

Chapter 4

Assimilation and its Alternatives Caveats in the Study of Nation-building Policies

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This chapter explains how states choose nation-building policies. Specifically, I focus on the strategic choice to use exclusionary state-planned nation-building policies toward non-core groups¹ instead of assimilating them or granting them minority rights. I define nation-building as the process whereby ruling political elites attempt to make the *political* and the *national* units overlap.² To achieve this overlap, these elites construct and impose a common national identity on the population of the state. Legitimacy in the modern state is connected to popular rule and thus majorities. Nation-building is the process through which these majorities are constructed.

Some countries are, or are at least thought of as, more homogeneous than others. For example, Japan is more homogeneous along ethnic and religious lines than Bosnia-Herzegovina or Nigeria. We know that countries that are considered homogeneous today were not necessarily so in the nineteenth century. For example, in Italy during the 1860s, “only 3 per cent of the population spoke the north Italian version elevated to official status, and no more than 10 per cent understood it.”³ Things in Italy are quite different today. The consensus in the literature is that this homogeneity has been constructed.⁴

1. 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, I call a “non-core group.” For a more detailed discussion of this definition, see Harris Mylonas, *Assimilation and its Alternatives: The Making of Co-National, Refugees, and Minorities*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 2008, pp. 50–52.

2. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983).

3. Crawford Young, ed., *Ethnic Diversity and Public Policy: A Comparative Inquiry* (St. Martin’s Press and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1998), p. 18.

4. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 2000); and James D. Fearon and David D.

Within existing state borders, a wide range of possible strategies can lead to a more homogeneous country. Once a government decides who constitutes the core group and what the criteria of inclusion are, it pursues policies to construct a homogeneous nation-state. But how do ruling elites choose among these policies? What explains variation in nation-building policies across groups and over time? Many arguments, ranging from ethnic antipathy, racism, and ethnic dominance to strictly security considerations, have been proposed to explain aspects of this variation.⁵ Many of the existing theories, however, focus on explaining the occurrence of the most violent state policies such as genocide, mass killing, or ethnic cleansing.⁶ As a result, they end up over-aggregating the different “peaceful” outcomes under the residual category of “non-violent.” As Stevan Pavlowitch notes, “There is a fascination with victims: the massacre of populations is more interesting than their daily lives.”⁷ The argument I advance in this chapter accounts for both violent and non-violent policies toward non-core groups.

I propose a categorical conceptualization of nation-building which posits three possible state policies: assimilation, accommodation, or exclusion.⁸ The ruling elites can pursue educational, cultural, occupational, marital, demographic, political, and other state policies aimed at getting

Laitin, “Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity,” *International Organization*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (2000), pp. 845–877.

5. Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Roger Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Roger Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring 1993), pp. 27–47.

6. Barbara Harff, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder Since 1955,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1 (February 2003), pp. 57–73; Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Cornell University Press, 2006); Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004); H. Zeynep Bulutgil, “Territorial Conflict and Ethnic Cleansing,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2009; Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), Alexander B. Downes, “Desperate Times, Desperate Measures: The Causes of Civilian Victimization in War,” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Spring 2006), pp. 152–195; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), Benjamin A. Valentino, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay, “‘Draining the Sea’: Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare,” *International Organization*, Vol. 58 (Spring 2004), pp. 375–407; Jack Snyder and Barbara Walter, *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

7. Stevan K. Pavlowitch, “Europe and the Balkans in a Historical Perspective, 1804–1945,” *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (November 2000), pp. 141–148.

8. To be sure, these policies are not always terminal. For instance, a government that pursues a policy of assimilation in T_0 might choose deportation or genocide in T_1 .

the non-core group to adopt the core group's culture and way of life. This is assimilation. Alternatively, they can retain the non-core group in the state, but grant the group special minority rights. Certain "differences" of the non-core group are respected, and institutions that regulate and perpetuate these differences are put in place. This is accommodation. Finally, they can physically remove the non-core group through population exchange, deportation, or mass killing. This is exclusion. Exclusionary policies are the most violent. Assimilationist policies could be either violent or non-violent. Accommodation refers to non-violent policies. What distinguishes these policies is the different intention behind each. Despite the voluminous literatures on national integration, state-sponsored nationalism, and nationalist movements,⁹ there is no theory that specifies the conditions under which a state is likely to assimilate, accommodate, or exclude a non-core group.

Following World War I, modernization theorists discussed national integration as a by-product of industrialization, urbanization, and political development. They emphasized the importance of economic transformations for identity change and suggested that national integration is a result of these processes.¹⁰ But these theories never specify who pursues these policies and in what fashion. This set of theories gives little attention to direct state involvement in the process of nation-building. As Anthony Smith put it, "the role of the state is simply to act as a handmaid of history, whose goal is a world of large-scale nation-states or regions."¹¹

9. Karl Deutsch and William J. Foltz, eds., *Nation-Building* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966); S. N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Building States and Nations: Analyses by Region, Vol. II* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1973); Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External Homelands in the New Europe: Notes toward a Relational Analysis," *Reihe Politikwissenschaft*, No. 11 (December 1993); Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin, *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992); Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536–1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Konstantin Symmons-Symonowicz, *Nationalist Movements: A Comparative View* (Meadville, Penn.: Maplewood Press, 1970); and Henry J. Tobias and Charles E. Woodhouse, *Minorities and Politics* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969).

10. Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press, 1965).

11. Anthony Smith, "State-Making and Nation-Building" in John Hall, ed., *States in History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 228–263, at p. 232.

Later generations of social scientists provided microfoundations for the various modernization theories.¹² These studies embraced the unplanned character of national integration posited by the modernization theorists. Their work, inspired by methodological individualism, focused on the calculations individuals make with respect to identity choices. However, individual-level decisions are always structured by the context of state policies. Without a theory that accounts for variation in state-planned policies toward non-core groups, we cannot have a complete theory of nation-building; the “supply side” of the phenomenon is under-theorized.

To address some of these shortcomings and enrich our understanding of the “supply side” of nation-building, my argument focuses on the importance of international, geostrategic concerns for nation-building policies. “Minorities” are often used as a pretext to fight expansionary wars or to destabilize neighboring countries, triggering specific—and predictable—policy responses by the targeted states. I argue that a state’s choices of nation-building policies toward non-core groups are driven by its foreign policy goals and interstate relations. The foreign policy goals of a host state may be revisionist or status quo. Revisionist states have lost territory in war and are unhappy with the international status quo; their foreign policy goals are focused on overturning it. Status-quo states have gained territory in war, 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 independent from—international alliance blocs.¹³

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 a rival 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 a rival state. Third, a host state is more likely to accommodate a non-core group if that group is supported by an allied state. Fourth, assimilation is more likely if the non-core group has no external support. Figure 4.1 depicts these predictions.

12. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism*; David Laitin, “Marginality: A Microperspective,” *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (January 1995), pp. 31–57; and David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).

13. For more details on the logic of the theory outlined here, see Mylonas, *Assimilation and its Alternatives*, chap. 1.

Figure 4.1. Theory Predictions.

		External Power		
		Yes: Interstate Relations		No
		Ally	Enemy	
Host State (Foreign Policy Goals)	Lost Territory (Revisionist)	Accommodation	Exclusion	Assimilation
	Gained Territory (Status Quo)	Accommodation	Assimilation	

My contribution to this volume is organized into three sections. In the first section, I discuss two prevalent problems that scholars of nation-building policies face: the politics of “counting people,” and the tendency to conflate intentions and policy outcomes. In the second section, I use material from my research on the Balkans to test part of my argument and illustrate the ways in which I address these problems. Finally, I conclude by exploring the implications of my argument for nation-building policies today.

