Introduction

The history of the international system of states is replete with examples of states turning on their own citizens and the twentieth century was certainly no exception. Indeed, it was in the twentieth century, as states developed greater bureaucratic and military capacities, that the toll on their citizens rose to unprecedented numbers. This was despite the received wisdom in international relations scholarship that the state performs the cardinal function of providing security for its citizens in an anarchical international environment. Since the end of World War II the international community has developed clear norms of legitimate state behaviour towards citizens, yet in the last decade of the twentieth century the world witnessed brutality on an astounding scale, from Rwanda to the former Yugoslavia, in which segments of populations were targeted for expulsion or extermination.

The recurrence of such practices raises a number of key questions which animate this study: why have such practices been an enduring feature of international history? Why have elites used the resources of the state to persecute large sectors of their populations in ways, and to extents, that have ultimately proven detrimental to those states? Why has the international community failed to eradicate such practices, despite the development of norms which clearly prohibit them and despite the destabilising impact of such practices in terms of both refugee flows and regional conflicts?

Recent waves of 'ethnic cleansing' and genocide have led to a renewed wave of scholarly interest in such practices, yet the favoured explanations tend to focus on the role of virulent nationalism in bringing about and rationalising the mass destruction of one group by another. Such arguments are problematic, though, because forced assimilation, expulsion and genocide have occurred throughout the history of the modern international system, starting well before the age of nationalism. Waves of refugees swept across Western Europe from the late fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, a result of the burst of state-building that occurred in this

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period and the repressive policies this entailed.[1] These waves only abated
when this first great phase of state-building had passed and those deemed
undesirable by state-makers had been either assimilated into dominant
identities or excluded from the state. Massive displacements have ac-
companied all subsequent phases of state formation, culminating in the
continuing plight of increasingly numerous refugees at the turn of the
twenty-first century, many of whom have either been expelled or have
fled in fear of their lives.

Existing theories of state formation struggle to explain such practices,
as they overlook the crucial role that the construction of collective inter-
ests and identities plays in state formation. Materialist accounts explain
the development of states and the states system as a function of the
world economy, and regard the 'homogenisation' of peoples as a nec-
essary function of this process which is driven by economic interests.
Institutionalist accounts also take the economic motivation of actors as a
given, though from a position of methodological individualism. In both
accounts the construction of interests and identities within the state is
left unexplored. Power-based explanations take for granted the interest
of state-builders in the accumulation of the means of violence within
the sovereign state. Although such explanations pay attention to the
processes of internal pacification that were an important part of early
modern state-building, they see this as a function of the administrative
centralisation of states, rather than a phenomenon that needs further
explanation.

The central argument of this study is that state formation has a crucial
cultural dimension, a dimension overlooked by other theories of state
formation, which regard culture, if they mention it at all, as merely an
instrument of either economic or procrustean interests. State-builders
must establish their right to rule, as well as the legitimacy of the political
order they seek to establish or consolidate. This involves two tasks: the
construction of a unified political community within the bounds of their
territorial rule – a community with a single, cohesive identity – and the
identification of the monarch or the national government as the political
embodiment or representative of that unified community. As Michael

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[1] Aristide Zolberg, 'The Formation of New States as a Refugee Generating Process', in
Elizabeth Ferris (ed.), *Refugees and World Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1985), pp. 33–8.
Refugee movements also result from political repression by authoritarian regimes, and
civil or international wars that may have little to do with state-building. However by
far the greatest number have been generated as states have formed in the wake of im-
perial breakdown, whether in Europe or in post-colonial states. See Aristide Zolberg,
'Contemporary Transnational Migrations in Historical Perspective: Patterns and
Dilemmas', in Mary M. Kritz (ed.), *US Immigration and Refugee Policy: Global and
Domestic Issues* (Lexington Books, 1982).

