States have often codified or encouraged nationalism selectively, demarcating by specified categories who is included and who is excluded. Such purposeful, internal boundaries of nationhood were long seen as reflecting homogenous solidarities such as ethnicity, falsely assumed to be a fixed or essentialist category. Alternatively, such exclusions have been deprecated as tangential lags in a more inclusionary process; the leading current theories of nationalism focus on economic imperatives toward inclusion or literary-based imaginings of a unified community. But more often, nationalism has been constructed exclusively, not according to fixed categories but instead demarcated by emergent states seeking to manage diversity by manipulating and reinforcing difference. Variations in the form of such state-led nationalism, its particular internal exclusions, have had important consequences and largely remain to be explained. How and why did states act to encourage or codify certain categories of inclusion and exclusions, along what lines, and with what effects?

This is not an idle question. Who is included in the nation—and why some are not, or only partially—is a crucial issue in an age when rights and status are determined by such inclusion for which people have been willing to fight and die. Included constituencies are acutely aware of this issue and seek to protect their privilege. Excluded groups are equally aware, with their very identity shaped by official or informal exclusion and their collective action often aimed at forcing inclusion. Indeed, the demand for inclusion in the nation, for citizenship and/or group rights against discrimination, has inspired many (though not all) modern social movements. This dynamic, framed by the issue of national inclusion, remains a central political issue of our time.

I here endeavor to address this issue, outlining a domination-based, coalition framework of nationalism in which exclusion is structural rather than fixed
or tangential to nation-building. This discussion of exclusive nationalism begins to reclaim from essentialism, economics, or literary analogy the issue of nation-building as one in which politics is central. In the process, I hope to show how instrumental and cultural approaches can be combined in explaining demarcations of nation inclusion, thereby moving beyond current methodological divisions.

Posing the Problem

The term “nation-state” implies some convergence of an institutionalized polity and collective allegiance to it, with “nationalism” defined here as such bounded solidarity and allegiance to a state. The nation is that group viewed as the legitimate owner of the state; the collective sentiment of such ownership (that is, nationalism) is what gives the state legitimacy.1 This connection can be established in more or less either direction: state first, building national loyalty, or a national community creating a state, though often these processes occur together. In whichever order, “the nation-state” implies, if not impels, convergence, though we know that in reality there has rarely been such neat convergence.

The traditional idea of a prior civil solidarity giving rise to states goes back at least to Jean Jacques Rousseau, who described a proto-nationalist “act of association [that] creates an artificial and collective body” or polity.2 Johann Herder, Hans Kohn, and more recently Liah Greenfeld agree that such a sentiment gives rise to forms of state rule.3 And that collective sentiment has often been assumed to be based on a preexisting group solidarity of ethnicity, seen as a more or less ascriptive category of shared ancestry and culture.4 In other words, nationalism is equated with “descent-based” ethnicity and with political units built accordingly as homogenous.5 As described by John Stuart Mill, even nonethnic “fellow feelings” should demarcate “the boundaries of government.”6

The fundamental problem with this liberal orthodoxy is that it assumes the prior existence of self-conscious, homogenous units of allegiance around which states are built. But such group consciousness is instead often constructed by officials and elites, who use selective evocations of history to project an image

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6 Ibid., 52.
of prior legitimacy and purposefully forget inconvenient images or experiences of past or present internal division.7 The images of a common identity, unifying ethnicity, and shared language were gradually invented, constructed, and reinforced, often explicitly, to bolster social cohesion.8 Ethnicity or other forms of unity were not so fixed nor so firmly established as to be the necessary or only basis of state building.9 Instead, diversity remained or grew, for instance, with the political incorporation of new territory, peoples, or immigrants into states, threatening political unity.10 If prior social cohesion is rarely so fixed as to form the prior basis for a nation seeking a state, then theories based on this assumption are challenged or incomplete.