Methodological Problems in the Study of Nation-building Policies

Scholars who study state-planned nation-building policies and the reactions to these policies have been faced with two fundamental problems: the politics of “counting people” and distinguishing intentions from policy outcomes. The first issue refers to the difficulties and politics involved in three interrelated choices: identifying a group as an “ethnic group” or a “minority,” deciding on an estimate of its population, and studying it as a relatively unitary and homogeneous entity. The most common methodological problems resulting are selection bias and over-aggregated actors. The second difficulty refers to the “revealed preferences problem” in the social sciences, namely the practice of inferring an actor’s intentions by taking statements at face value or just observing the outcomes on the ground. Disentangling the relationship between intentions, policies, implementation, and outcomes is necessary to understand the process of nation-building. Both of these challenges hinder the study of state-planned nation-building policies. Not addressing them in our research can lead to wrongheaded theories. This chapter stands as a critique to studies in comparative politics and international relations which fail to address these problems.

The Politics of “Counting People”

The politics surrounding statistics on “ethnic minorities” is an extremely problematic aspect of the study of nation-building. First, whoever is doing the counting many times determines the results. Second, even if we assume that the existing statistics on ethnic composition are accurate, we can never be sure that the categories used in a census were the most salient ones for the people on the ground. For example, depending on which dimension the state census committee chooses to highlight—religious affiliation, mother tongue, regional identity, racial categories, or ethnic background—it can produce a very different “ethnic structure.”

An aggregate approach to issues related to nation-building is precarious and cannot serve as the final word. Using census data to explain nation-building policies is, to an extent, confusing the outcome for the cause. Census data on “ethnicity” are part and parcel of nation-building policies and so are maps and atlases.¹⁴ The obvious case is that of groups which are *not* represented in census categories and are thus muted.

Take the Ottoman Empire, for example, which granted official status only to religious communities (milletts). The Ottoman censuses record Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Gregorian Christians, Jews, and later on Catholics and Protestants. Ottoman statistics provide no information about language, cultural difference, or national consciousness. In the Balkan Peninsula in particular, this meant that Muslim Albanian-speakers, Tatars, Turkish-speakers, Donmehs (Jewish converts to Islam), and other Muslim groups were all under the broad “Muslim” category. Similarly, all Christian Orthodox people—Slavic-speakers with various national affiliations, Albanian-speakers, Greek-speakers, Vlach-speakers, Sarakatsans, and so forth—were considered members of the “Rum” millet, represented by the Greek-dominated Patriarchate in Istanbul.

The transition from empire to nation-state occurred in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and with it a transition in the relevant recorded categories occurred. The same inhabitants of these territories were now aggregated with respect to language or a notion of national consciousness that was, at least initially, vague. This was the face of modernity in the region. Modern states in Western Europe recorded language use and national origin in their censuses, and the Balkan states followed suit in order to be on equal footing and to try to prove their historical rights to disputed territories. In the hands of the ruling political elites of the Balkan states, the census was part of a broader war for the hearts and minds of the newly incorporated rural populations.

Most studies rely either on census categories or on material produced by the elites of “oppressed” groups. Both sources are inadequate if our research question has to do with state-planned nation-building policies. For example, when we use census data, we are likely to get deflated popula-

14. Wilkinson, Henry R., *Maps and Politics: A Review of Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool, U.K.: Liverpool University, 1951).

tion estimates of most non-core groups and no estimates for the ones that are targeted with assimilationist policies. Similarly, if we try to discern the ethnic makeup of a country or a region using material produced by the elites of non-core groups, we often encounter propaganda that inflates the numbers of non-core groups. In this latter case, however, what is more disconcerting is that we are not capturing any of the non-core groups whose elites have been successfully co-opted, or any non-core groups with no elites. Selection bias is therefore almost unavoidable.

How can we overcome this situation where available statistics are capturing host states' nation-building policies instead of realities on the ground? One way to avoid this bias is to shun data from conflict-ridden territories until a fair amount of time has passed. Biased estimates and census manipulation are much more likely in contested areas. Focusing on such cases only exacerbates the problem. Detached historical research can put things into perspective. For example, Yugoslavia and Austria both claimed Carinthia for the first half of the twentieth century. According to the Austrian census of 1951, there were only 7,000 Slovenes in the Klagenfurt area of Carinthia, while the Yugoslavs claimed that there were more than 35,000. What accounts for this discrepancy? The Austrian census grouped people by "language used daily" into nine identity categories: "German, Slovene, Windish (a Slovenian dialect), and six combinations of the three."¹⁵ Scholars had no way to tell how many "Slovenes" were living there. Moreover, the population inhabiting Carinthia could be grouped in various different ways depending on the census question. Data from contested territories are unreliable; scholars studying such areas should be upfront about the various sources of bias.

Another solution involves looking at census data that were produced prior to significant political changes in a region. In the case of Southeastern Europe, I overcame several problems with the help of the Ottoman censuses from the nineteenth century, as well as confidential diplomatic reports prior to World War I.

The ideal solution, however, is to move our attention to state policymakers and take their perceptions seriously. The ruling political elites, who are central to the planning of nation-building policies, know that they cannot ignore non-core groups. These governmental officials, ministers, and governors write reports and confidential documents concerning groups of people that rarely come up in censuses. They are treasures for both building and testing hypotheses. In the empirical section of this chapter, I rely primarily on such sources.

15. Huey Louis Kostanick, "The Geopolitics of the Balkans," in Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics since the Eighteenth Century* (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1974), pp. 1-55, 27.

Intentions vs. Outcomes

In the nation-building process, intentions, policy choices, and policy outcomes are definitely linked, yet intentions are not always translated into policy choices, nor do those choices always produce the desired outcome. Moreover, policy choices are sometimes a function of capabilities and not of intentions. For example, the latter are sometimes veiled because of external intervention by an international organization or a great power. Moreover, private interests and biases of state officials, especially at lower levels of the administration, interfere in the planning and implementation of state policies. As a result, many theories are developed and tested on “events” that were unintended consequences or “forced” outcomes rather than accurate reflections of the administration’s intentions. The outcome often is deceptive empirical support for or incorrect falsification of theories.

An archival approach can help us address the revealed-preferences problem. Studying the decision-making process that led to nation-building policies helps differentiate between the intentions of the administration toward a particular non-core group and the actual policy plan that it eventually adopts. One might argue that this is not necessary because what actually matters in politics is the policy that is implemented. However, if we want to understand why state officials choose particular nation-building policies and not others, studying only the observed outcomes will not suffice.

For example, two different non-core groups might be granted the same minority rights, but with a different reasoning behind each case. In practical terms, the reasoning matters because it most likely will inform the policy implementation. In theoretical terms, understanding elites’ reasons can help distinguish between rival explanations. For instance, a hypothesis might predict the granting of minority rights to a non-core group, but for completely different reasons than the ones that were behind the actual decision. In this case, although the hypothesis makes the “right” prediction, it does not capture the logic behind the policy.

In the next section I use empirical evidence from my archival research in the Balkans to test my argument against alternatives and address many of the methodological caveats I discussed above.

Nation-building in Western Macedonia, 1916–1920

What accounts for variation in nation-building policies toward different non-core groups within one state? I find that the Greek government chose its nation-building policies based not on objective measures of cultural distance or deep-rooted ethnic hatred, but rather on security and geostrategic concerns. The diplomatic relations between rival states and Greece

largely determined both the perception of the non-core groups inside Greece and their consequent treatment.¹⁶

My analysis is based on archival research conducted in Greece in 2005 and 2006.¹⁷ For the purposes of this chapter, I rely mostly on a compilation of reports written by Ioannis Eliakis between 1916 and 1920.¹⁸ Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos sent Eliakis to be a representative of the “National Defense” revolutionary government in the region of Western Macedonia.¹⁹ Eliakis later became the Governor-General of Western Macedonia. From 1916 to 1920, he was the ultimate authority in that region. His decisions overrode those of any other state official, including military officers. His reports had a wide range of recipients: the Prime Minister, the Ministries of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Military Affairs.²⁰

Using both secondary sources and archival material, I focus on the national integration efforts in Western Macedonia. This nation-building effort took place during the turbulent context following the Balkan Wars²¹ and during World War I, in a region that was under the same administrative system—the Ottoman Empire—for centuries and involved a linguistically, religiously, and culturally heterogeneous population.

