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Multi-Ethnic Citizens in a Multi-Ethnic State: Constructing State–Citizen Relations Through 'Difference' in the Adivasi Janajati Scholarship Programmes in Nepal

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Abstract

In 1990, the Constitution of Nepal declared Nepal a multi-ethnic (*bahu jatiya*) country. This newly-transformed state promised better inclusion of marginalised groups through special provisions. How has this been operationalised, and what does this mean in practice for the members of the groups concerned? Drawing on fieldwork in the Nepal Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), this paper argues that the Nepali state's moral and political obligation to address long-standing concerns about group-based inequalities have opened up intriguing new spaces to perform and redefine state–society relations. Within these new spaces, categories of difference are constantly invoked and experienced, where both the state and citizens come to co-constitute each other in a variety of new ways.

Keywords

Ethnicity, citizen, education, group-based inequality, difference, Nepal.

Introduction

The Constitution of Nepal declared Nepal a multi-ethnic (*bahu jatiya*) country in 1990. The newly-transformed Nepali state promised better inclusion of marginalised groups through special provisions for 'the protection, empowerment, or advancement' of previously marginalised groups (Article 18.3). In response, the Government of Nepal established the Nepal Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) as an autonomous government body through the NFDIN Act of 2002 which had the overall responsibility for 'empowering' and 'uplifting' the indigenous nationalities in Nepal.[1] The Act officially recognised 59 social groups as Adivasi Janajatis:[2] 'a tribe or community as mentioned in NFDIN schedule who have their own mother tongue and traditional rites and customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or unwritten history';[3] 'and yet does not fall under the conventional fourfold Varna of the Hindu Varna system or the Hindu hierarchical caste structure'.[4] In 2004, the NFDIN put forward a five-fold categorisation—endangered, highly marginalised, marginalised,

[1] According to the NFDIN Act 2002, the foundation's objective is 'to make overall development of the indigenous nationalities by formulating and implementing programmes relating to the social, educational, economic and cultural development and upliftment of the indigenous nationalities'. See NFDIN, *National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities: An Introduction* (Kathmandu: NFDIN, 2003), p. 12.

[2] Various social groups, hitherto socially and politically marginalised by the Nepali state, are increasing coalescing under the category of Adivasi Janajati to make claims on the state.

[3] (NFDIN 2003: 32) NFDIN, *National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities: An Introduction* (Kathmandu: NFDIN, 2003), p. 32

[4] (NFDIN 2003: 6) NFDIN, *National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities: An Introduction* (Kathmandu: NFDIN, 2003), p. 6

disadvantaged, and advantaged Adivasi Janajatis[5] —based on various human development parameters.[6] This categorisation was an attempt to respond to an increasing awareness of the inequalities within the Adivasi Janajati groups and to limit the Foundation's benefits going to the country's most advanced groups.[7]

This paper aims to understand how this provision for the inclusion of various groups has been operationalised by the Nepali state and explore ways in which the state is experienced, engaged with, and re-imagined by Nepal's citizens. The analysis is based on fieldwork conducted between August 2016 and April 2017 at the Scholarship Section of the NFDIN head office in Lalitpur, Nepal. Since 2010, NFDIN has been running a partial education stipend programme (*aanshik chhatrabriti karyakram*) for students.[8] The call for applications for the stipend is made around April every year. In 2015–16, NFDIN supported 500 students, and in 2016–17 it planned to support approximately 300 students. If selected for scholarship, the students receive

[5] 1. The endangered category included Kusunda, Bankariya, Raute, Surel, Hayu, Raji, Kisan (Kuntum), Lepcha, Meche (Bodo) and Kusbadiya. 2. The highly marginalised category included Shiyar, Shingsawa (Lhomi), Thudam, Baramu, Chepang, Thami, Bote, Danuwar, Majhi, Dhanuk, Jhagad and Satar. 3. The marginalised category included Bhote, Dolpo, Larke, Lhopa, Mugal, Topkegola, Walung, Bhujel, Dura, Pahari, Phree, Sunuwar, Tamang, Darai, Kumal, Dhimal, Gagai, Rajbanshi (Koch), Tajpuriya and Tharu. 4. The disadvantaged category included Bara Gaule, Byasi (Sauka) Chhairotan, Markhali, Thakali, Sherpa, Tangbe, Tingaule, Thakali, Chhantyal, Gurung, Jirel, Limbu, Magar, Rai, Yakkha and Yolmo. 5. The advantaged category included Thakali and Newar.

[6] NEFIN, 'Classified Schedule of Indigenous Nationalities of Nepal Prepared by the Janajati Classification Task Force and Approved by the Federal Council of NEFIN', 1 March 2004.

[7] For more discussions on this, see David Gellner, 'Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal', in *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, no. 20 (2007), pp. 1823–8; Susan Hangen, *Creating a "New Nepal": The Ethnic Dimension* (Washington DC: East West Center, 2007); Townsend Middleton and Sara Shneiderman, 'Reservations, Federalism, and the Politics of Recognition in Nepal', in *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 43, no. 19 (2008), pp. 39–45; and Praytoush Onta, 'The Growth of the Adivasi Janajati Movement in Nepal after 1990: The Non-Political Institutional Agents', in *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, Vol. 11, no. 2 (2006), pp. 303–54.

