

window-dressing for geopolitical interests (32-33). By Mylonas's logic, we should expect external powers to prioritize their geopolitical interests over any genuine commitment to the interests of non-core groups in other states (See also 46–47, where Mylonas emphasizes that alliances are unlikely to be endogenous to nation-building policies). Second, if this is true, then why should we expect a host state to deviate from its most preferred policy of assimilation? Threats by an external power to switch alliances or wage war on behalf of a non-core group it supports in the host state should not be regarded as credible when the external power has good geopolitical reasons to maintain the alliance. By the same token, a policy of accommodation risks leaving unassimilated non-core groups that could act as fifth columns later, when the alliance structure shifts and the present ally becomes a rival. Indeed, Mylonas suggests that a policy of accommodation makes such a future scenario more likely due to the legal-institutional status of the "minority group" that it creates (40–41).

In short, the theoretical rationale for a policy of accommodation does not fully add up. If we follow the logic of Mylonas's argument, we should expect rational host states to adopt policies of assimilation with respect to non-core groups that are supported by the host states' allies. The external power might not like this policy, but they should be constrained by their own geopolitical interests from interfering with it. While I believe this is a genuine flaw in the logic of the argument, it does not seem to me to be fatal to Mylonas's approach to the problem. The line between policies of assimilation and accommodation is not always easy to draw, especially given the disordered conditions of the post-World War I Balkans. Mylonas himself points to mixed types ("assimilation through accommodation," [37] for instance), which suggests that a somewhat more nuanced theory might help us to better understand the conditions under which states opt for policies of accommodation.

I conclude by reiterating that Mylonas's book makes a genuine and significant contribution to the study of nation-building. The book is, in many ways, a model for how to do theoretically ambitious and empirically multi-method scholarship on historical topics. I have now had the opportunity to use the book twice in advanced undergraduate seminars. It has been particularly useful to me as a means to unsettle naïve, oversocialized conceptions of nationalism, and to get students thinking seriously about politics.

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The Politics of Nation-Building is a highly innovative, remarkable book that combines rich archival research with comparative analysis. It is an important research in several aspects: First, it introduces a novel theory that explains nation-building policies combining national and international levels. Second, it introduces a comparative analysis by quantifying archival data and is able to identify, and introduce solutions to, its own methodological issues. Third, it does not limit itself to theoretical explanations but offers policy implications. Let me explain these points in detail.

Mylonas's theoretical contribution starts with his critique of existing explanations of nation-building. Alternative explanations of primordialism, status reversal, reputation, the dark side of democracy, and national homeland (18) usually focuses on one factor

such as ethnic identities or the importance of opportunities for non-core groups. According to Mylonas, theories focusing on international factors are also limited in their predictive capacity for nation-building. Rogers Brubaker's perspective of the triangular relationship among nationalizing states, minority and national homelands – which were criticized for reducing the international component to national homelands by Mylonas – is the closest that could get to Mylonas's explanation of nation-building policies (Brubaker 1993). What Mylonas does is not to substitute new terms for old concepts such as non-core group instead of minority or external power instead of national homeland. Rather he revises and expands the very definition of these terms: The term “non-core group” replaces that of minority as a useful category since it does not imply legal status, particular group size, recognition by the host state and existence of claims or mobilization by the non-core group unlike the term minority (27). Similarly, unlike national homeland, the external power category does not assume kinship or ethnic ties. These categorical shifts broaden the horizon for international factors by understanding neighboring states, great powers, diaspora groups or a combination of the above (19) as external powers.

Mylonas's theory works at the meso level. It explains nation-building policies toward non-core groups by analyzing international factors, mainly external power support and host state's foreign policy goals. His theory predicts that when there is no external support, host states tend to assimilate non-core groups. When there is an ally state supporting a non-core group, host states tend to accommodate non-core groups. In the existence of an enemy state supporting a non-core group, policies of host states toward non-core groups depend on the host state's foreign policy goals: a revisionist host state is likely to exclude the enemy-backed non-core group while a status-quo state is likely to assimilate it (37).

Mylonas studies post-World War I Balkan states to test these theoretical predictions, and engages in an extensive study of archival data and secondary sources to identify 90 non-core groups in six Balkan states. His quantitative analysis proves that his theory is applicable to the majority of cases although 19 of the cases in the data set were incorrectly predicted. Mylonas takes the pain to explain the incorrectly predicted cases and identifies some methodological considerations impacting the nation-building policies such as periodization of the study, instances where there is an overlap of some nation-building policies, and the combination of different policies in transitional periods (112). These considerations are called “methodological caveats” in the book (112) but they have important implications for Mylonas's theoretical argument.