Interstate alliances shifted in the region over this period, and a few shifts in territorial control occurred. During World War I, Greece was fighting for the restoration of its gains from the Balkan wars (revisionist). Following World War I, Greece was trying to secure its territorial gains (status quo). Moreover, some non-core groups had no external backing, some were backed by allied states, and some were backed by enemy states. The combination of the above characteristics and the important variation in my main independent variables render this region an ideal location to study the politics of nation-building and test my theory.

16. For a more detailed treatment of this case study and additional material on the geopolitical situation, see Mylonas, *Assimilation and its Alternatives*, chap. 2.

17. I conducted this research at the Museum of the Macedonian Struggle, Pavlos Kaligas Archive (PKA). All translations from the archival material are mine.

18. Ioannis Eliakis was a close friend of Prime Minister Venizelos from the island of Crete. He was born in 1878 and moved to Greek Macedonia in July of 1916. For more information on Eliakis and his life, see Ioannis Eliakis, *He Hestoria Exinta Hronon me eikones kai documenta* [The history of sixty years with pictures and documents], (Hania, 1940).

19. Western Macedonia is delimited by mountains: Pindos and Grammos in the west; Vitsi, Peristeri, and Kaimaktsalan in the north; Olympus, Kambounia, and Chassia in the south; and Bermion in the east. The largest cities at the time were Florina, Kastoria, Kozani, and Grevena. See Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia. The Rural Settlement of Refugees, 1922–1930* (Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 2006), p. 13.

20. PKA, Eliakis to Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 22, 1920.

21. The First Balkan War involved Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro against the Ottoman Empire in 1912–1913. The Second Balkan War involved Bulgaria against Greece and Serbia in 1913.

Map 4.1. Western Macedonia, Greece.

Greek Macedonia



Western Macedonia



Detail of Western Macedonia

SOURCES: Greek Macedonia, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PosGreekMacedonia.png>; Western Macedonia, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Periferia_Dytikis_Makedonias.png; Detail of Western Macedonia, http://europa.eu/abc/maps/regions/greece/dytmak_en.htm.

Studying a specific region thoroughly allows me to trace the logic behind the nation-building policies proposed by the Greek administration. We rarely have the opportunity to access the reasoning behind the planning of such measures. This type of evidence allows me to test the causal mechanisms I have in mind. Additionally, by focusing on one region, I can control for many state- and regional-level hypotheses such as levels of economic development, regime type, elite understandings of nationhood, and international norms, and test the plausibility of my argument against three main alternative arguments: the cultural distance, status reversal, and homeland arguments.

According to the *cultural distance* argument, the larger the cultural difference between the non-core group and the core group, the more likely exclusionary policies become. Only groups that fit the criteria of the core group should be targeted with assimilationist policies. The *status reversal* theory argues that the more intense the past conflict between the dominant group and the non-core group, the more likely exclusion becomes once the roles are reversed. Finally, according to the *homeland* argument, elites in a national homeland make credible commitments to co-ethnics in the near abroad; this in turn makes the non-core group assertive, and can lead to a secessionist war. The implicit prediction with respect to nation-building policies is that minorities with national homelands are likely to be mobilized along ethnic lines against the core group; and thus targeted with exclusionary policies by the host state rather than assimilation or accommodation.²²

Integrating Western Macedonia: Intentions and Policies

The population residing in the “New Lands”²³ was far from being linguistically, ethnically, religiously, or culturally homogeneous. The inhabitants of the region were mostly peasants who lived in a world of corporate privileges for religious groups rather than individual rights. Industrial development was almost non-existent in Western Macedonia.²⁴ Moreover, the inhabitants were mostly illiterate, living in more or less homogeneous villages but overall mixed eparchies.

National categories such as “Greek,” “Bulgarian,” or “Turkish” did not signify the same thing to everybody, and nothing at all to many people. Sometimes people would call all Orthodox Christians “Greeks,” regardless of their native languages or ethnic backgrounds. Christians would use the term “Turk” to refer to Muslims of all types of ethnic and linguistic background; thus they could mean an Albanian, Bosnian Muslim, Donmeh, or Muslim Vlach. The majority of the population still identified themselves in religious terms. When somebody was called “Bulgarian,” it simply meant that person had joined the Bulgarian Exarchate, a church

22. For the cultural distance argument, see Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Politics in the New States,” in Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); and Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991). For the status reversal argument, see Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp. 17–18, 53; Stuart Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001); Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion*; and Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence*. For the homeland argument, see Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 66–67; and Pieter Van Houten, “The Role of a Minority’s Reference State in Ethnic Relations,” *Archives européennes de sociologie*, Vol. 39, Issue 1 (May 1998), pp. 110–146.

23. This is the designation that the Greek government used for the territories annexed in the Balkans Wars and World War I until the late 1920s.

24. Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia*, p. 19.

organization established with Russian backing as recently as 1870.²⁵ Until the early twentieth century, most people collapsed religious and national categories in very counterintuitive ways, from a modern point of view.

Table 4.1 provides us with a categorization of non-core groups in the region, as discussed by the Greek administration in their confidential reports. Despite the fluidity of identities and the superficial character of some identifications, Greek policymakers were convinced that in the 1910s the “pure Greek element” was a minority in Western Macedonia. According to Eliakis, with the exception of the eparchies²⁶ of Servia and Anasselitsa, in all other eparchies Greeks were a minority. In Kozani, the Muslims were predominant and in Kailaria—today’s Ptolemaida—Muslims and “Bulgarians” prevailed. In the eparchies of Kastoria and Florina, the majority were of the “Bulgarian” element together with a group of people with a fluid national consciousness. In the eparchy of Grevena, the influence of “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs was so great that Eliakis was not sure if there were any “pure Greeks” there.²⁷

The Greek government had been thinking of nation-building policies for the population of these lands for over forty years before their actual incorporation; however, officials had to finalize and re-calibrate them after 1913.²⁸ As Mark Mazower put it, “Much time, money and effort was required by disciples of the new nationalist creeds to convert its inhabitants from their older, habitual ways of referring to themselves, and to turn nationalism itself from the obsession of a small, educated elite to a movement capable of galvanizing masses.”²⁹

In the early twentieth century, and especially during the Balkan Wars, we observe a drastic intensification of nation-building policies in the

25. Thomas A. Meininger, *Ignatiev and the Establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate, 1864–1872: A Study in Personal Diplomacy* (New York: Arno Press, 1970).

26. An eparchy is a political subdivision of a province of Greece.

27. PKA, *Other Peoples*, Eliakis to the Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 5359, October 18, 1917. Also see PKA, *The State of Affairs of the Population in Western Macedonia*, Eliakis to the President of the Council of Ministers, Abstract of Report No. 7861, October 19, 1918). For detailed statistics of the regions, see Vemund Aarbakke, *Ethnic Rivalry and the Quest for Macedonia, 1870–1913* (Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, 2003).

28. Philip Carabott, “The Politics of Integration and Assimilation vis-à-vis the Slavo-Macedonian Minority of Inter-war Greece: From Parliamentary Inertia to Metaxist Repression,” in Peter Mackridge and Eleni Yannakakis, eds., *Ourselves and Others. The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity since 1912* (New York: Berg, 1997), pp. 59–78; Basil G. Gounaris, “Social Cleavages and National ‘Awakening’ in Ottoman Macedonia,” *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (January 1996), pp. 409–425; Anastasia N. Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia, 1870–1990* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Iakovos Michailidis, “The War of Statistics: Traditional Recipes for the Preparation of the Macedonian Salad,” *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (March 1998), pp. 9–21; Iakovos Michailidis, *Metakiniseis Slavofonon Plithysmon. O Polemos ton Statistikon* [Slavophone Population Movement. The War of Statistics] (Athens: Kritiki, 2003).

29. Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430–1950* (New York: Vintage, 2006), p. 256.

newly annexed territories by the three belligerents. Serbs pursued exclusionary policies against Albanians in Kosovo, Bulgarians against Greeks in Eastern Macedonia, and Greeks against Bulgarians in Central Macedonia.³⁰ After the Balkan Wars, the various national programs had already crystallized and internal nation-building intensified. The alliance pattern of the second Balkan War was preserved during World War I. This fact — which could have been otherwise—solidified the cleavages of the Second Balkan War.