Walzer argues, the political unity of the state 'has no palpable shape or substance. The state is invisible; it must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived.'[2]

State-builders cannot do otherwise than draw upon the prevailing cultural resources available to them as they seek to build a unified collective identity, and in doing so mark out the boundaries of the sovereign state as the boundary of a moral community. As Walzer goes on to argue, '[i]f symbolization does not by itself create unity (that is the function of political practice as well as of symbolic activity), it does create units – units of discourse which are fundamental to all thinking and doing, units of feeling around which emotions of loyalty and assurance can cluster'.[3] In drawing on the available cultural resources, state-builders contribute towards changing the very framework on which they draw. For example, early modern state-builders drew on the prevailing religious world view when defining insiders and outsiders, but in so doing they contributed towards the development of the secular world view as they rearticulated religious beliefs which no longer had universal normative purchase across Western Europe.

In the following chapters I trace the relationship between state-building and the strategies of 'pathological homogenisation' used by elites to construct the bounded political community of the modern state as an exclusive moral community from which outsiders must be expelled, and show how this process is intimately bound up with the development of the international system of states. The creation of outsiders as a distinctive social category is an important part of this process, and the investigation of how this has occurred in different times and places is a core concern of this study. The creation of outsiders is a political process in which 'difference' becomes translated into 'otherness' and therefore a threat to be disposed of in one way or another. For many state-builders, it is through this targeting of 'otherness' that a sense of unity in a shared collective identity is pursued. Such unity can only ever be symbolic, though, even if it is symbolised through the mass expulsion or destruction of a targeted group, as diversity in political life as elsewhere can never be fully eradicated. However, the attempt to create unity through the targeting of out-groups has concrete, and often bloody, political effects, as various regimes have attempted to construct homogeneous political communities in the most literal way.

[2] Michael Walzer, 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', *Political Science Quarterly* 82:2 (1967), 194.
[3] Ibid., 194.

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There are many aspects to the modern sovereign state. The term is used here in two ways: the first to denote the state as government, 'the collective set of personnel who occupy positions of decisional authority in the polity'. The second is to denote a 'normative order',[4] which, in turn, elites play an important, though by no means exclusive, part in constructing. The term state-building refers to those practices which elites have more or less consciously employed to consolidate and centralise power within clearly demarcated territorial boundaries. As we shall see, these practices draw on symbolic as well as material resources. For example, early modern state-builders, such as Ferdinand and Isabella, who in the fifteenth century laid the foundations for the Spanish state, were much less consciously engaged in 'state-building' than contemporary leaders such as Slobodan Milosevic, who was intent on building a strong (and expanded, to take in *all* Serbs) Serbian state in the wake of the breakdown of Yugoslavia. Yet the Spanish monarchs and modern nationalists have been involved in similar projects of political consolidation, and the strategies of symbolic manipulation they employ as they attempt to legitimate their authority have much in common.

Despite their many differences, these two cases share the use of what I term 'pathological homogenisation' as a means of state-building. This refers to the methods state-builders have used to define the state as a normative order and to cultivate identification through targeting those designated as outsiders for discriminatory and often violent treatment. According to current international standards of human rights and legitimate state behaviour these means are unacceptable. No such standards existed in the earliest phases of state-building, as Christian universalism lost its normative purchase and state-builders abrogated the authority of the Church, but to describe such methods as 'pathological' is not anachronistic. Such practices have without exception damaged the body politic, despite the benefits that state-builders may perceive, and they have invariably caused human suffering on a vast scale. From very early on in the development of the international system, voices have been raised to question policies so destructive in human and other terms. For example, in the early seventeenth century, Cardinal Richelieu described the expulsion of the Moriscos (Christianised Moors) from Spain as 'barbaric', giving voice to misgivings felt by many at the time about the methods used in this action by the Spanish monarchy, including taking small children from their families.

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[4] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics', *Comparative Politics* 16:2 (1984), 224.

I use the term 'pathological homogenisation' to designate a number of
different strategies that state-builders have employed to signify the unity
of their state and the legitimacy of their authority through the creation
of an ostensibly unified population. These strategies range from attempts
to legally exclude minority groups from citizenship rights, to strategies
of forced conversion or assimilation, expulsion and extermination.[5]
Although these strategies have had very different impacts on those un-
fortunate enough to be subjected to them, they are all a means to the
end of creating a 'homogeneous' population within the boundaries of the
sovereign state. For those who pursue such policies, they serve to symbol-
ise and create a 'purer' and thus more unitary sovereign identity within the
state, a more unified 'imagined community' to use Benedict Anderson's
phrase.[6]