Take the example of the periodization issue: Mylonas argues that coding the timespan of an analysis influences the outcome of nation-building policies. He mentions that the first five years after World War I was quite chaotic since the conditions changed rapidly. He presents the example of the Jewish community in Turkey in which his theory predicts assimilation (in the absence of external support). The real outcome was accommodation conflicting with this prediction. Mylonas argues that assimilationist policies toward the Jews did not start until the late 1920s. If the coding timespan of the study was expanded a few years, the Jewish case would fit in his theoretical framework. Similarly, the existence of mixed policies for short time periods and changing policies in transitional periods hints to processes of state consolidation, an important factor that is not taken into consideration in the book's theoretical framework. Mylonas acknowledges that the six Balkan states under study were transitioning from empire to nation-states and that he controlled for the impact of this transition since all six experienced similar conditions (therefore, it is possible to measure impacts of other factors such as external power involvement). The point that is

forgotten is that this transitional period also comes with a theoretical challenge that is the role of unified elites during a state's consolidation process. Power struggles among ruling elites influence state policies: Unified central governments can allow ruling elites to mobilize and deliver resources to respond to minority demands. Alternatively, a unified government with more resources can allow ruling elites to successfully repress minorities depending on other factors (Marx 2003). The effects of elite unity can vary in the long term. Once they consolidate their rule and secure their hold on the state, ruling elites tend to erode the previous legacies of imperial rule and could pursue assimilationist policies more easily.

Another neglected factor in Mylonas's otherwise impressive theoretical argument is the lack of non-core group agency. Mylonas's focus on state policies naturally leads to downplaying the role that non-core groups play in nation-building. The triangular relationship among non-core groups, host states, and external powers that is well presented in the book is mostly an interaction between host states and external powers. The third component, non-core groups, is usually in a passive relationship, meaning that non-core groups are either influenced by external powers or policies of host states. The possibility that non-core groups (their mobilization, political actions, factions among elites, etc.) can influence external power or host state policies is not taken into account. Moreover, similar to political elites in host states, non-core group elites are not unified in early stages of nation-building. Different factions of non-core elites could ally or be in conflict with host states and external powers. Mylonas acknowledges that host states can adopt different policies for non-core elites than the rest of the non-core group. Some form of assimilation or accommodation can be employed for non-core elites, while the rest of the group is subjected to exclusionary policies. However, the non-core elites can be divided into different factions and can form various relations with host states and external powers and these can influence nation-building policies.

In post-World War I Bulgaria, the political elites of the Muslim–Turkish minority were divided into two camps: supporters of secular reforms in the early Turkish republic vs. pro-Sultanate religious opposition. Secular groups received monetary and ideological support from Turkey, thus perfectly in line with Mylonas's emphasis on external support. The pro-Sultanate religious opposition, however, was supported by the Bulgarian state, which directly appointed the Chief Müfti, the highest religious authority of the Muslim minority. These divisions among the non-core group helped the Bulgarian state to increase its control over the minority, and state policies shifted from indifference (a form of accommodation in Mylonas's framework) to assimilation over time. Bulgaria was a revisionist state after WWI, and Turkey was an ally during WWI and continued to be a status-quo state forming friendly relations with Bulgaria afterwards. These conditions predict accommodation in Mylonas's account, and until the late 1920s a mixture of assimilation and accommodation was the actual policy of Bulgaria. However, increasingly in the early 1930s, the Bulgarian policy turned toward assimilation and exclusionary policies when the relations between the two states worsened during the Balkan Pact negotiations. As Mylonas argued, expansion of the coding timespan can increase explanatory power of the theory, but this case brings certain issues to the forefront: First, instead of thinking in terms of either/or categories, it can be better to think of both external power support and the host state's foreign policy goals as a continuum. The extent of revisionism or the extent of enemy/ally state perception by the host state can influence nation-building policies. Turkey was an ally state on paper but had worsening relations with Bulgaria in this period. Similarly, policies of assimilation, accommodation, and exclusion can be conceptualized as a continuum. Some assimilationist policies go to

an extreme, leading to exclusion or some accommodation policies can turn out to be assimilationist in practice.

Second, attaching more agency to non-core groups in the making and remaking of the host state's nation-building policies is important. This will also problematize the assumption of states as unified entities and shift the emphasis to divisions and struggles among ruling elites in host states, external powers, and non-core groups.

Third, the case of the Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria also shows the importance of not only external powers but also the interstate system. It is the attempts of forming the Balkan Pact as a way to contain revisionist claims and Bulgaria's unwillingness to be part of it that intensified the tensions in Turkish–Bulgarian relations, which was in turn reflected in exclusionary nation-building policies toward the Muslim/Turkish minority. In the Balkans, it is not only one external power influencing nation-building policies but overall alliances and competitions among various states that explain shifts among state policies toward non-core groups. Mylonas acknowledges the existence of more than one external power in the cases of Tibet and China's non-core groups and posits the impact of regional integration on nation-building policies as an important future research question (186).

As is clear by now, my comments on *The Politics of Nation-Building* do not challenge the main tenets of the study. Rather, they are invitations to expand the scope and develop distinctions for future applications of this brilliant theoretical approach. It is certain that Mylonas's combination of international and national factors to understand nation-building policies will be used in many other studies focusing on different regions and time periods.

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The Politics of Nation-Building Revisited: A Response to Fabbe, Kocher, and Köksal

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In the last two centuries, many states were established following secessionist movements or the collapse of empires. The vast majority of them legitimated their authority with the help of nationalist ideology, that is, the principle that the boundaries of the state and the nation must coincide (Gellner 1983). In *The Politics of Nation-Building*, I focus on the policies that nation-states pursue in their effort to render state and national boundaries congruent. My research question is: Under what conditions are nation-state elites likely to target a non-core group – that is, any ethnic group perceived as unassimilated by the governing elites – with assimilation, minority rights, or exclusion from the state? I offer a geostrategic explanation: a state's nation-building policies toward non-core groups are driven by its own foreign policy goals and its interstate relations with the external patrons of these non-core