The evocative theory of Benedict Anderson is directed at this problem in liberal theory, for Anderson seeks to explain the emergence of the cohesive nation as an “imagined community,” rather than take such a unit for granted. The process begins with the spread of capitalism, with trading requiring a shared language, and with the spread of a printed vernacular encouraging a sense of shared experience and community, the basis of nationalism as Karl Deutsch had argued earlier.11 For Anderson, the nation emerges as a sort of literary trope out of the spontaneous sense of simultaneous existence engendered by shared language and texts. Anderson agrees with the liberal tradition in that his argument for early social/national cohesion requires no institutional action; there is no state acting to encourage the process of community cohesion or loyalty. To his credit, he moves beyond the traditional tendency to fall back on ethnicity as the purportedly fixed basis of prior cohesion: “from the start the nation was conceived in language, not in blood.”12 But accordingly, Anderson cannot account for and instead assumes that no one is purposefully or even accidentally excluded from the emerging cohesion. As he says, “language is not an instrument of exclusion . . . it is fundamentally inclusive.”13

Anderson’s argument has been disputed less for its inclusiveness and more for its spontaneity. Historians and social scientists have demonstrated that instead of being the basis for state-seeking, collective sentiment may often have been encouraged by states and state ruling elites. Indeed, “nationalizing states” are more common than preexisting nations forming states. Political units formed

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9 Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed.
10 Ernest Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1994), 34; Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship, 10; Connor, Ethnonationalism, 22.
12 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 133.
13 Ibid., 122.
out of warfare or colonialism and the interest in raising revenues faced the imperative of encouraging allegiance with images of nationalism, thereby inviting the masses into the polity.14 In such instances, the focus of this analysis, states made nations, rather than the reverse; or institutions and sentiments of allegiance were built together. A central mechanism for encouraging such solidarity was the institution of citizenship, with emergent states granting membership and rights in order to encourage internal cohesion and allegiance. According to T. H. Marshall or Reinhard Bendix, the allocation of distinct citizenship rights may vary and its extension to particular groups may lag, but the tendency is toward universal extension, again assuming exclusions to be anomalous.15 Certainly, if nations are defined and even forged by such official allocations of citizenship, then this cannot be described as a spontaneous process.

The other currently prominent theory of state-led nationalism is that of Ernest Gellner. Like Anderson, for Gellner nation-building begins with the spread of capitalism; in a sense they are both modernization theorists. But there they diverge. For Anderson, capitalism spreads vernacular language, forging a nation which then creates a state. According to Gellner, economic imperatives for a common language of work and culture could only be met by state-provided education ensuring such socialization.16 Put schematically, capitalism requires a state to spread language and national cohesion. Of course, this cannot account for any early forms of nationalism that emerged before industrialization, though Gellner would deny that there are any such preindustrial nations. But the power of his focus on state action is undeniable. Even Benedict Anderson, in reconsidering the issue, acknowledges that postcolonial states shape the imagined community of the nation.17

Amid the turn away from ethnonationalism to spontaneous community building or to state-led theories of nationalism, the image of internal homogeneity and inclusion has largely remained. The common assumption is that states seeking or benefiting from unity, whether for warfare, revenue, or development, encourage the common allegiance of their population with images of shared nationalism, excluding only foreigners. For Anderson, this allegiance emerges out of language. For state theorists, loyalty to the polity is purposefully encouraged, with the state adjudicating disputes to bolster unity.18 Pervasive


fellow feeling cannot be assumed but must be built and is. For Gellner, homoge-
neity is “imposed by objective... imperatives” of the economy, with “industrial
society allergic to counter-entropic institutions” or traits. On the inclusive ten-
dency of nationalism, all major theories other than ethnonationalism agree.