[8] The Nepali state has also been implementing social welfare programmes for other categories: Dalits, old people, and those from the Karnali district in the Far West poverty-stricken area of the country.

a stipend ranging from NRs8,000 to NRs28,000 per annum depending on their educational level.[9]

This article uses an ethnography of the new bureaucracy of affirmative action programmes and aims to contribute to a wider scholarly endeavour to understand the state as a site of social rights. There is a growing body of literature on the ways in which affirmative action triggers transformations not only in social relations, but also in state–society relations.[10] On the one hand, scholars have drawn our attention to the ways in which the top-down nature of affirmative action policy encourages people to 'perform tribality'.[11] This performance is utilised by citizens and state officials alike to fit minority groups into the 'tribal slot',[12] as well as by dominant high-caste groups (such as Bahun and Chhetris) to seek indigeneity.[13] On the other hand, scholars have also noted how various actors enter the well-developed space of ethnic discourse, and work to transform the state itself.[14] This paper expands this dual nature of affirmative action programmes and explores the ways in which the ideas of ethnicity engage with

[9] NFDIN scholarship amounts for the year 2016–17 are : a. For non-technical subjects – Rs 8,000 for Grades 11 and 12, Rs9,000 for Bachelors degree, Rs10,000 for Masters degree; b. For technical subjects: Rs12,000 for Grades 11 and 12, Rs 13000 for Bachelors degree, Rs14,000 for Masters degree ; c. for research degrees - Rs13,000 for Masters research; Rs18,000 for MPhil degree, and Rs28,000 for PhD degree.

[10] Alpa Shah and Sara Shneiderman, 'Towards an Anthropology of Affirmative Action', in *Focaal—Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, Vol. 65 (2013), p. 4.

[11] Sara Shneiderman, 'Developing a culture of marginality: Nepal's current classificatory moment', in *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, Vol. 65 (2013), pp. 42–55; and Townsend Middleton, 'Across the interface of state ethnography: Rethinking ethnology and its subjects in multicultural India', in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 38, no. 2 (2011), pp. 249–266.

[12] Tania Murray Li, Articulating indigenous identity in Indonesia: Resource politics and the tribal slot. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 42, no. 1(2000), pp. 149–79.

[13] Krishna P. Adhikari and David N. Gellner, 'New Identity Politics and the 2012 Collapse of Nepal's Constituent Assembly: When the Dominant becomes "Other"', in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 50, no. 6 (2016), pp. 2009–2040.

[14] Shneiderman, 'Developing a Culture of Marginality'.

the process of state formation and vice versa. This dialectical process of state-formation and ethnicity-formation has been an ongoing theme in academic discussions in Nepal.[15] While early studies published in the 1990s and 2000s focused on the emergence of the 'classificatory moment' when the new categories were introduced to offer entitlements to ethnic minorities, this paper demonstrates how one of these state-led affirmative action programmes has actually been implemented, and in turn led to transformations of both the citizens and the state.

Methodologically, I follow anthropologists of the state who have made a case for studying interactions between local functionaries and ordinary people as the starting point for understanding the state.[16] For this purpose, I paid close attention to the everyday practices of state officials, the ways in which citizens engaged with them, and vice versa. During fieldwork, I participated in everyday activities at the NFDIN Scholarship Section, conducted informal interviews with scholarship officers, student applicants and other people who facilitated the scholarship process, and volunteered to help in the collection of applications. Rather than focus on whether these programmes were effective or ineffective, I situate this paper on the interactions

[15] See Richard Burghart, 'The Formation of the Concept of Nation-State in Nepal', in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 44, no. 1 (1984), pp. 101–125; David Gellner, Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka and John Whelpton (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu kingdom:The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997); William Fisher, *Fluid boundaries: Forming and transforming identity in Nepal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Arjun Guneratne, *Many tongues, one people: The making of Tharu identity in Nepal* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); Susan Hangen, *The rise of ethnic politics in Nepal* (London: Routledge, 2010). Sara Shneiderman and Louise Tillin, 'Restructuring States, Restructuring Ethnicity: Looking Across Disciplinary Boundaries at Federal Futures in India and Nepal', in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 49 (2015), pp. 1–39.

[16] Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); and Stuart Corbridge, Glyn Williams, Manoj Srivastava and Rene Veron, *Seeing the State: Governance and Governmentality in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

between the scholarship officials and the students, and their everyday experiences of the programme. During their engagement with the NFDIN scholarship programme, the students referred to the Nepali state as a *rajya* (state) to describe the NFDIN as part of an institution that safeguards their Adivasi Janajati rights, and as a *sarkar* (government) to describe the NFDIN as a bureaucratic unit that implements programmes such as the scholarships. Drawing on these interpretations, I locate the scholarship bureaucracy as a site for experiencing the state and also as a site for interpreting the relational space of state practice. In doing so, I explore the dynamics animated by this complex distributary apparatus of the state through which equity in education is claimed to be officially achieved.

This ethnographic exploration of state–citizen encounters allows us to explore how new ideas and practices become a part of the landscape that they are attempting to change. By focusing on what states do when they work, this paper explores the ways in which the scholarship provisions available for Adivasi Janajati students created new spaces of interaction in which various Adivasi Janajati categories are constantly invoked and experienced by both the students and the scholarship officials. Political theorist Iris Young uses the term 'differentiated citizenship' to describe these processes that call for the recognition of difference to alleviate social disadvantage and to promote equitable opportunity for all. In these new social and political spaces, the aim is to ensure equality on the basis of the very grounds on which it had previously

been denied.[17] Drawing on the concept of 'differentiated citizenship', this paper demonstrates that while the practices around 'difference' are shaped by the regulatory categories of the state, these practices also exceeds those categories as individuals come to inhabit them.

These changing relational spaces between state and citizens have had distinct implications for engendering the experience of differentiated citizenship in Nepal. Through the focus on Adivasi Janajati specific programmes, the Nepali state emerged as a site for obtaining social rights, and especially for redressing long-standing group inequalities. With this broadening of group-differentiated welfare provisions, social groups such as the Adivasi Janajati which historically had received limited public services came to use state programmes as a way of engaging with the state. In the everyday practices in NFDIN scholarship programmes, we see that the Adivasi Janajati students are 'mostly not resisting the state but using the system as best as they can'.[18] Moreover, such programmes are being used as the state's prime method of legitimating itself, especially in the post-conflict context where the lack of effective state programmes has animated citizen grievances. By drawing attention to the reconfiguration of state–citizen relations in Nepal, this paper aims to contribute to the growing ethnographic work on the state in South Asia, the evolving nature of state–citizen relations, and how these are crafted in particular historical conjunctures.

