yakubskaya and others hold a different


\(^{82}\) Quoted Critically by E.V. Tadevosyan, "V.I. Lenin (O Gosudarstvennoi Federatii)" *Voprosi Istorii KPSS* (Moscow), no. 2, 1961, p. 49.
opinion that Lenin recognised federation as a desirable form of state construction only after the October Revolution. This they trace to the adoption by the third All Russian Congress of Soviets in January 1918 of the Declaration of Rights of Working and Exploited Peoples.\(^83\)

In Lepeshkin's view, the aim of determining the time of the recognition of federation by Lenin, two aspects deserve to be differentiated:

a) The possibility of allowing a federation as one of the possible forms of political construction of multinational socialist Russia, and

b) recognition of federation by Lenin as a historically necessary form of state construction conducive to free union of different national states in a democratic single socialist multinational state.\(^84\)

As far as the question of the recognition of federation as a form of state construction was concerned, Lenin arrived at this conclusion only in the process of accomplishing the October Socialist Revolution and particularly during the first months following it. Lenin raised the question of admissibility of federation, in his article, *Task of Proletariat in Our Revolution* written a few days after the publication of *April Thesis*, in which Lenin pointed out,

"As regards the national question, the proletarian party first of all, must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or kept forcibly within the boundaries of, the state i.e., annexed."\(^85\)

\(^83\) A.I. Lepeshkin, *Sovetski Federalizm* (Moscow; Progress, 1977), p. 52.
\(^84\) ibid., pp. 57-58.
\(^85\) V.I. Lenin, "The Task of the Proletariat in Our Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, (Moscow; Progress, 1964) p. 73.
A little later, Lenin explained that he had given a "new formulation of the right of self-determination which had given rise to numerous misinterpretations and proposed the perfectly precise concept of the right to free secession". The idea was further developed by him in the article Finland and Russia (May, 1917) where he developed the idea of voluntary union of "the Russian Proletariat and Peasant Republic, and the Republics of all other Nations". He stated that "without recognising the right of secession all phrase-mongering about an "agreement" is self-deception and deception of the people".

In his article, Mandate and Deputies of the Soviets Elected at Factories and Regiments, (May 1917), Lenin mentioned:

"The Great Russians offer a fraternal union to all nations and propose the formation of a common state by a common and voluntary consent ... and all other nations without exception freely to decide whether they wish to live as a separate state, or in union with whomsoever they pleased."

The appeal of Lenin contained in his speech at the First All Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers Deputies, in June 1917 "Let Russia be a Union of free nations (republics)" confirmed Lenin's position on federalism as the possible form of state unity for future socialist Russia.

In all the statements of Lenin there was a reference to the possibility of federation as a form of state unity. It is important to note that, Lenin here for the first time used the term 'Union of State' i.e. federation (though he did not use this term exactly). Proceeding from the new historical conditions emerging in Russia in 1917, the Party recognised its position vis-a-vis federation as a possible form of state unity for...

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88 ibid., p. 336.

In January 1918, the recognition of a federal form of the state construction of the Soviet Republic was legally secured in the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited Peoples*. "The Russian Soviet Republic", it declared, "is established on the principle of a free union of nations, as a federation of Soviet National Republics." The declaration however did not outline the nature of federal relations, "leaving it to the working class and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their administrative congress of Soviets if they wish to participate in federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms."\(^91\)

Thus, it was not suddenly that Lenin and the Bolshevik Party recognised the need of a federal structure. It was a gradual development of the situations which made them conclude that only a federal form of state can unite the entire masses of various nationalities.

Having discussed and analysed the background in which the concept of federation originated and developed in the Soviet Union, the discussion and examination of the key question, "*Why did Lenin give up the Marxist concept of centralised state in favour of federalism*?" is pertinent and important. Here a basic conflict of opinion can be discerned.

Some Soviet scholars on federalism like M.I. Kulichenko and P.G. Semenov think that basically there was no change of views by Lenin on federalism. But the fact remains that Lenin had opposed the federal construction of Russia upto the Octobr Revolution. Prof. E.V. Tadevosyan and others who disagreed with Kulichenko and Semenov do not base their explanation on why Lenin wanted a federative state

\(^91\) Devendra Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times* (Moscow; Progress, 1970), pp. 132-33.
primarily on notions of self-determination and democracy. A number of more concrete arguments are advanced by them, which are as follows:

a) Lenin regarded a federal state as a long-term commitment to rally the distrustful non-Russian masses to the Bolshevik side.