Here then is the problem. States have not consistently incorporated all po-
tential internal constituents, but instead have often purposefully excluded
some, contrary to the presumed imperative for pervasive unity or ethnic homo-
ge neity. Ethnic subgroups have been retained as subalterns or have been ex-
pelled, though the victims have not been preordained. Citizenship rights have
often been allocated selectively, not universally. The franchise has been lim-
ited. The imagined community has been constrained; fellow feelings and loyalty
have been bounded. Nationalism has been internally exclusive, not just along
the lines suggested by the old debate about civic or ethnic forms, but also ac-
cording to race, gender, religion, and class. For instance, Michael Hechter has
described the selective allocation of citizenship rights according to a cultural
division of labor reinforcing class divisions. Such difference has been institu-
tionalized and reified within and by states, contrary to the assumption that
states sought to unify all within. Why? And why has nationalism been bounded
differently according to varying categories? As Rogers Brubaker asks, why has
nationalism been institutionalized in particular forms as a practical and
bounded category or contingent event?

To answer these questions, what is needed is a new conception of national-
ism that takes seriously the role of dominant structures, prior conflict, and ex-
clusion, without falling into an essentialist assumption of fixed ethnic exclusion.
Currently popular theories of nationalism and related allocations of citizenship
rights have tended to assume universal inclusion, at least eventually, with exclu-
sions described as mere lags in the provision of rights. But such omissions and
exclusions vary and may not be mere lags but instead purposeful and crucial,
with exclusion of some “other” not as accidents but instead designed to solder
core coalitions among those included. Nationalism is not an imagined commu-
nity of inclusion, as a sort of literary trope, nor an institutionalized process to-
w ard inclusion propelled by economic development and modernization. In-
 stead, nationalism is often purposefully exclusive, with such exclusion emerging
in fits and starts but encouraged or encoded to serve the explicit requirements
for solidifying core loyalty to the nation. Rather than diversity precluding cohe-
sion, diversity and selective allocations of nationalism and related rights may
be the tools for building cohesion among the core that is included and demar-
cated. It is important to note that this mechanism is not the only basis for exclu-

19 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 39, 65, 82.
20 Hechter, Internal Colonialism. See also Tom Nairn, The Break-Up of Britain (London: New Left
21 Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, 16.
22 John A. Armstrong, Nations Before Nationalism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina
sion of groups, which may occur as the result of prejudicial antagonism rather than as a strategy for cohesion. But the latter focus of this analysis is an important basis of exclusion, which often exacerbates conflict over inclusion.

**LINEAGES OF EXCLUSIVE NATIONALISM**

The question posed is: Why and how is nationalism configured and codified in particular, internally exclusive forms? To answer, we must examine where this process is located, how it works, what explains the motivation for such exclusion generally, what accounts for the specific form of exclusion, and what shapes the resulting dynamic.

To fully explicate this argument is not possible in this brief context, but it is useful to refer to illustrative cases that suggest the recurrence and variety of exclusionary nationalism. Such cases must be drawn from a specific universe to which my argument is limited: examples of state-led nationalism threatened by internal conflict that becomes exclusive in varying forms. I do not include those rarer examples of inclusive nationalism that have most often emerged where there is little internal conflict or perceived threat of such conflict, though such apparent homogeneity itself requires explanation elsewhere. Similarly, exclusion that is preordained by imperial or colonial powers is not the focus of this analysis, for there is little puzzle about these outcomes.23

To clarify the argument, I will cite relevant cases of exclusion, which will then be referred to as illustrative of my argument and summarize the overall implications for these cases in the conclusion. For easy reference, I organize these illustrative cases into Table 1 along the vertical axis according to dependent exclusion varying from de facto discrimination, selective legal exclusion, to forced assimilation or expulsion. Along the horizontal axis I specify the independent level of internal conflict varying from contained or absent conflict, civil war after which state authority emerges more consolidated, to civil war from which the form and power of the state remains uncertain and open to further conflict. Each of these terms will be explicated further. Of course, the small number of cases discussed limits the reach of my analysis to variations of exclusionary nationalism, but I hope at least to suggest a more general argument.