In the pursuit of a homogeneous collective identity within the state vari-
ous assimilatory policies have been practised. Forced religious conversion
is one means of forcibly assimilating a minority within a dominant iden-
tity. Such policies often result in the mass movement of people attempt-
ing to avoid forced conversion, as occurred in late seventeenth-century
France, when French Protestants fled their homeland when their religion
was outlawed. In some cases, forced conversion may be posed as a choice:
convert or leave. This was the 'choice' presented to Spanish Jews in the
fifteenth century. Many did convert to Christianity while others who wish-
ed to maintain their Jewish identity were expelled from the state, result-
ing in the end of the official existence of the Jewish community in Spain.
Expulsion may also be ordered with no 'choice' of any other alternative,
except perhaps death or imprisonment. In 1609 the Moriscos were not
presented with any other alternative but to leave Spain and numerous ex-
amples of expulsions can be found in the history of the international sys-
tem. These include 'population exchanges' such as those between Greece
and Turkey early in the twentieth century; the massive displacement of
ethnic Germans in Europe following World War II; and the exchange of
populations between India and Pakistan at partition, to name just a few.

In the twentieth century, as the bureaucratic and technological capacity
of the state has increased, mass murder and genocide have increasingly

[5] Paul Brass notes how 'both processes of nationality-formation and state-building may
be pushed beyond pluralist accommodations to extreme, even pathological limits, to
expulsions, counter-expulsions, the exchange of population groups and even to genocide'.
Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (New Delhi: Sage, 1991),
p. 21.
[6] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nation-
alism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

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been used as pathological means of homogenisation by state-builders. The intent here goes beyond expulsion to the wholesale removal of the targeted group through obliteration. Forced conversion (though by no means an attractive option) has become less thinkable in the age of national criteria of identification, linked, as these often are, to notions of racial or ethnic identity as inherent in the individual and therefore unchanging.[7] In the case of the genocide of the Armenian people of 1915–16, there were cases of Christian Armenians converting to Islam in order to avoid death (particularly children who were taken into Muslim families), but few were given this option in a genocide in which religious criteria had become inextricably bound up with national criteria of identification. A conception of racial identity as inherent in the person was also behind the Holocaust. A similar view of 'ethno-national' identity as inherent in the person and unchanging, ironically marked out through religious affiliation, informs the virulent ethno-nationalism seen in action during the attempts at state-building which followed the fragmentation of Yugoslavia. From such a viewpoint, expulsion or extermination become much more likely policy 'options' than conversion.

The book is divided into seven chapters. In chapter 1, I argue that mainstream theories of international relations are ill-equipped to explain pathological homogenisation as they explicitly bracket off processes of state formation and the construction of interests and identities. However, as noted above, theories of state formation also fail to investigate the cultural dimension of state formation and the construction of identities and interests, leaving them unable to explain practices of pathological homogenisation. Drawing on critical approaches to international relations, I argue that cultural structures and strategies play crucial roles in the construction of collective state identities and hence in the consolidation of the boundaries between states. It follows, therefore, that these structures and strategies also play an important and often overlooked role in the constitution of the international system of states.

Chapters 2 to 5 illustrate this relationship between state formation, cultural practices and practices of pathological homogenisation. Four case studies range across five centuries and over the geographical spread of much of Europe, broadly defined to include the Ottoman Empire.[8] This broad historical and geographic sweep allows comparison of different regimes, the different criteria of inclusion and exclusion that they have employed as state-builders, and the continuities and discontinuities to be

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[7] See Craig Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity', *Annual Review of Sociology* 19 (1993).
[8] The period covered – the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries – was when the Ottoman Empire was being 'brought in' to the European society of states.

found in practices of pathological homogenisation across space and time. A central argument of the study is that such processes are not the result of nationalism *per se*. Rather, they are the result of modern state-builders' efforts at building unified states according to different criteria of identification which, since the late eighteenth century, have been primarily national. This argument has informed the selection of case studies which aim to demonstrate that homogenisation played an important role in state formation *before* the age of nationalism.