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[17] Iris Marion Young, 'Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship', in *Ethics*, Vol. 99 (1989), pp. 250–74.

[18] C.J. Fuller and John Harriss 'For an Anthropology of the Modern Indian State', in Christopher Fuller and Veronique Benei (eds), *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India* (New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2001), pp. 1–30.

New spaces of the state–citizen relationship

The first-floor waiting room, just outside the NFDIN scholarship office, was full of students filling in their application forms to apply for scholarships. Approximately 20 to 30 students were sorting out their various certificates, organising photocopies of the documents that needed to be enclosed with the application forms, and going in and out of the scholarship office. Many students saw this state-funded scholarship (*sarkari chhattrabriti* as many students called it) as way for Adivasi Janajati citizens to get long-awaited support from the Nepali state (*rajya*). The two scholarship officers were busy answering the students' queries, verifying the documents submitted, and checking if the applications had been filled in correctly, especially the question on Adivasi Janajati groups. Since scholarships were primarily targeted at poor but meritorious students belonging to Adivasi Janajati groups, the students were required to prove their eligibility for a scholarship.

The Government of Nepal identified 59 social groups as Adivasi Janajati on the basis that each group fulfils the following criteria: 'a distinct collective identity; own language, religion, tradition, culture and civilisation; own traditional egalitarian social structure; traditional homeland or geographical area; written or oral history; having "we" feeling, has not had decisive role in politics and government of modern Nepal; who are the indigenous or native people of Nepal, and who declared itself as

Janajati'.[19] These processes of identification, as Shneiderman points out,[20] have spawned a variety of dynamics whereby different groups claim their Adivasi Janajati status by 'performing' their 'indigeneity'. Nonetheless, the NFDIN definition has served as a 'working definition of who is and is not a janajati in Nepal'.[21]

The NFDIN's education stipend programme was clearly the Nepali state's response to the long-standing concerns about group-based educational inequality in Nepal. Studies on social exclusion in Nepal show that different social groups have low school completion rates.[22] The literacy rates among Janajati groups such as the Chepang (14 percent) and the Bote (21 percent) are much lower than the national average of 54 per cent.[23] Authors such as Gopal Gurung and Neupane have drawn attention to the skewed representation of upper-caste groups such as the Bahuns and Chhetris in state institutions:[24] elite-caste Hindu groups comprised 77 percent of the judiciary, 77.6 percent of the security forces, 60 percent of the parliament, 62 percent of the cabinet, 77.35 percent of the educational leadership and 75.9 percent of civil society leadership. Other studies have shown that the hierarchy between social groups

[19] NFDIN, 'National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities', p. 6.
[20] Sara Shneiderman. 2015. *Rituals of Ethnicity: Thangmi Identities between Nepal and India* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).
[21] Onta, 'The Growth of the Adivasi Janajati', pp. 303–54.
[22] Lynn Bennett, Seirra Tamang, Pratyoush Onta and M Thapa, *Unequal Citizens: Gender Caste and Ethnic Exclusion* (Kathmandu: The World Bank and DFID, 2006); and Lynn Bennett, D.R. Dahal and P. Govindasamy, *Caste, Ethnic and Regional Identity in Nepal: Further Analysis of the 2006 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey* (Calverton, MD: Macro International Inc., 2008).
[23] Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), 'Social composition of the population: Ethnicity and religion in Nepal', in *Population Monograph of Nepal 1981* (Kathmandu: National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, 2001), pp. 87–135.
[24] Gopal Gurung, *Hidden Facts in Nepalese Politics*, transl. B.D. Rai (Kathmandu: Gopal Gurung, 1994) [http://www.nepaliliterature.com/uploads/docs/2010121916505111.pdf, accessed 15 May 2018]; and Govinda Neupane, *Nepalko Jatiya Prasna: Samajik Banot ra Sajhedarko Sambhawana* (Kathmandu: Centre for Development Studies, 2000).

has become a major instrument for 'identity, social status and life chances' of the Nepalese people.[25] The differential outcomes are a consequence of 'entrenched inequalities' in Nepalese society[26] which is based on the legally-sanctioned hierarchical social order of the Muluki Ain (The Civil Code of 1854)[27] and an ideology that 'buttress[es] and sustain[s] high-caste Hindu dominance',[28] often called Brahmanism or *bahunbaad*.[29]

At first glance the NFDIN categories do not appear very different from the Muluki Ain categories. However, in contrast to previous practice that used these categories to impose hierarchy, the current use of these categories is to enable claims to social rights and to gain support from the state.[30] The self-chosen term 'Adivasi Janajatis', or its English translation 'indigenous nationalities', has been used to displace labels such as Matwali (the term used to denote all the social groups that have the cultural sanction to drink alcohol) that made up the Muluki Ain hierarchy. As the Nepali state is being restructured in recognition of its inherent heterogeneity since the 1990s, many scholars have noted that ethnicity has increasingly gained prominence in

[25] Bennett *et al.*, *Caste, Ethnic and Regional Identity in Nepal*, p. 1.
[26] Harka Gurung, 'Affirmative Action in Nepalese Context', in Mukti Rijal (ed.), *Readings on Governance and Development Vol. IV* (Kathmandu: Institute of Governance and Development, 2005), pp. 1–25.
[27] Andres Höfer, *The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal. A Study of the Muluki Ain of 1854* (Innsbruck: Universitatsverlag Wagner, 1979).
[28] Susan Hangen, *The rise of ethnic politics in Nepal: Democracy in the margins* (Oxford/New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 31.
[29] The term Brahminism was first used by Bista to indicate the domination by Hindu high-caste groups and the exclusion of minority groups. See Dor Bahadur Bista, *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernisation* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1991); and Kamal P. Malla, 'Bahunvada: Myth or Reality?', in *Himal*, Vol. 5, no. 3 (1992), pp. 22–4.
[30] Middleton and Shneiderman, 'Reservations, Federalism and the Politics of Recognition in Nepal', pp. 39–45.