**Forms of Exclusive Nationalism**

I begin by simply clarifying what is to be explained by focusing on state policies and related forms of exclusion as the dependent variable. I agree with Rogers Brubaker that the form of nationness is best understood “as an event, as something that suddenly crystallizes . . . as a contingent, conjecturally fluctuating,

and precarious frame of vision.”24 Such crystallization is arguably most evident in explicit rules of citizenship that are not universal, for these specify who is legally included and excluded, protected or not. In other words, while not complete, a focus on the legal boundaries of citizenship has provided a useful marker for the exclusive forms of nationalism established by nationalizing states. Prior debates about civic versus ethnic nationalism relied on the same legal markers. The dependent variable of this analysis includes such legal markers, but also other forms of less formal and more draconian exclusion along a continuum.

Citizenship rules are a significant indicator of exclusion, established at defining moments and locking in relations that tend to endure for a time and have discriminatory legacies even after codified exclusion is abandoned. Of course, such categories of inclusion or exclusion have historical bases. But while prior prejudice is relevant, it is neither fixed nor does it directly account for the specific and varying forms of exclusion. For instance, some prejudices are institutionalized in citizenship rules that afford selective protections, and others are not. And such internal exclusion does not always occur, though it does more often than liberal theorists assumed. When prejudice is formally encoded, its effects are thereby exacerbated and often become the focus of conflict more than informal discrimination. But less formal aspects of exclusion can also be hurtful and conflictual.

Not all forms of exclusion are made explicit by legal allocations of a full set of citizenship rights. Forms of the dependent variable of exclusion range from rhetorical, social, economic, and informal (that is, not legally encoded) discrimination, partial legal exclusion from some but not all rights, encouraged or forced homogenization, to homogenizing expulsion from the state. These outcomes vary greatly, albeit all loosely characterized as exclusion. I do not include in this framework instances of ultimate exclusion via genocide, which are so extreme and specific to the modern era that they require a distinct analysis.

Hurtful but less institutionalized forms of exclusion include cases of significant socioeconomic discrimination, which is allowed or encouraged by the state

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24 Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, 19.
or leading parties within the state, but not legally codified. One example is the informal exclusion of Afro-Brazilians post abolition. Brazil became a republic in 1889, emerging out of a past of Portuguese rule as the largest slave-holding society in history, with roughly half its population of significant African descent. Under the official policy of "racial democracy," these black Brazilians were granted equal citizenship rights per se, though continued immigration from Africa was long banned and most Afro-Brazilians were long excluded from the franchise by property and literacy requirements. Despite miscegenation and some individual advancement, most Afro-Brazilians were and remain less educated, under or unemployed, and notably poorer. Such inequality is clearly the result of on-going discrimination, which has been and is illegal, but with protections notably unenforced. Poverty disproportionately affecting blacks remains unchecked, and affirmative action for blacks is not legally mandated.25

India emerging from British colonialism made similar claims of pluralism to include Muslims, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's efforts. But once independence was gained, internal antagonisms emerged forcefully, with Muslim separatism complementing an anti-Muslim impetus and culminating in the breakaway of Pakistan. During the resulting conflict, more than 15 million Muslims fled India. Thereafter, an effective compromise was developed under India's Congress party, which balanced Muslim and Hindu interests and priorities.26 Only more recently, amid the disarray of the Congress party, has the Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) gained strength while engaging in anti-Muslim rhetoric. But amid informal anti-Muslim antagonism, the extent of formal or legal Muslim exclusion has remained limited in the recently BJP-led Indian governments, which apparently have been eager to moderate policies in order to avoid conflict.