In Western Europe from the end of the fifteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century, religion was the dominant criterion of inclusion and exclusion. Thus the first two case studies come from the first phase of state-building in Western Europe as the moral authority of the Respublica Christiana and the Holy Roman Empire disintegrated. In this phase the criterion of homogeneous identity could not be anything other than religious, as rulers wrested religious authority from its previously universal sources.

Chapter 2 investigates the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 and, briefly, the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609. The expulsion of the Jews of Spain was ordered in an edict issued at the end of March 1492 by Ferdinand and Isabella, the 'Catholic Monarchs'. The Jewish community was given four months to either convert to Christianity, or leave Spain. This expulsion, along with the reconquest of Islamic Spain completed in the same year, represented a final break with the medieval tradition of coexistence between the three great monotheistic religious and cultural groups. As Aristide Zolberg notes, the expulsion was a 'startlingly modern measure'.[9] In its systematic nature, it was unlike previous measures taken against Jews in what was to become Spain. It was also unlike previous expulsions of Jews from England and France, in that the population that was expelled from Spain was a well-integrated, socially diverse population whose forebears had lived in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon for 1,000 years. The Jews of Spain were as 'Spanish' as anyone else in Spain at that time. Yet the expulsion, along with the forced conversion of Muslims in Spain which followed soon after, allowed the monarchs to emphasise religious unity as the basis of the new state.

Chapter 3 investigates the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in late seventeenth-century France. By this act, Louis outlawed Protestantism in France and caused an estimated 200,000 French Protestants to flee the country. This attempt to enforce Catholicism was a systematically implemented programme with a clearly defined goal of a religiously homogeneous population within the state. When, in the

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[9] Zolberg, 'The Formation of New States', p. 34.

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sixteenth century, the Huguenots *did* pose a threat to the stability of a
factionalised state, the weak monarchy was unable to take effective ac-
tion against them. But by the time of Louis XIV, the Huguenots no longer
posed any military or political threat to the French state. Yet the very exis-
tence of a group with a distinct corporate identity was perceived as a threat
to the integrity of the absolutist state and a challenge to the legitimacy
of absolutist rule, and they were targeted for repression and the extin-
guishing of their collective identity. This was an extremely popular policy
within France at the time, and it served to buttress Louis' legitimacy, at
least in the short term. However, it was widely criticised across Europe
and soon came to be seen as a costly mistake within France.

The next two cases in chapters 4 and 5, highlight the importance of the
national principle in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as providing
both the basis of political legitimacy and of collective state identity. At
its most extreme, the national principle can be interpreted to justify an
absolute conception of sovereign identity which claims that the sovereign
state must be exclusively of and for a particular nation. It can thus provide
a potent motive for policies of pathological homogenisation. In order to
investigate this, chapter 4 focuses on the genocide of the Armenian people
in 1915–16, and the role this played in building a unitary sovereign
state amidst the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks
and their Party of Union and Progress (CUP), which came to power in
1908, were initially concerned with reforming the empire in order to save
it, but ultimately they sought to remake the remains of the crumbling
Empire into a centralised, modern and national state, which could stand
as an equal among the European powers. Influenced by a virulent strand
of Turkish nationalism, the Young Turk regime systematically imple-
mented a policy that sought the extermination of the Armenian people in
Anatolia, which Turkish nationalists now considered the national heart-
land of Turkey. In a time of war and revolution, the Young Turks used
the targeting of this minority population to buttress their own fragile le-
gitimacy, at the same time that they sought to mark out the boundaries
of the Turkish state. It was no accident that those Armenians who were
'deported' to die in the desert, died within the bounds of the Ottoman
Empire, but outside the boundaries of the state of Turkey, recognised as
independent and sovereign by the international community in 1923.

Chapter 5 highlights the continued use of methods of pathological
homogenisation in the late twentieth century. The emergence of the
successor states to the former Yugoslavia was accompanied by 'ethnic
cleansing' – the euphemistic phrase that has now entered our lexicon in
place of genocide and deportation. Though all parties to the conflict in
Bosnia-Herzegovina committed atrocities and forcibly removed people

from their homes, the focus of this chapter is on the 'logic' of ethnic homogenisation that drove the ethnic cleansing practised by Serb and Bosnian Serb forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and subsequently in Kosovo, which led to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in 1999. Behind the rhetoric of this virulent form of nationalism has been the process of state disintegration and reformation, with elites using nationalist ideology to construct a conception of the sovereign identity of the state which buttresses their, otherwise doubtful, legitimacy. However, these strategies do not exist in a cultural vacuum and in the former Yugoslavia elites drew on and exacerbated currents of resentment and cultural stereotypes that exist within a society rendered vulnerable by the historical experience of the last century.