Table 4.1. Non-core groups in Greek Macedonia (circa 1916).

Non-core groups	Religion	Language
Koniarëoi	Muslim	Turkish
Valaades	Muslim	Greek
Albanians	Muslim and Christians	Albanian
<i>Muslim Vlachs</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Vlach</i>
<i>Pomaks</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Slavic</i>
<i>Donmehs</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Ladino/Turkish</i>
“Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs	Christian (Exarchate)	Slavic
“Greek-leaning” Slavs	Christian (Patriarchate)	Slavic
“Romanian-leaning” Vlachs	Christian (Romanian)	Vlach
“Greek-leaning” Vlachs	Christian (Patriarchate)	Vlach
Greeks	Christian (Patriarchate)	Greek
Sarakatsans	Christian (Patriarchate)	Greek
<i>Armenian</i>	<i>Christian (Gregorian)</i>	<i>Armenian</i>
<i>Gypsies</i>	<i>Christian (Patriarchate) and Muslim</i>	<i>Gypsy/Romany</i>
<i>Jews</i>	<i>Jewish</i>	<i>Ladino/French</i>

Note: Italicized non-core groups are not discussed in Eliakis’s reports.

30. George Frost Kennan, *The Other Balkan Wars* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993).

Map 4.2. Competing National Aspirations in the Balkans, 1912.



SOURCE: *Report of the International Commission To Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914.

When World War I broke out, historical Macedonia—the region corresponding roughly to the kingdom of ancient Macedonia—was once again at the center of controversy. Serbia and Bulgaria had entered World War I on the opposite sides of the war. Bulgaria allied with the Central powers, and in 1915, Entente forces landed in Thessaloniki to assist Serbia.

In 1916, Bulgaria occupied Eastern and much of Western Greek Macedonia. This final blow to the territorial integrity of Greece led to the National Defense revolt in Thessaloniki and to the peculiar situation of two governments in Greece. This “national schism” in Greece was the culmination of an ongoing domestic conflict between the pro-German King Constantine and pro-Entente Venizelos. Venizelos’ revolutionary government in Thessaloniki pushed for Greece to enter the war on the side of the Entente and create “Greater Greece”; King Constantine’s plan was to keep out of World War I and sustain a “small but uncorrupted Greece.”

Map 4.3. Boundary Changes after the Balkan Wars, 1912–1913.



SOURCE: Report of the International Commission To Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914.

Ioannis Eliakis moved to the Western part of Greek Macedonia in July of 1916. In the rest of this section, I describe Eliakis's thoughts and policy recommendations about each non-core group under his jurisdiction. I structure the discussion based on the religious divide between Muslims and Christians, which was the oldest and most salient cleavage in the region.³¹ Within each religious group, there were groups speaking different languages and having different national leanings (see Table 4.1). Moreover, some non-core groups had no external backing, some were backed by allied powers, such as Romania, and others were backed by enemy states, such as Bulgaria. During this four-year period, from 1916 to 1920, Greece moved from being a revisionist state to a status quo state, and in certain cases Eliakis's recommendations changed as well (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3).

Muslims in Western Macedonia

Approximately half of the inhabitants of Macedonia in the early twentieth century were Muslims.

After the incorporation of the so-called Aegean Macedonia into the Greek kingdom in 1913, Muslims could have chosen either the Ottoman or the Greek nationality. This was a policy clearly differentiating between the two religious communities and "encouraging" the Muslims that felt strong attachments to the Ottoman Empire to leave. There was variation in the effectiveness of this mechanism of "ethnic unmixing."

In Western Macedonia, fewer Muslims chose the Ottoman nationality than in other parts of northern Greece. Eliakis attributed this fact to the timely arrest of the Mufti³² in Kailaria and of certain Beys³³ by the French Army in 1916, as well as to his personal efforts. He summoned all the Mukhtars³⁴ of the region and explained the program of the Greek authorities, asking them to accept Greek rule. These Mukhtars submitted to the new sovereign, and Eliakis promised to protect their human and community rights from both Greek and foreign authorities.³⁵

31. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society* (New York: Holmes and Meir, 2000); Konstantinos Tsitselikis, "The Pending Modernisation of Islam in Greece: From Millet to Minority Status," *Südosteuropa*, Vol. 55, Issue 4 (2007), pp. 354–372.

32. A Mufti is a Muslim cleric who gives opinions on Islamic law.

33. A Bey was a Provincial governor in the Ottoman Empire. By the end of nineteenth century, however, the term Bey is used for heads of ruling families, local notables, and military officials.

34. Mukhtar was the Turkish word for community leader, later mayor. They were appointed by the Ottomans in each community and were usually wealthy. The Mukhtar was responsible for enforcing law and order, collecting taxes, and calling the police when necessary. His house also functioned as the base for any visiting government officials.

35. PKA, *The Attitudes of Aliens toward the Movement: Voting Rights*, Eliakis to the Pro-

It is important to remember that Eliakis was from the island of Crete, where he had experienced the co-existence between Muslims and Christians. This experience informed Eliakis's attitude. More importantly, Prime Minister Venizelos, also from Crete, shared this experience and attitude. In a report to the Ministry of Military Affairs in 1917, Eliakis wrote:

With respect to the Muslims of my jurisdiction I am in the pleasant position to stress that because of my stance toward them, although they have been asked to satisfy many military needs, they understood that the State is protecting everyone irrespectively of race or religion, and this made them even more loyal subjects of our State. Holding the view that we should not grant political rights to the Muslims, since this would corrupt them, I have always argued we will not be able to sever their bonds with the Ottoman State unless we respect their human rights and their religious beliefs. Following this policy will allow us to use them as an important factor in every respect, but more importantly, it will prove that we are able to govern alien people, something necessary in order to enforce order in Macedonia.³⁶

Not much later, Eliakis noted that the above policy produced amazing results. The Muslims had demonstrated their trust in the state by enthusiastically enlisting in the Greek Army. The benefits from this were clear, because the army needed these "obedient and healthy soldiers." Eliakis drew a parallel between them and the "Moroccan Spahis"³⁷ fighting for the French and suggested specific policies to ensure the success of this endeavor:

1. create Muslim battalions with their own flag, which should include the half moon in one of its corners;
2. allow each battalion to have an Imam³⁸ for prayer;
3. promote the best to non-commissioned officers;
4. allow them to wear the *fez*;
5. insert Greek soldiers fluent in Turkish to monitor the behavior of these battalions and spy on them if necessary.³⁹

In general, Eliakis believed Muslims were easy to deal with *because of* their religion. It was enough to protect their life, honor, and property, respect their religion, and treat them equally. Having political rights was not a concern for them, he believed, as long as they could freely regulate their communal affairs. According to his analysis, if this policy were to be followed, the Muslims would gradually become "civilized" and understand themselves to be an indispensable part of the Greek nation. This would happen especially after the Muslims realized that the Turkish state would not be able to recapture these territories.

visional Government, Abstract of Report No. 564, November 11, 1916.

36. PKA, *Conscription of Muslims*, Eliakis to the Ministry of Military Affairs, August 25, 1917.

37. *Spahis* regiments were light cavalry regiments in the French Army recruited primarily from the indigenous populations of French Morocco. The name comes from *Sipahi*, an Ottoman cavalry man.

38. An Imam is a Muslim prayer leader.

39. PKA, *Conscription of Muslims*, Eliakis to the Ministry of Military Affairs, August 25, 1917.

The Muslims of Western Macedonia were not a homogeneous group. Eliakis distinguished between three main non-core groups: Koniareoi, Valaades, and Albanians. Koniareoi were the Turkish-speaking conquerors of Macedonia who came from Anatolia and, according to Eliakis, were still in an “animal state.” The ones that felt closer to the Ottoman Empire would choose the Ottoman nationality and would be “encouraged” to leave. For the rest, he believed that they could be ruled easily through the Koran. The second group was Valaades, the Greek speakers of Vlach origin who had converted to Islam and lived in villages near Anasselitsa. According to Eliakis, many of them were aware of their Greek origin and most did not even speak Turkish. They would be easy to assimilate. As Eliakis put it: “Their assimilation will be complete once they are convinced that religion is not the attribute of Nations, but national consciousness and origin.”⁴⁰

After World War I, Eliakis’s intentions with respect to these two groups were far from exclusionary. Valaades were perceived and treated as if they were Greek. Koniareoi were accommodated in the short term, but the ultimate goal was to assimilate them. Given that they were perceived as a group backed by an enemy power, the Ottoman Empire, and that Eliakis wanted to preserve the favorable status quo, my theory predicts assimilationist policies. Thus it correctly predicts Eliakis’s long-term objectives, even though the actual policies initially looked more like accommodation than assimilation.