The southern United States under Jim Crow would be an example of selective legal exclusion of blacks from particular citizenship rights. The franchise was limited by literacy and other requirements; social and educational services were inferior or not offered; and social and economic discrimination was allowed, if not always encouraged by law.27 Such alternatives to the liberal tradition of inclusion, and resulting forms of exclusion, have been eloquently discussed by Rogers Smith.28

Apartheid South Africa employed a more extensive form of racially categorized exclusion from citizenship rights. The vote was denied to Africans per se

and limited for so-designated coloreds and Asians; specified jobs were reserved by race, public services were denied, education was inferior, and discriminatory segregation in public facilities was enforced by law. By the 1960s, the South African state had even begun to deny South African citizenship to those Africans designated as citizens of supposedly independent homelands.29

Selective exclusion was evident even in the self-described “civic,” inclusive, emergent nations of early modern Western Europe, suggesting the pattern explored here had roots at the very emergence of centralized states and proto-nations. Religious minorities were denied certain rights, forced to assimilate, or threatened with expulsion during the early modern period of state consolidation. In France, Protestant Huguenots were massacred on St. Bartholomew’s Day in 1572 and then subject to restraints on their religious practice and encouraged to convert until the 1598 Edict of Nantes encoded toleration. That edict was rescinded in 1685, when those Huguenots remaining were expelled, placing early modern France toward the more extreme form of exclusions, ultimately forcing greater homogeneity on the basis of faith.30 The precise boundaries of such homogeneity were then contested, constructed, and reinforced locally, for instance in the towns on the border with Spain.31

Merry Old England was not so merry for Catholics during the seventeenth century and for at least 150 years thereafter. Charles II encoded the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678, banning Catholics from public office or from living and congregating in towns, with those exclusions of rights reinforced by William and Mary after 1688. Those legal discriminations remained enforced in England itself until 1829 and continued for Catholics in Ireland.32 As a result, many Catholics were forced to convert or to flee, most dramatically with one Catholic-sympathizing monarch beheaded and another Catholic king forced into exile. Again, early modern England’s denial of rights, forced conversion, and expulsions of Catholics places it at the extremity of our continuum of exclusions, contradicting the conventional image of liberal inclusion.

Internal Conflict as Causal

States, or more accurately elites controlling states, are eager to avoid disruption of their rule, whether to ensure stability, support in warfare and revenue, or participation in development. They are “rational” in such goal-seeking behavior.33 In a sense, this argument fits with the literature on state autonomy—states act in their own interest to reinforce their legitimacy and to preserve themselves, their society, and economy.34 But this autonomous interest of the state

34 Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, Bringing the State Back In.
is not shaped in a vacuum but in response to real pressures and challenges to the state emerging out of civil society, itself divided. If there were no such challenges, the imperative for state action to encourage unity and preservation would be less acute. The form of such challenges shapes state action aimed at establishing, forging, and unifying what the core constituency is. State action guided by this imperative depends on state capacity, which may vary, with states more or less able to codify and enforce exclusion. The level and form of internal conflict is here stipulated as the independent variable that can impel such efforts at the forging of cohesion via exclusion of some group not central to that pressing conflict.

I also further specify the condition of cases applicable to my analysis. Societies that perceive themselves to be homogenous are not included in the universe of cases, though how such perceived homogeneity is itself produced remains a subject for analysis. Where emergent states are faced with internal divisions that threaten central authority rather than strengthen autonomy, elites seek to contain or heal such divisions. Potential, on-going, or past social conflict may be diminished by state action. The juncture points where this process would be most evident and subject to analysis are when such conflict emerges and attempts are made to resolve it in order to preserve the polity.

There is of course a wide range of real, past, or threatened internal conflicts and challenges to state rule. These include concern about possible but largely absent social conflict, civil wars in which preservation of the form and power of the state remains unresolved. The relative lack of conflict is easy to specify with the absence of collective violence. The distinction between civil wars resulting in bolstered state authority or in continued challenges to that authority is evident according to whether large-scale conflict reemerges after war. Where such conflict does continue, then clearly the on-going challenges to the state continue to require state response. Not included in this analysis is the ultimate form of internal conflict, or full-scale revolution, in which prior state authority and social structure is defeated and replaced by another.