This study draws on a distinction made by Alexander Wendt, between the internal, or corporate, and the international, or social, aspects of state identity construction, though unlike Wendt I do not bracket off the domestic aspects of state identity.[10] Indeed, I argue that we cannot understand relations between states if we do this. Where chapters 2 to 5 focus primarily on pathological means of corporate identity construction, in chapter 6 I turn my focus to the social identity of the state as an actor in the international system and I contend that the relation between the corporate and social aspects of state formation is mutually constitutive. The practices which some political elites have used to construct corporate state identity have pushed states at the international social level to develop norms that proscribe such behaviour. In turn, these norms of legitimate state behaviour play a role, though sometimes an oppositional one, in corporate identity construction. Despite the discourse of sovereignty and the claims by state elites that they possess the right to define the corporate identity of the state, there has long been a dialectical relationship between such claims and the social identity of states which depend for legitimation on adherence to basic norms of acceptable behaviour – within the state as well as in relations between states. However, there are strong tensions between developing norms of what are acceptable means of corporate identity construction and the other important principle of coexistence between states, non-intervention. It is this principle which gives moral and legal form to the inviolability of the boundary of the sovereign state – the very boundary that has so often been constructed by practices which the international community now regards as illegitimate.

As Marc Weller points out, the debates over how to deal with the Kosovo conflict, culminating in the 1999 NATO bombing campaign

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[10] Alexander Wendt, 'Collective Identity Formation and the International State', *American Political Science Review* 88:2 (1994), 385.

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against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was a contest over 'core val-
ues' in the international system. The principles of territorial unity, non-
intervention and the non-use of force were all subject to intense debate.[11]
While the manner of this intervention is open to criticism, the intervention
reflects growing acknowledgement that what happens inside the borders
of a sovereign state cannot be disconnected from international politics.
This is so in two senses. First, with the development since World War
II of clear norms that prohibit practices of pathological homogenisation,
there is recognition (albeit contested at times) that the human rights of
citizens of all states are matters of international concern. Second, such
practices still remain attractive means of state-building to some regimes.

This raises the question of under what conditions such strategies will
not be attractive to state-builders in the first place. In order to inves-
tigate this question in chapter 7 I examine two 'threshold cases', the
Czech Republic and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, both
of which have many of the 'preconditions' for pathological homogenisa-
tion, most importantly the existence of a clearly defined minority which
is regarded with distrust or entrenched prejudice by significant sections
of the majority population. During the 1990s, elites in these two states
either backed away from, or did not pursue pathological strategies of
corporate identity construction. These two cases show how emphasis
on the social identity of the state – which in both the cases studied
here means gaining recognition as a pluralistic democratic state within
Europe – can provide alternatives to state-builders. However, these cases
also demonstrate that reliance on the social identity of the state is not
enough when there is a significant clash between international norms
and strongly entrenched domestic norms. The extent to which recasting
the social identity of the state may help reconstitute domestic norms
towards less exclusivist notions of citizenship rather than merely acting as
an external restraint on the potential for pathological policies of corporate
identity construction, is explored in this chapter. In the first case, that of
the Czech Republic, I examine the 1992 Citizenship law that came into
operation when the Czech Republic and Slovakia separated peacefully at
the beginning of 1993. This law had the effect of rendering a large num-
ber of Roma, who were permanent residents in the Czech Republic and
who had been citizens of Czechoslovakia, stateless. I trace the domes-
tic and international pressure on successive governments to change this
law, which some critics claimed was expressly designed to rid the state of
members of this underprivileged, yet widely disparaged, minority. Over

[11] Marc Weller, 'The Rambouillet Conference on Kosovo', *International Affairs* 75:2
(1999), 213–18.