Nepal's social and political transformation.[31] While there have been heated debates on whether ethnic movements are an imposition of Western ideas[32] or a genuine voice for social justice,[33] they have placed affirmative action at the centre of the social inclusion agenda in Nepal.[34] Grounded in the experiences of group-based inequality, ethnic activists have expressed their discontents publicly, thus playing a decisive role in the transformation of the public sphere in Nepal.[35] As Hutt points out in his analysis of the new national anthem, the celebration of multiple ethnicities, languages and religions is often presented as 'symbolic shorthand for an inclusive and progressive nation' by ethnic activists and the Nepali state alike.[36]

The Adivasi Janajati scholarship programme is one of the ways in which the NFDIN fulfils its mandate 'for development of indigenous nationalities for social, economic and cultural development and upliftment of various indigenous nationalities of Nepal and for their equal participation in the mainstream of national development'.[37] The NFDIN was established in response to immense pressure from

[31] Gellner, Pfaff-Czarnecka and Whelpton, *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom*; Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka 'Debating the State of the Nation: Ethnicization of Politics in Nepal—A Position Paper', in Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, Ashis Nandy and Edmund Terence Gomez (eds), *Ethnic Futures: The State and Identity Politics in Asia* (New Delhi: Sage, 1999), pp. 41–98; and Mahendra Lawoti and Susan Hangen (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nepal: Identities and Mobilization after 1990* (London: Routledge, 2012).
[32] Rajendra Pradhan, 'A Native by Any Other Name' in *Himal*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (1994), pp. 41, 43–5.
[33] Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, 'Making no heads or tails of the ethnic "Conundrum" by scholars with European Head and Nepalese tail', in *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 25, no. 1 (1998), pp. 111–30.
[34] Alpa Shah and Sara Shneiderman, 'The practices, policies, and politics of transforming inequality in South Asia', in *Focaal*, Vol. 65 (2013), pp. 3–12.
[35] Michael Hutt and Pratyoush Onta, *Political Change and Public Culture in Post-1990 Nepal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
[36] Michael Hutt, 'Singing the New Nepal', in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 18, no. 2 (2012), p. 307.
[37] 'Preamble', NFDIN Act 2002.

the Nepal Adivasi Janajati Mahasangh or Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)—an umbrella association of 59 ethnic organisations in the country.[38] The NFDIN is an autonomous body with the prime minister as the chairman of the Governing Council and the minister of local development as the co-chairman. The co-chairman appoints the member-secretary based on the Council's recommendation 'from among the person[s] of indigenous nationalities who have made special contributions to the upliftment of the indigenous nationalities'.[39] The identification of these categories has been made in consultation with various academics, ethnic organisations, citizen groups and other civil society organisations, and is seen as a culmination of the ethnic political movement in Nepal.

While the NFDIN is clearly a state-initiated foundation, it also presents itself as a 'bridge' between 'the State (*rajya*) and Janajatis' that makes them 'feel included'.[40] The NFDIN website asserts that without the Adivasi Janajatis' 'active participation in the State's affairs, the vision of a new Nepal can never be realised'. This idea of a 'new' Nepal, where the Nepali state is pressurised to address issues of ethnicity and inequality through affirmative action policies and federal restructuring of the state, has been central to political debates since the 1990s.[41] In this evolving political context, both recognition of group inequality and attempts to address it through group-

[38] For detailed discussion see Gellner, 'Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal', pp. 1823–8; and Onta, 'The Growth of the Adivasi Janajati Movement'.
[39] NFDIN, *National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities: An Introduction* (Kathmandu: NFDIN, 2003), pp. 19–20.
[40] See NFDIN website [http://www.nfdin.gov.np/eng/page/objectives, accessed 25 May 2018].
[41] Lawoti and Hangen (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nepal.*

specific programmes have remained central to re-establishing the legitimacy of the state. As Gellner notes, 'the state's prime method of legitimating itself is through development…. Development involves the state trying to mobilise people and imposing new rules'.[42] Various NDFIN programmes thus operate in these new spaces for state–citizen engagement where ethnic identity can be used to make claims on the state.

Political theorist Iris Young argues that 'differentiated citizenship' is the best way to realise the inclusion and participation of everyone in full citizenship.[43] Often referred to as the 'politics of recognition', such processes call for limited forms of segregation, or to use Young's term, 'differentiated solidarity' to alleviate social disadvantage.[44] The key feature is thus the recognition of difference, where identities are seen as a means to forge solidarity and as centres of collective action. Here, the demand is not for inclusion within the fold of a 'universal' framework on the basis of shared human attributes, nor is it a demand for respect 'in spite of' one's differences, but respect for oneself as different.[45] In the context of Nepal, one of the important ways in which 'differentiated citizenship' has been actualised is through the provision of social rights based on ethnic identity. Drawing on fieldwork in the NFDIN, in the

[42] David. N. Gellner, 'From group rights to individual rights and back: Nepalese struggles over culture and equality', in J. Cowan, M. Dembour and R. Wilson (eds), *Culture and the Anthropology of Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 7.
[43] Young, 'Polity and Group Difference', pp. 251–8.
[44] Iris M. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 210–28.
[45] Sonia Kruks, *Retrieving Experience: Subjectivity and Recognition in Feminist Politics* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 85.

following sections I discuss the ways in which group-differentiated programmes have opened up new spaces to reshape the boundaries of the state–citizen relationship.

Seeking a 'different' state

As NFDIN categories were gradually incorporated into discourses about worthiness to receive state assistance, the students in the present study were expected to present themselves as 'ethnic' citizens with distinctive political subjectivities. In order to become eligible, they needed to fulfil four main criteria:

1. Belonging to an Adivasi Janajati group, verified by surname, a letter of recommendation from the Adivasi Janajati Students' Federation for students residing in Kathmandu Valley or a letter of recommendation from their respective ethnic organisation affiliated to the NEFIN. 2. Socio-economic disadvantage, verified with place of residence, type of school attended, and other certificates of marginalisation such as a disability certificate that shows the nature and category of disability, a conflict-affected certificate to indicate if the family was affected by any violent conflicts in Nepal such as the 'People's war', an earthquake-affected certificate to prove if the family was affected by any of the earthquakes that struck the country on 15 April 2015, a poverty recommendation letter from their respective urban or rural municipality to assess if the student's family was below the poverty threshold established by the local government

3. Aacademic merit verified through the grades on the education certificates,

4. Bonafide student status verified through a letter of recommendation from a current educational institution; only government school students are eligible, except for technical subjects such as engineering or computer science).