Finally, there was also the third group the Muslim Albanians.⁴¹ According to Eliakis, religion did not matter to them and their Albanian consciousness prevailed.⁴² The Albanians differed from the Koniareoi, who were looking toward Istanbul for protection. Many Albanians had economic interests in the Greek territories, emphasized the common origins of Greeks and Albanians, and worked for Greek-Albanian cooperation.

Two elements made Eliakis suggest a different treatment of Albanians: the desire to maintain friendly relations with the newly born state (Albania), and the distinct Albanian consciousness of this population, which disassociated them from other Muslims. He wrote:

If there is an Albanian State after the War it is to our benefit that this State is friendly to us. Thus, I think we should not take the same measures toward the Albanians ruled by our regime that we take against the other Muslims. We should not for example confiscate their land as if it was abandoned, even if it really is, as long as they do not emigrate to Turkey. The confiscated land of the Albanians who emigrated for a while but came back and declared their loyalty to our regime has to be returned to them even if their loyalty is not sincere.⁴³

40. PKA, Eliakis to the President of the Council of Ministers, Abstract of Report No. 7861, October 19, 1918.

41. There were three other groups of Muslims that lived in Greek Macedonia at the time: the Muslim Vlachs (primarily from Meglen region); the Gypsies; and the Slavic-speaking Muslims (Pomaks). Eliakis, however, does not refer to them.

42. He also noted there were few *Christian* Albanians sharing this Albanian consciousness.

43. PKA, *Alvanistai*, Eliakis to the Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No.

Albania, which was established in 1913 but not yet a functional entity due to the outbreak of World War I, would be a new state that Greece had many reasons to befriend.⁴⁴ The Albanians in the Greek kingdom could operate as guarantors of friendly relations with Albania. The national interest would be better served by making this small material sacrifice of not confiscating Albanian land. Eliakis's proposal was implemented by the government a year and a half later. Thus the Albanians, members of a non-core group backed by a neutral power, were accommodated by the Greek administration, consistent with my theory.

The alternative hypotheses (see Tables 4.3 and 4.4) all incorrectly predict exclusionary policies toward the Albanians because they spoke a different language and had a different religion; they had a newly minted homeland; and they had been traditionally allied with the Turks within the dominant Muslim millet during Ottoman times. Similarly, all three alternative hypotheses predict that the Greek administration should have excluded the Koniareoi population because it was Muslim, spoke a different language and used to be the privileged group during the Ottoman times. While this was partially true during the Balkan Wars and World War I, it certainly does not appear to be in Eliakis's intentions and actions following World War I.

Christians in Western Macedonia

SLAVIC-SPEAKING CHRISTIANS

Having tested my theory on non-core groups with a different world religion from the core group, I now turn to non-core groups that shared the same religion (although not necessarily the same denomination) with the core group, but spoke a different language. The Slavic-speaking population of the region—especially the part loyal to the Bulgarian Exarchate—was considered a Bulgarian national minority by the Bulgarian state.

"BULGARIAN-LEANING" SLAVS.

Although Eliakis was not worried about the loyalty of the various Muslim groups, he was less optimistic with respect to the Christian Orthodox, "Bulgarian-leaning" Slavs. These were people who sided with the Bulgarian Exarchate after its establishment in 1870. His reasoning, however, was not one of cultural differences or affinities but rather of diplomatic relations and war dynamics. He believed that if there had been no Second Balkan War in Macedonia, then:

389, January 27, 1917. Note: The date for Abstract of No. 389 report appears as 1918 in the original document but this must be a mistake. First, the report is addressed to the Provisional Government, which did not exist in 1918; second, the report is between reports from 1916 and 1917.

44. One of the reasons for this fact was that the Albanians could be Greece's allies in case of a pan-Slavic alliance in the Balkans.

the local Bulgarians would be so audacious that [Greek] Macedonia would be everything but Greek, since the 'Bulgarians' would be able to freely express their Bulgarian feelings. However, the second war followed and the local 'Bulgarians' were discouraged and converts to the schism [the Exarchate] presented themselves as orthodox [loyal to the Patriarchate] and Greeks, supposedly forced to convert religiously and consequently to change their nationality as well. In the midst of that terror, our state should have put aside everything else and focused its efforts on cementing in the hearts of the population these [national] ideas...It did almost nothing instead.⁴⁵

Eliakis criticized the Greek government because it did not send its best civil servants and educators to Macedonia. He strongly believed that if there were schools in every village and if Greek priests took the place of those backing the Bulgarian Exarchate, then the population would have been assimilated quickly. However, the civil servants were below average, and many of them came in order to make a fortune; moreover, only a few schools started operating right away, and no priests were sent to the villages that returned to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate. Despite all of these complaints, Eliakis was optimistic:

if we try to change the souls of the population, it should be easy to do, since they are used to being changed. They tell me that in one trial which took place in Florina during Turkish rule...a witness was asked by the President of the Court what his nationality was and he replied that eight years ago he was Bulgarian, two years later he became a Greek and remained such for three years, after which he became Bulgarian again....And he found this identity change unproblematic and really believed in each period that he was what [nationality] he thought he was. Thus if we work not spasmodically...but systematically, it would be possible to make the local population believe they have become Greeks and if they maintain this conviction for a long time it will be possible that they will really become such.⁴⁶

The grave results from the government's inaction with respect to the assimilation of the local population were obvious during the Bulgarian attack in Western Macedonia, when many Slavic speakers welcomed Bulgarian soldiers as liberators. A further indicator of the pro-Bulgarian sentiment from a part of the local population was that even when the Entente (French and British) forces pushed out the Bulgarian troops, many believed they would come back. Some of them followed the defeated troops, hoping they would return as victors.

Following the Bulgarian defeat in the area, the Entente forces treated the people residing in Western Macedonia badly because they had demonstrated pro-Bulgarian feelings. The only refuge for these people was to adopt the Greek national identity and demonstrate their loyalty to the Greek state. According to Eliakis, this was an opportune moment for the Greek administration to achieve in two years what it would otherwise not be able to achieve in ten. The Slavic-speakers of Western Macedonia were trying to prove their "Greekness" by protesting the lack of schools. Once

45. PKA, *The State of Affairs of the Population in Western Macedonia*, Eliakis to the President of the Council of Ministers, Abstract of Report No. 7861, October 19, 1918.

46. Ibid.

again, the Greek government did not act upon this opportunity because of administrative failure. While Eliakis was writing his report in 1918, most schools remained closed and Athens did not provide schoolbooks.

Eliakis was not optimistic about assimilating the older Slavic-speaking population in the region, and he suggested that most policies should focus on the younger generation. He expected the best results to come from orphanages and girls' boarding schools. He also insisted that, based on experience, the assimilation of "Bulgarian-leaning" Slavs could not entail solely cultural and educational measures; it had to entail terror as well.

During World War I, methods such as deportations, arrests, and even killings were legitimized by the fact that Bulgaria was an enemy power fighting on the side of the Central Powers (the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires). During peacetime—when Eliakis was writing this report—violent measures were harder to justify and pursue without attracting the attention of the international community. Furthermore, Greece was in favor of the international status quo. Nevertheless, Eliakis suggested that violent measures were essential even in peacetime in order to neutralize any obstruction to peaceful assimilation policies.

Indeed, the Greek government had passed a law during World War I that facilitated the deportation of individuals considered dangerous to the public order. Eliakis built on that law and suggested it had to be enforced when necessary. He thought that Greek authorities should deport not just the guilty party but his whole family. Moreover, the deportation and the reasons for it should be made known to the whole community.