b) He believed that the revolutionary transformation of different nations at different stages of development inevitably required a diversity of state forms i.e. federal state.

c) Lenin saw the adoption and maintenance of a federal state system as one of the means of containing and resolving the then existing and future political conflict between the central leadership and the national elites. 92

For the first time, these conditions were outlined by J.V. Stalin in December 1924 in the note to his article "Against Federalism" published in Pravda on 28 March 1927. In Stalin's view this evolution on the question of federalism took place because, at the time of the October revolution:

a) a number of nationalities of Russia were actually in a state of complete secession and complete isolation from one another, and in view of this, federation represented a step forward from the division of the working class of these nationalities to their closer union, their amalgamation;

b) the fact that the very forms of federal union suggested themselves in the course of Soviet development proved by no means so contradictory to the aim of closer economic unity between the working masses on the nationalities of Russia as might have appeared formerly, and even

M.I. Kulichenko mentions the following reasons which caused Lenin to revise his views on the federation:

a) the country was on the eve of a socialist revolution, which should have seized the whole country-the centre and the periphery.

b) the national liberation movement had reached a high level of maturity which had placed the creation of its own independent national statehood by every nation on the agenda of the day.  

According to Semenov, this change was in terms of inequality of treatment, oppression, economic and cultural backwardness of the non-Russian nationalities.  

Apart from the above factors there were other factors which provided the basis for re-examination of its stand towards federation by the Party. These factors have been summarised by Lepeshkin as follows:

1) Recognition of Lenin that Soviet Republic was different from all forms of bourgeois state not only in its essence but also in the principle of its organisation. The federation based on the Soviets was in no way

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93 J.V. Stalin, n. 80, pp. 32-33.
94 M.I. Kulichenko, Natsional'nye Othosheniya vSSR i Tendentsiiakh Raztiya (Moscow; Progress, 1972), p. 173.
96 Lepeshkin, n. 83, pp. 63-68.
contradictory to the creation of centralised strong democratic state. The Soviets which arose before the October Socialist Revolution, became after its victory, a political basis of the state cultivated the idea of uniting people by making provision for their national sovereignty. This realisation by Lenin and the Bolshevik party made them re-examine their attitude towards a federation which was deemed as a more progressive state form for ensuring unity for the Soviet multinational state.

2. The other cause for this change that the relative strength of the national movement in Russia turned out to be more serious than it appeared before the October Socialist Revolution. More than hundred nations with different stages of socio-economic development burst into a big upsurge with the February bourgeois democratic revolution which was strengthened by the colonial policy of provisional government, particularly in the sphere of national question. In the period of the bourgeois democratic revolution three basic tendencies could be noticed in the national areas of the country:

a) urge for the formation of unitary national republics.
b) national federated union, and
c) revolutionary democratic movement for the creation of a single strong socialist multinational state.

In such a historical setting, the federal form of state construction was relevant from the standpoint of unity among nations and the cause of formation of a single union state. The federation under such conditions provided the state with legal instrument to forego a structure based on the unity and solidarity in a system of single federal socialist state. Summing up the result of state construction during the first month of the existence of RSFSR, Lenin wrote that:

"On the basis of its example it shows us particularly clearly that federation, which we are introducing and will introduce is now the surest step towards the most
3) One of the basic causes for recognition of federation appeared in no way contradictory to the task of forging economic cooperation of the toiling masses of the various nationalities of Russia.

4) The guarantee for external security of the Soviet Republic in political economic and military sphere became one of the main causes for change of stand on federation. In the period before the October Revolution, the Bolshevik party was of the view that federation would be less favourable for implementing the political task of the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. But during the first few months of the existence of the Soviet state, it was demonstrated that without strong military cooperation among the Soviet Republics, the civil war could not be won and the independence of every republic, "if attacked by the imperialist power" could not be defended. Federal form for the multinational Soviet state under certain historical conditions was confirmed by the party programme adopted in March 1919 and in the 'Thesis on the National Question' ratified by the Second Committee Congress in 1920. But the federation which was to be organised on the Soviet pattern was conceived as a transitional form towards "complete and full unity". Thus it took quite a long time to create the parameters of a new type of federation which had an inbuilt mechanism to respond to the question of its applicability not only as a transitional but as a durable form. In the given circumstances, it was a logical result of the tremendous amount of political work that was undertaken to unite various nations in a single state on the principle of internationalism. The conception

of the principle was almost flawless. However, the historical evolution of its functional parameters left much to be desired.

The functional parameters will be put to analysis and examination in the next chapter.