This independent variable can also be illustrated. Neither Brazil nor India experienced anything akin to civil war, though potentials for conflict have been a concern to elites. Post-empire Brazil avoided a civil war of the sort witnessed in the United States. Post-colonial India experienced tensions with Pakistan that inflamed internal ethnic conflict, and at least the potential of class and caste conflict which has not exploded. By contrast, the United States experienced the violent Civil War and South Africa the Boer War, both of which left a centralized state intact—further consolidated in the United States and newly founded and enforced within the British Empire for South Africa. In early modern France and England, civil wars left central state authority still fragile, being built or significantly reconfigured into absolutism or greater parliamentarism amid on-going, violent, domestic conflict.

The Logic of Exclusion: Linking Dependent and Independent Variables

The key to my argument is that selective exclusion has been encouraged or encoded to heal past or threatened disunity among those included as the core constituency. Much prior analysis has assumed that the imperative for encouraging national unity should be inclusive, but often this is not possible. Diversity and historical antagonisms, whether the result of territorial incorporation, immigration, or conversion, impede pervasive unity or coordination. The actual or perceived threats to such unity vary. Where such threats exist, a pattern of outcomes emerges that is not explicable by supposedly fixed categories. State elites make deals en route to nation-building, selecting who to include, reward, and encourage loyalty from as the core constituency. To identify and consolidate the core, elites manipulate established antagonisms against some other group thereby excluded. And the core constituency so demarcated and reinforced may itself change over time according to shifting challenges and alliances.

The schematic form of this argument is as follows: states are often not faced with a dyadic issue of imposing their rule over a unified society, but instead they face a more complex triadic challenge, with the sovereign facing competing or antagonistic groups. To avoid being defeated by those competing groups that align, the state plays one group off against the other to forge an alliance with one group that is solidified by the purposeful exclusion of a different group from specified rights. This reinforces prejudice. A more manageable form of rule is enforced by such state action. Or as Barry Weingast has recently suggested, states needing a minimum of support but reluctant to meet the needs of competing groups who are unable to coordinate their demands can solidify their support by transgressing the rights of one group to the advantage of the other group. The result is a form of nationalism akin to the economic theory of the club, in which public goods are selectively allocated and protected from outsiders.

Simplifying schematic arguments can be as misleading as they are useful, so it should help to rephrase the above argument in different terms. Nationalism of all may not be possible in instances of aggravated antagonisms. In such instances, states may learn to encourage the support of a key constituency by acceding to its prejudices, often using a particular prejudice that can unify the key constituency, which is otherwise divided by other antagonisms. By maintaining legal boundaries and excluding an internal “other” as a common enemy, such states encourage the coherence and support of those who are included, focusing tangible benefits and using symbolic manipulations. These devices might not be as powerful or immediately salient if applied only to foreigners.


the more common focus of studies of selective citizenship, though often the exclusion of insiders is reinforced by related and on-going external antagonisms. Demarcating, demonizing, and depriving “outsiders” found within provides a referent that further unifies and solidifies the support of the “ingroup.”

Selective exclusion thus serves the interests of the state in avoiding or containing the conflicts where social cleavages make more inclusive “civic” unity of all impossible or difficult to achieve. It is not surprising then that nationalism “is not a shapeless free-floating unspecific unfocused feeling. . . . Its object is normally only too sharply defined, as the love of certain categories of people, and the detestation of others,” with that love and detestation working together.

Arthur Stinchcombe concludes, nationalism “is a wish to suppress internal divisions within the nation and to define people outside the group as untrustworthy as allies and implacably evil as enemies. . . . It is on the one hand . . . a love of compatriots. . . . But it is on the other hand a spirit of distrust of the potential treason of any opposition within the group and a hatred of strangers.”