The possibility of deporting all of the "Bulgarian-leaning" Slavs from Macedonia was suggested and described as a more "radical" measure of nationalizing the territory. However, Eliakis quickly dismissed this idea because "on the one hand, this would make a terrible impression to the liberal people of the civilized world, and, on the other, because we do not have those [Greeks], with whom we could replace them."⁴⁷

In 1919, the repatriation of Greeks from Anatolia was unlikely, especially because the Greek kingdom needed to keep them where they were in order to justify its campaign to the East.⁴⁸ Under such circumstances, a mass deportation of all the Bulgarian-speakers would lead to a severe depopulation of Macedonia. This would make the kingdom look weak.

Moreover, the Greek government had to act as a civilized liberal polity in the eyes of the international community. This was the first concern of the Governor-General of Western Macedonia. In 1919, while considering a deportation proposal made by Konstantinos Mazarakis-Ainian,⁴⁹ Eliakis writes:

47. Ibid.

48. Eleutherios Venizelos, *Greece Before the Peace Congress of 1919. A Memorandum Dealing with the Rights of Greece*, published for the American-Hellenic Society by the U.S. branch of Oxford University Press, 1919.

49. Konstantinos Mazarakis-Ainian (1869–1949) was the commander of the Xanthi division, which occupied Western Thrace for Greece.

In case of a deportation of ‘Bulgarians’ there will be a terrible manipulation of the affair. If we listen to the advice of the Greeks then there is a danger either of turning Northern Macedonia into a deserted land, which would call for the intervention of Europe and would damage our reputation in the eyes of the civilized world, or of providing the opportunity to these Greeks of all sorts of blackmail that would disturb human consciousness.⁵⁰

For the above reasons, Eliakis concluded that the most sensible policy was assimilation. He argued that if the right measures were taken, only a few would not be assimilated:

We are obliged to follow the hard and rough way of proselytizing, through good and expensive administration, systematically in all sectors of the administration. I am certain that with such administration we will rapidly have results. And instead of transplanting the local population with the danger of not replacing them, through this kind of administration, we will implant in them our ideas and turn them into fanatic Greeks, more fanatic than the old Greeks.⁵¹

With respect to the “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs, my theory correctly predicted Eliakis’s preferred policies. During World War I, terror and intense assimilationist policies would have achieved the exclusion of the pro-Bulgarian population and successfully assimilated the rest of the Slavic-speaking population. “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs were backed by a rival power while the Greek administration was fighting a war to recapture its lost territories. Following World War I, Greece wanted to preserve the international status quo in Macedonia, thus intense assimilationist policies were the preferred choice and exclusionary policies would only target specific families of agitators.

For the whole period under study, 1916–1920, external interference never stopped. Bulgarian agitators were present in all of Macedonia. Toward the end of the period under study, a voluntary population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria under the Treaty of Neuilly in 1919 was the middle road actually followed by the Greek government on this issue. As a result, about 56,000 “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs left Greece for Bulgaria by the mid-1920s, “in many cases being forced to emigrate by the Greek authorities.”⁵² After 1919, a mix of assimilationist and selectively targeted exclusionary policies was the actual policy followed toward this group.

All but one of the alternative hypotheses predict exclusionary policies toward the “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs because they spoke a different language; were organized under a different religion organization, the Exarchate; and had a national homeland. The status-reversal argument is

50. PKA, *Deportation of Bulgarians*, Eliakis to the Ministry of Interior, Abstract of Report No. 4164, June 12, 1919.

51. PKA, *On the Ownership of the Fertile Lands*, Eliakis to the Ministry of Interior, Abstract of Report No. 4164, June 12, 1919.

52. Iakovos Michailidis, “National Identity versus Minority Language: The Greek and Bulgarian Experience in the 20th Century,” in Ann Katherine Isaacs, ed., *Language and Identities in Historical Perspective* (Pisa, Italy: Edizioni Plus-Pisa University Press, 2005), p. 94.

the only one that predicts assimilationist policies, because the “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs were also disadvantaged during the Ottoman times, along with the rest of the Christians. Because of the mixed strategy followed toward the “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs, all hypotheses find support. Significantly for my argument, however, the group was not accommodated.

“GRECOMANOI” OR “GREEK-LEANING” SLAVS.

“Grecomanoi” was a term used to indicate Slavic speakers with Greek national consciousness. These people had sided with Greek guerrilla troops during the Macedonian Struggle (1903–1908) and had resisted the influence of the Exarchate.⁵³ They were not mobilized by a competing claim and were, as expected, targeted with assimilationist policies. Looking solely at the cultural differences of this non-core group from the core group could lead to a prediction of exclusion, because they spoke a different language and were of Slavic origins. The homeland argument likewise incorrectly predicts exclusion because Bulgaria could be understood as their homeland. The status-reversal argument accurately predicts this policy, because “Greek-leaning” Slavs were a politically disadvantaged group under Ottoman rule.

VLACH-SPEAKING CHRISTIANS

Many Vlachs were primarily herders living a nomadic life, while others were sedentary farmers. A few had settled in larger towns in the Balkans and become merchants or artisans. They spoke a Latin dialect close to modern Romanian. Most of them lived in the Pindus mountain range, but some also resided in the hills near trading centers such as Monastir, Grevena, Kastoria, Koritsa, Moskopol, Veroia, and Edessa.

“ROMANIAN-LEANING” VLACHS.

The Romanian government began its efforts to “awaken” a Romanian identity in the Vlachs of Macedonia in the late 1860s. To gain Romania’s support during the treaty conference in Bucharest in 1913, Prime Minister Venizelos declared that Greece was willing to provide autonomy to the Koutsovlach schools and churches in the newly acquired Greek possessions. The group was recognized as a national minority, and their schools and churches were funded by the Romanian state.⁵⁴ This was the first time that the minority provisions of a treaty signed by Greece referred to a *national* minority. Vlachs had to decide if they were “Romanian” or “Greek.” The governments of the two countries had to compete for their allegiance.

In the eparchy of Grevena there were a few “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs, who during Ottoman times were under the protection of Romania.

53. Douglass Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897–1913* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1966).

54. See George Th. Mavrogordatos, “Oi Ethnikes Meionotites” [The National Minorities], in Christos Chatziiosif, ed., *Istoria tis Elladas tou 20ou aiona* [History of Greece of the Twentieth Century], Vol. II (Athens: Vivliorama, 2003), pp. 9–35, 16.

Their main incentive to identify with Romania was to facilitate herding and commerce with Romania.⁵⁵ Romania had pursued a national agitation campaign in European Turkey during the late nineteenth century, and with the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913, Romania achieved the recognition of Romanian minorities in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. The Romanian propaganda in Macedonia waned immediately after its occupation by the Greek Army, despite the treaty provisions; however, it was spurred during World War I under the temporary French military administration. The civil servant for finance at Grevena, Askarides, wrote to Eliakis:

If the French Administration lasts longer and if the *National Defense* does not incorporate the eparchy of Grevena soon, then they ["Romanian-leaning" Vlachs] will prevail over the Greek element since they are working systematically and intensely in order to establish a precedent which I hope will not be recognized as a permanent situation.⁵⁶

During World War I, Eliakis was mostly worried about the spread of "Romanian propaganda." Unlike most Muslims and "Bulgarian-leaning" Slavs, who were perceived to be backed by enemy powers, Romania was an ally; therefore, the only reasonable policy toward the pro-Romanian Vlachs was to present Greece as a better and more prestigious protector of their rights. Eliakis firmly believed that as soon as the "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs realized that they no longer had a need for external protection, then with the help of school, military service, and church, they would become "pure Greeks."

In 1917, Eliakis warned Venizelos's government that the "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs in Grevena had been approached by the Italian authorities there in order to change them into "Italian-leaning" Vlachs. The Italians presented the idea of self-determination to the Vlachs living in the Pindus mountain range, and while the Italian troops were withdrawing, many locals expressed such desires. The Greek police arrested some of the rebels who were against Greek sovereignty. However, the ambassadors of both Italy and Romania protested to the Greek government over these arrests. Eliakis interfered and asked to meet with the prisoners before they were taken to the court-martial in Thessaloniki.