While the last three sets of education-related and economic status documents[46] were important in applying for these scholarships, the certificate of ethnic identity was the primary document needed to qualify and apply for group-differentiated programmes, including NFDIN scholarships. Students obtained these documents mainly through local municipal bodies and from the NFDIN office after recommendation from their respective ethnic organisation. Ethnic categories were increasingly becoming a way through which students could access and interact with state officials.

Through these applications, the students sought a state that was responsive to 'difference'. Rajesh Chhantyal, a science student from Kaski, received Rs8,000 in 2016 to support his Grade 11 education. Encouraged by his selection last year, he had come to support his sister who was applying for a scholarship. Like many other students, he had difficulty putting together all the different documents: 'There are just too many documents that we have to gather together. I had to spend many days to get my application complete,' he complained. Then he quickly added: 'But I met a *dai* (lit.

[46] For assessment of these criteria, the NFDIN relied on documents collected by the students from various places—educational institutions and local government. Many students shared experiences of difficulty in obtaining them. For difficulties in obtaining earthquake-affected documents, see Bina Limbu, Jeevan Baniya, Manoj Suji and Sara Shneiderman, 'Reconstruction Conundrums: Labelling "Fake Victims" Doesn't Help', *The Kathmandu Post* (19 Feb. 2019) [http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2019-02-19/reconstruction-conundrums.html, accessed 19 March 2019]. While these experiences are an important part of student's experiences of the Nepali state, this paper is focused on their interactions with the NFDIN bureaucracy.

elder brother, a colloquial word to refer to someone who is older) from our *jati sanstha*[47] (ethnic) organisation. He is also a high school teacher. He helped me to understand the application process and how to complete it. He also helped me to get a recommendation letter from our *jati* (ethnic) organisation'. With this support from his *jati* organisation, Rajesh completed his application and posted it to NFDIN head office. After around seven months, he received a phone call informing him that his application had been successful, and that he would receive another call when the NFDIN staff visited Kaski: 'I got a call from this office. He asked me to come to Srijanachowk. I went there with my documents, and I received the money in cash', he told me very happily.

These new administrative categories, primarily aimed at countering existing social and political marginalisation, also entail transforming lived experiences of identity into a specific institutional arrangement of multi-ethnicity. The NFDIN's classification of Adivasi Janajati categories represents an institutionalised juxtaposition of group differences in which social groups are arranged within a specific institutional matrix and inter-group relations, which are codified according to specific institutional formulas. These new categories also represent the Nepali state's commitment to greater inclusion of marginalised groups through a special provision for the advancement of 'those who belong to economically, socially or educationally

[47] Although etymologically the term *jati* translate as 'species', it is also increasingly understood as ethnic groups within the broader discourse on ethnicity. The NFDIN staff and the students frequently used the term *jati sanstha* to refer to the member ethnic organisations of the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN).

backward' groups. This mechanism of operationalising social reality into manageable administrative procedures exemplifies what Mathur calls the bureaucratic practices that go into composing the state.[48] This way of crafting a multi-ethnic Nepali state was opening up new avenues of advancement for janajati students, but non-janajati students were not always happy about the situation. During my field work, I met many student union leaders who came to collect scholarship forms to distribute in their colleges. These student union leaders did not always belong to Janajati groups. While they saw the NFDIN scholarship programme as a way of strengthening their relationships with the student body—by disseminating information and helping them fill in the forms—they often pointed out that there were no special educational provisions for upper-caste Bahuns and Chhetris who came from poorer economic backgrounds. 'This scholarship does not help a lot of people. These kinds of programmes should really be for the poor. It should not be just for the janajatis', complained one of the student leaders as she left with a pile of application forms in her hand.

Nonetheless, the implementation of the scholarship programme opened up new spaces for state–citizen relations, and mediated the interaction between state officials, scholarship applicants and others who engaged with the programme. These relational spaces created through the scholarship bureaucracy not only developed a distinct sense of identity, but also shaped a different sense of becoming a citizen in contemporary Nepal. As three students belonging to the Magar community

[48] Nayanika Mathur, *Paper Tiger: Law, Bureaucracy and the Developmental State in Himalayan India* (Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

explained: 'We went to the Magar Association to get a recommendation letter for this application. We had not known its location, so made a call at its office. Once we got there, it was good to meet other Magar *dajubhai* (brothers). We sometimes go there to volunteer now'. For many students, access to this state-supported programme is mediated by ethnic organisations that certify the applicant's group identity. As for the bureaucracy, one NFDIN official told me: 'Sometimes, the ethnic group is not easy to understand just from the name. Some surnames such as Thapa could be Thapa or Thapamagar (i.e. Chhetri or Magar). We have had legal cases where non-janajati groups have claimed janajati programmes. We therefore ask for a recommendation letter from their respective ethnic organisations'. In addition, most of the NFDIN staff members belong to Adivasi Janajati groups themselves, an attempt to address a long-standing grievance that the staff in state institutions do not represent the heterogeneity of Nepal's population.[49] NFDIN staff members also often mobilised their social networks to disseminate information within their own janajati group.

