In *Making Nations* I explain state policy towards “non-core groups.” The three policy choices I consider are exclusion, assimilation, and accommodation. I address the following question: What drives a host state’s choice of whether to assimilate, accommodate or exclude the various non-core groups within its territory?

‘Minorities’ are often used as a pretext to fight expansionary wars or to destabilize neighboring countries, triggering specific policy responses by the targeted states. Interference of states by supporting non-core groups in other states drives not only the mobilization and politicization of a noncore group’s identity, but also the host state’s perception of the group and its nation-building policies towards it.

Forging a bridge between the comparative politics and international relations literatures on this topic, I argue that a state’s choices of nation-building policies towards non-core groups are driven by both its foreign policy goals and its interstate relations. The foreign policy goals of a host state may be revisionist or status quo. Revisionist states are unhappy with the international status quo and their foreign policy goals are focused on overturning it. Status quo states are content with the international distribution of resources and want to preserve it. Interstate relations can take the form of rivalry or alliance; these in turn are influenced by --but are independent from-- international alliance blocs.

I make four predictions: First, a host state is more likely to exclude a non-core group when the state has revisionist aims and the group is backed by an enemy state. Second, a host state is more likely to assimilate a non-core group if the state favors the status quo and the non-core group is supported by an enemy state. Third, a host state is more likely to accommodate a non-core group if that group is supported by an allied state in order not to jeopardize the alliance. Fourth, assimilation is more likely if the non-core

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1 In my work I define nation-building as the process whereby ruling political elites attempt to make the political and the national units overlap (Gellner 1983). I call a ‘non-core group’ any aggregation of individuals that is perceived as an ethnic group (the relevant marker can be linguistic, religious, physical, ideological) by the ruling political elite of a country at the beginning of the period analyzed.
group has no external support since the host state wants to prevent future external interference.

Alongside the strategic considerations, in *Making Nations* I highlight certain demographic and cultural factors which are also of importance (e.g. language, religion, population, geographic concentration, and domestic politics). Nevertheless, in my account it is the *politics of ethnicity in the international arena* rather than ethnic attributes *per se* that structure nation-building choices.

In the manuscript I test the theory against a variety of alternative explanations on multiple levels of analysis and a variety of data sources. The first test is conducted on a cross-national dataset of nation-building policies towards all non-core groups I managed to document in the Balkans after WWI. The states that emerged from the gradual deterioration of the Ottoman Empire in Europe provide an excellent context in which to study nation-building policies because of the protracted intermingling of heterogeneous peoples as well as the unstable relations between Balkan states. I also use archival material and conduct a subnational test – studying Western Macedonia, a religiously, culturally, and linguistically heterogeneous province in Greece—and a temporal test – studying the treatment of the Albanians in Kosovo over time.

Moving from the Interwar to the Cold War period and from the Balkan Peninsula to Asia, I probe my argument focusing on the Tibetan-Chinese and the Uighur-Chinese interactions in the context of the Cold War. Tibet and Xinjiang have had a turbulent history and a perhaps even more turbulent historiography in the 20th century. Finally, I run my argument and its implications through current affairs in cases ranging from the Black Sea to Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the manuscript I address three prevalent problems in the study of nation-building: a) ‘statistical infighting’ among scholars; b) the conflation of intentions, policy implementation, and policy outcomes; and c) principal-agent problems, where the behavior of individuals at the lower levels of the administration follow their own “policy” which is often at odds with the one chosen by the central command.
Chapter Outline

Introduction

I lay out the main argument that in order to understand a host state’s nation-building policies towards its various non-core groups we need to take the role of external involvement by interested powers seriously. I also provide a road map of the manuscript and a discussion of the policy implications of my argument.

Theory

Chapter 1. A Theory of Nation-Building

In this chapter I discuss the building block concepts and present my argument. I also situate it in the existing literature. The manuscript moves beyond ethnic hatreds, cultural distance, and homeland arguments, to identify the conditions under which different policies become more likely with respect to different groups. I provide a clear argument for an International Relations explanation of domestic policies towards non-core groups that will push the debate forward in the field. I argue that identifying the links between certain non-core groups and external powers, the foreign policy goals of the host state as well as its interstate relations with other states can help us account for the variation in nation-building policies.