I asked them why they were arrested and they pretended that they had no clue or attributed their arrest to defamations by their enemies. I asked them if they are Greek, and they hesitated to deny the Greek national identity; some even said 'if only more were like us....' Following these questions, I talked to them for a long time in this manner: I told them, that since I hear that they speak Greek, I consider them Greek. And they should boast for being Greek since they have the most glorious history in the world.⁵⁷

55. PKA, "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs, Eliakis to Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 5359, October 18, 1917.

56. PKA, "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs, Eliakis to the Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 389, January 27, 1917.

57. PKA, "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs, Eliakis to Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 5359, October 18, 1917.

This is a typical example of Eliakis's cultivation of the local population. He would emphasize the superiority of Hellenism and Greek culture in general, while at the same time he would attempt to convince them of their Greekness. Sometimes he highlighted the linguistic attributes of the population he addressed, other times their religious affiliation, and sometimes even their dress, like in the following report:

The inhabitants of upper Grammatikovon, where the liturgy is in the Romanian language, are "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs and almost Romanians. The potential military recruits of this village are so fanatical that they did not enlist in the last draft; instead they went to work for the English service station. Because of this, the committee of grain storage in Kailaria did not want to supply grain to this village. So the head of this village came to complain. I asked him if he is a Greek and he replied "Don't you see what I am wearing?" pointing to his dress. I answered that I saw him wearing the Greek fustanella⁵⁸ and that I heard him speak Greek, which means that he is Greek, and one of the best for that matter, since the Evzones that also wear the fustanella are the best soldiers of the Greek Army. On this basis and with the above spirit I spoke to him and I could tell the powerful impression it produced. I made him wonder how he could have been unaware that he is Greek.⁵⁹

More importantly for my argument, Eliakis moderated his assimilationist tendencies because of the geopolitical situation. Although he tried to instill Greek feelings in the "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs, he also told them:

If any of you has Romanian feelings, if he is Romanian, I respect his feelings, because Romania is a friend and allied power. We share both friends and enemies with her and we have no conflicting interests since Romania is not considering jumping over the Balkan Peninsula to come and conquer the territories you inhabit.⁶⁰

Eliakis was willing to respect their Romanian leanings, both because he had to and because he considered them to be geopolitically harmless, since Romania was an ally. Accommodation was the policy toward the "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs. A population exchange between Greece and Romania was not considered at all. Greece needed Romania as an ally, and Bulgaria was the common enemy. Finally, the absence of a common border with Romania minimized the perception of threat for the Greek side.

"GREEK-LEANING" VLACHS.

"Hellenovlachoi" was the term used by the Greek administration to refer to Vlach-speaking people who had Greek national consciousness; it stood for "Greek-leaning" Vlachs. These people had sided with the Greek guerrilla troops during the Macedonian Struggle (1903–1908) and had either

58. A fustanella is a skirt-like garment worn by men in the Balkans up to the end of the nineteenth century. It was the uniform of the Evzones (light infantry) until World War II; today of the Greek Presidential (formerly Royal) Guard in Athens.

59. PKA, "Romanian-leaning" Vlachs, Eliakis to Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 5359, October 18, 1917.

60. Ibid.

resisted or escaped the influence of the Romanian and Italian propaganda. They were not mobilized by a competing claim and were thus a good prospect for assimilationist policies. This subgroup thus conforms to the expectations of my theory.

Looking at the Vlach-speaking population and its two sub-groups, we observe that focusing on cultural differences alone does not help us account for the variation in nation-building policies. Both groups spoke a Latin-based language and they should thus be excluded. Instead, the former non-core group, the “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs, was accommodated while the latter, the “Greek-leaning” Vlachs, was targeted with assimilationist policies.

Moreover, the homeland argument cannot help us distinguish between the two sub-groups of Vlach-speakers either, because Romania viewed both as potential co-ethnics. The status-reversal argument correctly predicts a policy of assimilation toward the “Greek-leaning” Vlachs, but is incorrect in the case of the “Romanian-leaning” ones, who were accommodated instead. Both groups were disadvantaged during the Ottoman times, and based on this fact we would expect the Greek administration to pursue assimilationist policies toward both of them. Finally, focusing on the religious affiliation of the two sub-groups leads to similar predictions. Because both groups were Christian Orthodox, they should be targeted with assimilationist policies; however, only the “Greek-leaning” Vlachs were targeted, while the “Romanian-leaning” ones were accommodated. To be sure, assimilationist tendencies were expressed by Eliakis, but the policy during that period was one of accommodation of their differences through Romanian schools and Romanian churches.

GREEK-SPEAKING CHRISTIANS

Within the “Greeks,” the Greek-speaking or Greek dialect-speaking Christian Orthodox population, there was a group referred to by Eliakis as “Skenitai” or “Sarakatsans.” They dressed like Vlachs and lived nomadic lives, but they were considered by everyone, including Eliakis, to be Greeks. There were approximately 40,000 in Greek Macedonia; they took their name, Skenitai (tent-people), from their way of life. In the winter they settled in the lowlands, especially Chalkidiki, while in the summer they tented up in the mountains. This group apparently made no claims to the communal property of the places it inhabited and did not interfere with their administration.⁶¹ Eliakis suggested the settlement of this population among groups who had foreign national leanings and its conscription into the Greek army.⁶² Not surprisingly, all theories make the same prediction for the Sarakatsans: assimilation. They were indeed targeted with standard assimilationist policies such as schooling and military conscription.

61. According to Eliakis, the explanation behind the emergence of “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs was that they were people who immigrated to Romania, but when they came back they were in constant competition with the sedentary local population.

62. PKA, *Skenitai*, Eliakis to Provisional Government, Abstract of Report No. 5359, October 18, 1917.

Conclusion

WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR VARIATION IN NATION-BUILDING POLICIES?

My geostrategic argument is largely supported by the evidence provided here. Granted, a set of reports written by a particular administrator in a four-year period is not a representative sample of the Greek government as a whole—not to mention governments in general; however, this level of analysis is crucial if one wants to test the microfoundations of an argument. A theory might make the right predictions, but fail to identify the correct causal mechanisms at work. Historical contextualization coupled with rich archival material allows us to test both the predictions and the causal logic underlying a theory.

The different combinations of interstate relations with external powers and foreign policy goals lead to different predictions of my theory (see Figure 4.1). Looking at Tables 4.2 and 4.3 we see that, consistent with my argument, non-core groups without any external power backing them and claiming their allegiance were targeted with assimilationist policies, and were the least likely to get minority-rights protection. Allied-backed groups were accommodated (Albanians and “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs).

During World War I, we find that Eliakis’s goal was securing the “New Lands” to the Greek kingdom through ironing out both internal and external enemies (See Table 4.2). Besides dealing with direct security concerns, he had to neutralize the propaganda of the various competitors in the region. Under these circumstances, exclusionary policies were pursued toward enemy-backed non-core groups (Koniareoi and “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs). Toward the end of World War I, however, Eliakis becomes more optimistic about the assimilability of certain non-core groups.

Following the World War I, the Greek administration was in favor of the international status quo, and it adopted an assimilationist policy toward enemy-backed non-core groups with an emphasis on political equality and egalitarianism toward the population that it considered as assimilable *regardless* of cultural, religious, or linguistic differences (Koniareoi and “Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs). Consistent with my theory, the perception of these non-core groups was to a great extent endogenous to the external interference by competing states. The past political behavior of the various non-core groups *vis-à-vis* the Greek cause in the region prior to the annexation of the territories was also central in the planning of nation-building policies.

Another shortcut the Greek administration used in order to determine whether a non-core group was assimilable was not the particular marker that differentiated it from the core group, but rather the constraints put in place by international and bilateral treaties with neighboring states and great powers (France and Britain). To be sure, besides the constraints—which my theory emphasizes—there were also perceived opportunities, as in the case of the Albanians. Interstate alliances had an effect on the planning of nation-building policies in two ways: through a retrospective assessment based on existing alliances, and a prospective one based on future opportunities for useful alliances.