With the use of the Adivasi Janajati category as a route to state-supported (*sarkari*) entitlement, students also increasingly embodied and expressed NFDIN categories in various ways. Students now engaged with the NFDIN, their schools and ethnic organisations as new spaces of interaction were opened up by these new bureaucratic categories. They also used their membership in Adivasi Janajati groups to understand their eligibility for scholarships. 'I had written Bhote as my Janajati

[49] Karl-Heinz Krämer, 'Resistance and the State in Nepal: How Representative is the Nepali State?', in David N. Gellner (ed.), *Resistance and the State: Nepalese Experiences* (New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2003), pp. 179–98; and Neupane, *Nepàlko Jàtãya Prasna: Sàmàjik Banoñ ra Sàjhedàrãko Sambhàwanà*.

group; that is what we call ourselves. But my Janajati card has Lhomi (*shingsa*) written on it. I think that is the official name. I have been advised to write the same in my application form', explained one student as he was making corrections in his form. Even while the everyday terminologies of identity, used by the students, did not perfectly align with the categories devised by the NFDIN, students were gradually incorporating them into their own lives. Through the students' engagement with the NFDIN scholarship programme, the categories of 'difference' were becoming central to reconfiguring state–citizen relations in Nepal.

The everyday practice of the scholarship programme was also overwhelmingly shaped by the broader public discourse on concerns around the 'misuse' of public funds.[50] As in other countries, the management of public funds has often been under greater scrutiny due to potential 'leakages' and the dominance of 'corruption talk' in popular discussion.[51] This responsibility for accountability and anxiety about potential misuse meant that the scholarship officers relied on 'documents' to verify the students' *janajati* status. Thus students were required to submit either a *janajati* card or a recommendation letter from a *janajati* student federation. The authorship of these documents was therefore particularly important. As the literature on 'documents' tells us, a document is an expression of agency on the part of its author,

[50] 'Editorial: Misuse of Funds', *The Himalayan Times* (25 May 2016) [https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/editorial-misuse-funds/ accessed 20 May 2018].

[51] Sian Lazar, 'Citizens Despite the State: Everyday Corruption and Local Politics in El Alto, Bolivia', in D. Haller and C. Shore (eds), *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), pp. 212–28; and Akhil Gupta, 'Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State', in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 22 (1995), pp. 375–402.

and the message it carries is important according to the decisions or views it records and the actions it determines.[52] The writing on the document is designed to 'convince someone else to take up a statement, to pass it along, to make it more of a fact, and to recognise the author's ownership'.[53]

Furthermore, in order to ensure that scholarships are distributed on the basis of marginalisation, students also had to fill in their position in the NFDIN's five-fold categorisation: endangered, highly marginalised, marginalised, disadvantaged, and advantaged. However many students were not aware of this. Such state initiatives can be understood as part of complex rationalities, or what Tanya Murray Li calls 'improvement programs' that address social disadvantages by 'rendering them technical', knowable and manageable in specific ways.[54] Although the question about the five-fold category was the first one on the application form, many students could not fill it in because these categories were not the ones that students used in their everyday lives. There were no charts on the wall or other written information that was easily available for them. Sometimes they just guessed their category and got it wrong. Some asked the NFDIN staff members; most of the time, the NFDIN officers suggested that the students leave it blank so they could fill it later. Such actions meant that as the students engaged more closely with the NFDIN, these categories were gradually

[52] Anne Riles, *Documents: Artifacts of Modern Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006); Matthew Hull, *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012); and Bruno Latour and S. Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The Social Construction of Scientific Facts* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1986).
[53] Latour and Woolgar, *Laboratory Life*, p. 5.
[54] Tanya Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 270.

becoming part of their own vocabularies. As I spent more time in the NFDIN office, I observed that students were gradually helping other students to identify their position in the five-fold categorisation.

Implementing equity through 'difference'

After the NFDIN scholarship team received an application, their first task was to check all the documents before accepting it. Each of these applications was then given a registration number, and the details of the application were entered onto an Excel sheet. 'Sometimes the surnames in the all the documents do not match. Other times, they do not enclose all the supporting documents that are required', complained one of the officers as he typed details into his computer. 'This makes it very difficult for us to consider the application'. The scholarship applicants were, therefore, encouraged to maintain consistency throughout all their documents and to submit all the papers required for their application. Moreover, the NFDIN placed emphasis on dual criteria—poverty and group identity—for the Adivasi Janajati scholarships. Thus the scholarship officers spent most of their bureaucratic time to 'establish the situation'—that is exerting what Bourdieu calls a power of nomination.[55]

The practices in the NFDIN bureaucracy show that the scholarship disbursement was based on various approximations of the socio-economic status of the applicant which could then be mapped into different administrative categories.

[55] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John Thompson, trans. Gino Raymond (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

First, applications were only considered from students from government schools (private schools were considered if the student was enrolled in technical subjects). Second, the applicants' places of residence were also noted in order to identify rural–urban and Kathmandu–non Kathmandu applicants. Third, the applicants were identified based on their gender,[56] so that at least one male and one female applicant could be selected from every *janajati* group. Fourth, the applicants were also sorted into technical and non-technical subject categories (computer engineering and software design were considered technical subjects whereas microbiology and micro-technology were considered non-technical). Fifth, special consideration was given to special circumstances such as disability, conflict-affected, earthquake-affected and poverty, which were verified on the basis of the various documents that the applicants submitted. The practice of rendering a social issue as technical also confirms expertise and constitutes the boundary between those who have the capacity to diagnose these issues and those who are subject to an expert direction.[57]

Once all the applications had been sorted into different groups, the main criterion for selection was academic merit. The scholarship officers calculated the average percentage scores for all the academic qualifications and arranged them in descending order. The students with the highest percentage in each Adivasi Janajati groups were then highlighted for further consideration. More checks were made to ensure that the students were from government education institutions, at least for

[56] NFDIN used gender as one of the important ways to ensure distributional parity in scholarship programmes. In all the categories, equal numbers of male and female students were selected. While gender could be an interesting point of analysis, it is not the focus of this paper.
[57] Li, *The Will to Improve*, p. 10.

their school education. Sometimes, it was not easy to calculate academic merit. The scholarship officer explained the problem to me: 'It is not easy to convert the current system of Grade Point Average (GPA) into percentages.[58] Some students have done it by multiplying it by 25. But we do not consider it fair. Within this conversion system, it is possible for students to get a very high percentage'. In such circumstances, the scholarship officers asked the students to provide conversion certificates, or they sometimes used approximate percentages. While these rules were certainly vague, the situations in which they are applied were also unstable. Both rules and actual practices were the result of attempts to navigate a shifting terrain on which the apparent certainty of the scholarship rules could be applied.