Empirics

Early 20th century

Chapter 2. Cross-National: Nation-Building in the Interwar Balkans

In this chapter I offer a cross-national test of my theory against alternative explanations. I conduct the test on a dataset I compiled on all non-core groups in post-WWI Balkans (88 groups). My argument is supported in the analysis. States behave vis-à-vis non-core groups based on actions of external powers and interstate relations with these powers. In particular, non-core groups mobilized by rivals are excluded in revisionist states and targeted with assimilationist policies in status quo states. Non-core groups mobilized by allies are accommodated. Minorities that are not backed at all are targeted with assimilationist policies. In addition, having a different religion and language makes accommodation more likely than assimilation, but this finding although statistically significant goes against the prediction of exclusion that cultural distance arguments would make.
Chapter 3. Analysis of Outliers
In this chapter I analyze cases that do not conform to the predictions of my theory and identify some interesting dynamics that set up a new research agenda. Looking at the outliers of my statistical analysis three methodological issues emerge: a) determining the appropriate time horizon, b) dealing with mixed policies, and c) discerning terminal from transitional policies. This section discusses all of these issues using examples from the early 20th-century Balkans. It also identifies a divide and rule strategy that Balkan governments pursued both to fragment large non-core groups and to prevent subnational assimilation of smaller non-core groups to larger ones.

Chapter 4. Subnational: Nation-building in Western Macedonia, 1916-1920
In chapter 4, I present a subnational test of my argument. It explains variation in policies towards eight non-core groups in Western Macedonia (1916-1920). In this context I control for the state level hypotheses, such as understandings of nationhood, modernization theories, and domestic politics and test several group level hypotheses, such as primordialism, status reversal, irredentism, and homeland. Based on archival material on nation-building from Western Macedonia, Greece, I explore the conditions in which the ruling political elite of a state is likely to target a non-core group with assimilationist instead of either exclusionary policies or accommodation.

Chapter 5. Temporal: Albanians in Kosovo, 1913-1940
In this chapter I conduct a subnational case study focusing on temporal variation: Using archival material from the British Foreign Office reporting on the treatment of Kosovo Albanians from 1913 to 1940, I trace the policies followed by the Serbian ruling political elites. Studying the nation-building policies pursued by the Serbian elites towards the Albanians in Kosovo over time makes it possible to keep many factors constant and isolate the effect of my main variable of interest, external interference.

Chapter 6. Out-of-Sample Testing in China
In chapter 6, I focus on cases that come from the Cold War period. I probe my argument using a wide range of examples from various continents and. Focusing on one government, one country, one regional system and a carefully selected non-core groups
allows me to isolate the impact of external support and interstate relations on the planning of nation-building policies. The main puzzle I am addressing in this chapter is Why did the Chinese government crack down on the Tibetan movement in 1959 but on the Uighurs in 1962 given that Han antipathy, cultural differences, and self-determination claims were present in both cases? I argue that although the Chinese government was following the 1952 program for regional autonomy in both Xinjiang and Tibet different patterns of external involvement and interstate relations account for the variation in nation-building policies in these regions.

Policy Implications

Chapter 7. The Future of Nation-Building

I this concluding chapter I am summarizing my findings and discuss the implications of my theory and findings for the future of nation-building. Although the bulk of my evidence comes from the 20th century, my argument has clear implications for contemporary politics. This is a book relevant to policy makers today. Understanding the logic of state-planned nation-building policies will help decision makers in the international community devise new incentives to prevent ethnic cleansing in the future, encourage accommodation, or foster national integration. Broadly speaking, to improve relations between core and non-core groups, we should improve relations between states. In particular I draw three policy implications: 1. To increase the probability of accommodation, we should increase interstate alliances through regional integration initiatives and international institutions. 2. To prevent exclusionary policies, we should uphold the principle of state sovereignty and minimize external interference and border changes. The United Nations should allow border changes only in cases where there will be no non-core groups in the newly independent states or alternatively no external power would have an interest in interfering. 3. To reduce the danger of exclusion governments ought to be particularly judicious when they assist non-core groups in rival host states. The UN Security Council should check interventions by rival states in order to reduce exclusionist policies.

In the end of the manuscript there is a Methodological Appendix discussing my coding rules and a note on Balkan historiography.