Table 4.2. Explaining Nation-building policies in Western Macedonia, 1916–1918 (Greece was Revisionist).

Non-core groups	External Backing?	External Power: Rival or Ally?	Predictions	Intentions	Policy
“Greek-leaning” Slavs	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
“Greek-leaning” Vlachs	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Sarakatsans	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Vlaades	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Albanians	Yes	Neutral	Accommodation	Accommodation	Accommodation
“Romanian-leaning” Vlachs	Yes	Ally	Accommodation	Accommodation/ Assimilation	Accommodation
Kontiareoi	Yes	Rival	Exclusion	Exclusion/ Assimilation	Exclusion/ Accommodation
“Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs	Yes	Rival	Exclusion	Exclusion/ Assimilation	Exclusion/ Assimilation

Table 4.3. Explaining Nation-Building Policies in Western Macedonia, 1918–1920 (Greece was Status Quo).

Non-core groups	External Backing?	External Power: Rival or Ally?	Predictions	Intentions	Policy
"Greek-leaning" Slavs	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
"Greek-leaning" Vlachs	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Sarakatsans	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Valaades	No	.	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Albanians	Yes	Future Ally	Accommodation	Accommodation	Accommodation
"Romanian-leaning" Vlachs	Yes	Ally	Accommodation	Accommodation/ Assimilation	Accommodation
Kontiareoi	Yes	Rival	Assimilation	Assimilation	Accommodation/ Assimilation
"Bulgarian-leaning" Slavs	Yes	Rival	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation/ Voluntary Exchange

Table 4.4. Evaluating Alternative Explanations in Western Macedonia, 1916–1918.

Non-core groups	Language	Religion	Status Reversal	Homeland	Policy
“Greek-leaning” Slavs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Assimilation
“Greek-leaning” Vlachs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Assimilation
Sarakatsans	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Valaades	Assimilation	Exclusion	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation
Albanians	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Accommodation
“Romanian-leaning” Vlachs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Accommodation
Koniareoi	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion/ Accommodation
“Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs	Exclusion	Exclusion	Assimilation	Exclusion	Exclusion/ Assimilation

Note: Incorrect predictions in grayscale.

Table 4.5. Evaluating Alternative Explanations in Western Macedonia, 1918–1920.

Non-core groups	Language	Religion	Status Reversal	Homeland	Policy
“Greek-leaning” Slavs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Assimilation
“Greek-leaning” Vlachs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Assimilation
Sarakatsans	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation	Assimilation
Valaades	Assimilation	Exclusion	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation
Albanians	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Accommodation
“Romanian-leaning” Vlachs	Exclusion	Assimilation	Assimilation	Exclusion	Accommodation
Koniareoi	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Accommodation/ Assimilation
“Bulgarian-leaning” Slavs	Exclusion	Exclusion	Assimilation	Exclusion	Assimilation/ Voluntary Exchange

Note: Incorrect predictions in grayscale.

How well do alternative arguments do in this context? State- and regional-level hypotheses such as levels of economic development, regime type, understandings of nationhood, international norms, and so forth are held constant by design. There is, however, group-level variation. Looking at Tables 4.4 and 4.5, we see that cultural-distance arguments cannot explain most of the variation. For example, with respect to the “Bulgarian-leaning Slavs” and “Romanian-leaning” Vlachs, Eliakis’s reasoning was not one of cultural differences or affinities, but rather on diplomatic relations and war dynamics. The former group was backed by a rival power and was thus targeted with intense assimilationist and ultimately exclusionary measures, while the latter was backed by an ally and was accommodated. Even where they make correct predictions it is for the wrong reasons. Koniareoi are not targeted with exclusionary policies during World War I because of their cultural difference, but because of their links to the Ottoman Empire, which was fighting on the side of the Central Powers.

The status-reversal argument does better. This argument, however, can only differentiate between conflict and no conflict and thus has little to say about assimilation or accommodation. For example, although the Koniareoi were members of the dominant group before the Greek occupation, Eliakis pursued a policy of accommodation in terms of their culture and language. This policy directly contradicts the status-reversal argument. It also contradicts my argument, which predicts exclusion during and assimilation after World War I for this group, but the archival material helps us to understand this policy choice. As Eliakis stated, this phase of accommodation was just a step before assimilationist policies.⁶³

The homeland argument does worse than the status-reversal one. Whether a non-core group has an external homeland or not is important, but it does not help us predict which nation-building policy the host state will pursue. My theory suggests that looking at the degree to which the homeland interferes with the fate of its “ethnic kin,” as well as the interstate relations of the host state with the homeland, is crucial. Moreover, besides the degree of external interference, the foreign policy goals of the host state are an important factor in the planning of nation-building policies.

FUTURE RESEARCH ON NATION-BUILDING

On the methodological front, I have identified two fundamental problems in the study of nation-building policies: the politics of “counting people” and distinguishing intentions and policy choices from policy outcomes. Both of these challenges hinder the study of state-planned nation-building policies. Not addressing them in our research can lead to deceptive empirical support for theories. In this chapter, I demonstrate the centrality of archival research in the effort to overcome these important caveats in the study of nation-building.

63. For a discussion of the distinction between transitional vs. terminal policies, see Mylonas, *Assimilation and its Alternatives*, chap. 5.

Bridging the macro-level with the micro-level, i.e., understanding the structure of the international system within which nation-building takes place at the local level, is crucial. Studies that focus on specific regions or specific ethnic groups would benefit from a more explicit treatment of the international dimensions of the process they are analyzing. The international context affects the preference ordering of host states, external powers that contemplate interference, and non-core group elites alike. Scholars studying the politics of nation-building should focus more on the perceptions of state officials as well as the influential international players (great powers, international organizations, non-governmental organizations), and try to identify the new cleavage dimensions that are about to be politicized.

At the same time, studies that emphasize the importance of systemic effects but neglect the micro-level processes at work are also problematic. Such studies often fail to identify the right level of analysis for data collection and hypothesis testing. Moreover, they suffer from a “revealed preferences problem,” because they frequently make inferences about the actor’s motivations based exclusively on their public statements or observed behavior. Archival material coupled with historical contextualization is one way to mitigate this problem. A balanced study of nation-building should bridge the micro-level empirical work with the systemic effects of the structure of the international system by providing a theoretical argument at the meso-level, linking the macro- and the micro-level.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I have argued that external interference and support for specific non-core groups by competing states affects the nation-building policies the core-group elites pursue. When interstate relations change, policy changes follow suit. In the twenty-first century there are thousands of ethnic groups in over 190 countries, mostly concentrated in post-imperial and post-colonial territories similar to the ones I study. Understanding the logic of nation-building is therefore crucial. Such an understanding could help decision-makers in the international community devise incentives to prevent exclusionary policies, encourage accommodation, or foster national integration.

At least two policy implications follow from my argument: First, in order to improve core and non-core group relations, we should focus on improving interstate relations. The causes of interethnic conflict are often to be found outside the location in which they are taking place. External interference by interested powers politicizes differences that hadn’t been as salient before and often triggers exclusionary policies by the host state; an example of this process occurring in 2008 was the war in Georgia.⁶⁴ To prevent exclusionary policies, we should uphold the principle of state sovereignty and minimize external interference as well as border changes. The preservation of the international status quo is the best safeguard

64. For more on this, see Thomas Meaney and Harris Mylonas, “The Pandora’s Box of Sovereignty,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2008, p. A17.

against exclusionary policies. As long as there are external powers that have an interest in destabilizing or partitioning other states, assimilationist and exclusionary policies will persist.

Second, if we want a world where non-core groups enjoy special minority rights, we should increase interstate alliances through regional integration initiatives and international institutions. There are two assumptions behind this prediction: that states participating in regional integration schemas such as the European Union are a) less likely to be revisionist; and b) more likely to be in an alliance with their neighboring states, and consequently more likely to accommodate their non-core groups. Countries in regions that have established stable security configurations are more likely to move toward non-aggressive multicultural arrangements.

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