The NFDIN scholarships show how the relational space between state and citizen is not only entrenched in bureaucratic hierarchies, but also shaped by an existing logic of state support and welfare programmes, where poverty and group-based marginalisation are increasingly utilised to gain state support. After the scholarship applications were received, the NFDIN officers assessed them according to the five-fold categorisation. One of them later explained that applicants in each category would be assessed separately. This was in response to an increasing awareness about the inequality between different *janajati* groups—where groups such as the Newars and Thakalis had a higher socio-economic advantage compared to groups such as the Surel and Kusbadiya. This inequality was also reflected in the

[58] GPA is based on a 0 to 4.0 scale (A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0, and F = 0), with a 4.0 representing students who have scored straight As in every course. This creates a mismatch in converting this score into a percentage because the students getting As could be counted as scoring 100 percent.

applications received. According to the 2017 NFDIN report, the highest number of applications (438) came from Newars (13 were selected). There were no applications from the Kusunda, Banakaria or Raute groups (endangered category), from the Siyar or Thudam (highly marginalised category), or from the Chairotan, Marfali Thakali or Tangbe (disadvantaged category).[59]

In order to address this well-noted difference between large and small *janajatis*, the NFDIN relied on the census numbers to guide the decision-making process.[60] According to an NFDIN official memo of 2 April 2015, the ratio for selection would reflect each *janajati*'s proportion of the total population of Nepal. The memo also stated that no category should have a zero-scholarship recipient, if possible. This 'quota' system was to acknowledge that Adivasi Janajati is not a uniform category and to ensure that applicants from the endangered groups are not pitted against applicants from advantaged categories. For instance, in 2017, the successful student from a Santhal community (highly marginalised category) residing in Morang district (far from Kathmandu) had an average of 40 percent in her previous educational qualifications, whereas a Newar student (advantaged category) studying in Bhaktapur district (near Kathmandu) had an average of 88.6 percent. In 2016–17, 370 applicants were selected out of 3431 applications[61]. A total of 162 applications were

[59] *NFDIN Report on Adivasi Janajati Scholarship Programme* (Kathmandu: NFDIN, 2017).
[60] According to Census 2011, 35.4 percent of the total population in Nepal are janajati groups; of which 0.08 % are endangered, 2.2 % are highly marginalised, 14.5 % marginalised, 13.5% disadvantaged, and 5.0% advantaged Janajati, groups.
[61] Due to budget cuts to the NFDIN in 2016–17, the number of selected applications was much lower even though the total number of applications was higher. In 2016–17, 370 applicants were selected from a total of 3,431 applications. In 2015–16, 500 applicants were selected from a total of 2,061 applications.

received from the endangered group of whom 31 received a scholarship, there were 298 applications from the highly marginalised group for 82 scholarships, 1524 applications from the marginalised groups for 132 scholarships, 999 applications from the disadvantaged group for 111 scholarships, and 439 applications from the advantaged groups for 14 scholarships. In each category, scholarships were equally distributed amongst male and female students.

When the final list of successful applicants was ready, the NFDIN announced it through various media—newspapers, NFDIN noticeboard, NFDIN website and NFDIN Facebook page. Different ethnic organisations were also informed and asked to disseminate the information. Most importantly, the scholarship officers made a phone call to each student via the phone numbers submitted on the application form. Many successful applicants came to the NFDIN office in person to collect their scholarship money, especially if they lived in and around Kathmandu. In addition, NFDIN teams visited various district headquarters to distribute money to applicants who live far from Kathmandu, with visits to these students usually commencing about a month after the initial announcement of scholarship selection. The NFDIN officers told me: 'It is very difficult to contact all the students. Sometimes, the students do not give us the correct phone number. Or they might have changed their numbers. Other times, we find that the students have discontinued their studies and, therefore, [are] disqualified from receiving it. But most of the times, we are able to reach successful applicants through various ethnic organisations'. This was especially true for students in the endangered and marginalised categories who did not live in Kathmandy valley

and were unable to collect their scholarship amounts in person from NFDIN headquarter.

Multi-ethnic citizens, multi-ethnic state

These changing approaches to ethnicity indicate the temporal nature of the state where the altered ideational norms can potentially lead to the re-imagining of the state. The appropriation of certain ideas is a product of particular historical conjunctures, and circulation of specific values is embedded in particular times. As many scholars have noted, ethnicity has long been used as a generic 'cultural' marker of people in Nepal, both in academia and in politics.[62] However as discussed in the previous section, ethnicity has also emerged as a decidedly public and highly-politicised phenomenon in contemporary Nepal.[63] In this context institutions such as the NFDIN, which were established to redress past ethnic grievances, are supposedly instrumental and symbolic at the same time.

These developments also animated a variety of ways to acknowledge 'difference' and construct new forms of citizenship. 'I think I have a good chance to get this scholarship', said one of the students explaining his decision to apply; 'I am a Sherpa, and I have got good grades in my SLC. Not too many people from my

[62] Richard Burghart, 'The formation of the concept of nation-state in Nepal' in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 44, no. 1 (1984), pp. 1–25; and William F. Fisher, *Fluid Boundaries: Forming and Transforming of Identity in Nepal* (New York/Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1983).
[63] Pfaff-Czarnecka, 'Debating the State of the Nation'; and Gellner *et al*., *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom*.

community get scores as high as mine'. Identifying closely with his *janajati* group, this student was quite aware of its importance as an administrative category in the NFDIN and was utilising it as a way to claim educational assistance. He added: 'Nepal is a multi-ethnic (*bahu jatiya*) country now. These kinds of programmes are our right (*adhikar*)'. Clearly the notion of multi-ethnicity, as a differentiated way to claim social rights, had entered common parlance, both for the students and the state officials. Unpacking a pile of application that had just arrived by post, a scholarship officer said: 'We have just received a scholarship application from the Surel group. We do not usually get applications from them. This candidate is definitely going to receive it as there will be no competition within this group. We want more applications from Kusunda, Banakaria and Raute but they have hardly anyone who has completed school and moved on to higher education'.

The ways in which these categories of 'difference' are used in Nepal indicate the evolving nature of state–citizen relations, and how it they crafted in particular periods of time. As Mitchell argues, the line between state and society is constructed through a variety of institutional mechanisms that ensure a certain social and political order.[64] The institutional arrangement on multi-ethnicity in Nepal, as we see in the NFDIN scholarship programme, shows the ways in which a variety of social relations are thematised and brought into the domain of the state. The institutionalisation of ethnic categories, supported by census statistics, provides the knowledge base to design and implement affirmative action programmes. This institutional arrangement

[64] Timothy Mitchell, 'The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics', in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, no. 11 (1991), p. 90.

also provides the rationale within which states operate to ensure both social order and social rights. It is, therefore, necessary to appreciate how state institutions have made claims to and imagined what is now perceived as the dilemma of 'difference': where the imperative to maintain institutional order and provide social rights appear as a way to normalise regimes of social obligation.[65]

Though the scholarship bureaucracy provided a new space for forging state–citizen relations, this was not without challenges. The NFDIN has faced some instances where their decisions have been questioned. 'Once we received a complaint from an ethnic organisation that all three children from one family got the scholarships. We looked into it and realised that they were given the scholarships in different categories such as technical, non-technical, and research degrees. But our rule does not allow us to concentrate all the scholarships into the same household. So we had to cancel it. We usually have to raise a memo (*tippani uthayera*) to change a decision', explained one NFDIN officer. Such complaints are raised quite frequently even though the scholarship amount is very small compared to the cost of education, especially for technical subjects. Those students who did not receive a scholarship complained that they 'do not believe in any *sarkari* (state-funded) programme', or that they knew that it was a 'set-up' where the selection is already pre-decided. Some students declared that they would 'never ever' apply again, though they were helping others to fill in the application forms. There were several complaints that the scholarship amount was not adequate. One student who was studying computer

[65] Li, *The Will to Improve*, p. 5.

science in Biratnagar stated: 'My tuition fee is Rs4,000 per month. This amount that I have received (from the scholarship) is only enough to support the stationery cost for the year'. Nevertheless although the amount of money is small, most students saw the programme as *sakaratmak* (positive) because it gave them *protsahan* (encouragement) to continue their education. '*Saano sahayog le ullekhniya prabhab parchha* (small help can make a huge difference)', said one of the students who was applying in 2017. Another applicant added: 'Institutions like the NFDIN exist to help poor *janajati* students like us. So, I am quite hopeful'.

The government's moral and political obligations towards Adivasi Janajati groups, based on ideas of inclusiveness and equity, also reveal new logics of governance and new ways of encountering the Nepal state. The rules, practices and effects of the state-sponsored education initiatives are gradually emerging as basic tools for citizen engagement with the state. These initiatives have become central to the way in which people encounter and make themselves legible to the state.[66] Even while these categories are meant to address group-based inequality and provide educational assistance, they have also become the domain for state activity. In this process, public discourse and practice about belonging-ness, deserving-ness and state assistance, that centre on group inequality, become new spaces for state–citizen engagement. Within these new avenues, categories of 'difference' are constantly invoked and experienced, and both state and citizens come to co-constitute each other in a variety of new ways.

[66] Corbridge *et al*., *Seeing the State*.

Conclusion

Over past decades, anthropological approaches were variously used to offer ethnographically-informed perspectives on the state. Scholars showed that it is through paying close attention to the everyday practices of state officials, and to how people experience and engage with the state, that we are able to understand the internal workings of the state. Drawing on these insights, this paper has located the bureaucracy as a site for experiencing the state and interpreting the relational space of state practice. By exploring the NFDIN scholarship bureaucracy, I have explored how both the state and citizens 'come into being' through these mechanisms of engagement, albeit in a new form—as a multi-ethnic state and multi-ethnic citizens.

The establishment of the NFDIN is simultaneously instrumental and symbolic. It reflects the Nepali government's commitment to redressing past ethnic grievances and implementing policies specifically for Adivasi Janajati groups. Such new institutions are primarily founded on an acknowledgement of difference and heterogeneity in Nepal's population. However, these new spaces of state–citizen engagement also use 'difference' to construct new forms of (ethnic) citizenship. Through moral and political obligations, continuously performed at these sites of engagement, various Adivasi Janajati categories are constantly imagined, invoked, and experienced. These provide the rationale for state operations that ensure both social order and social rights, and normalise regimes of social obligation. This new

logic of governance firstly authenticates people's claims to their identity, and secondly is used by people to make claims on the state. In the process, it introduces a different way of interacting with the state—one that is formal, based on documents, and where one can claim social rights through 'difference'. However this sometimes leads to new anxieties related to the procedures themselves, especially for students.

This paper suggests that while group-differentiated programmes such as the NFDIN scholarship programme are inherently embedded in the specific process of state formation, they also steer new imaginings of the state. On the one hand they render differentiated citizenship more legible by recognising and redressing diversity in Nepal's population; on the other, the state reinvents itself by conferring authority on to different institutions to operationalise 'difference' through affirmative action programmes. Moreover, the attempts to institutionally recognise diversity also animate a whole network of other institutions such as ethnic associations, and facilitate different types of ever-shifting uncertain collaborations that different actors, including the state, are trying to navigate. This paper adds to the growing body of scholarship on the anthropology of the state by highlighting the ways in which new spaces of the state enable us to make visible new configurations of state–citizen relations in Nepal and beyond.

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