Referring back to prior points, such organized exclusion is often, though not always, designed to encourage the unity and allegiance of those included; and it is evident in informal discrimination, state policies of citizenship, forced assimilation, or expulsion. Such exclusion certainly builds upon the habitus of prior social dispositions constraining the state, most notably “the primordial tacit contract whereby they define ‘us’ as opposed to ‘them.’” The result combines Marxism’s traditional focus on self-interest and strategic calculations with the symbolic power of historically determined but seemingly natural habitus.

But as Pierre Bourdieu notes, precisely when antagonisms threaten to go out of control, to threaten the state itself, more rigid or legal codification is more likely. Such codifications then “minimize ambiguity . . . making clear cuts” upon which sufficient state support can be built. Moments of codification are then the moments in which nationalism is crystallized.

There are at least two other factors that contribute to this outcome of selective exclusion. On the macrolevel, there are transnational influences, most notably historical waves of interest in nationalism that encourage or force the adoption of such rhetoric in places where diversity precludes inclusive forms of nationalism. International tensions and antagonisms can reinforce internal exclusions, for instance, with those insiders suspected as being aligned with for-
eign enemies and therefore more likely subjects of internal exclusion. From the microlevel, there are psychological factors encouraging selective inclusion. A rich tradition of psychological theories and experimentation has demonstrated that the cohesion of any in-group is solidified by discrimination against an out-group, with the demarcation of an “other” giving a sense of common characteristics or fate to the core.44 The actual basis of the category of those excluded is relatively irrelevant, reflecting what Sigmund Freud too dismissively called “the narcissism of minor differences.”45 But to augment core cohesion, often a scapegoat is selected precisely because it is present, visible, and powerless to resist. The scapegoat is useful for displacing aggression from some faction of the in-group too powerful to exclude. The combination of international pressures and psychological tendencies adds to a powerful impetus to exclude, magnifying otherwise minor difference.

This general argument suggests a connection between the forms or levels of threats to a polity and the form or level of exclusion used to heal or prevent such conflict; and our cases (summarized in Table 1) illustrate this coinciding variation. Where conflict has not exploded into organized violence or war, potential conflict within a core constituency may be contained by limited exclusion of some third party. For instance, in postindependent and relatively peaceful Brazil, and more recently India, largely rhetorical and limited informal discrimination against Afro-Brazilians or Muslims has been approved or at least permitted by the state. In India, the weakening of unifying control by the Congress party has led to a rise in de facto anti-Muslim discrimination. In both Brazil and India, central state authority has been consolidated without a regional, class, or caste civil war impelling more vigorous accommodation via exclusion.

Where social conflict had exploded into civil war in which the polity has successfully fought for its perseverance, prior conflict had to be healed more strenuously and national unity had to be built through legal exclusion. Blacks seen as inassimilable were excluded from the franchise and other rights in Jim Crow United States after the Civil War, thereby appeasing the South, which demanded such discrimination after Reconstruction. This set the stage for a gradual regional reconciliation under a centralizing state. After the Boer War, South Africa was formed and gained capacity from the British Empire, which allowed for the exclusion of the black majority to provide a basis for reconciliation between Afrikaners and English unified as whites. That racial exclusion was then further systematized under apartheid after World War II had


reignited ethnic intrawhite conflict. Afrikaner separatism came to power and enforced segregation, enriching all whites and again allowing for gradual reconciliation among them.46

The connection between internal conflict and exclusion was also evident in the early modern emergence of states and nations before states had been consolidated or developed enough capacity for more finely tuned legal exclusions. Prior violent conflict leaving the state less in control was healed by the more blunt instrument of forced assimilation or expulsion. Religious groups seen as assimilable were forced to convert or lose rights after the French religious wars of the sixteenth century threatened the crown, and again when absolutist rule was shaken by revolt in the next century. Catherine de Medici and her sons maneuvered to retain power against noble challengers by harnessing the passion of anti-Protestantism, consolidating an alliance with the Guise faction, which was cemented with the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of the Huguenots. Toleration and order were restored only by the Catholic-converted Henri IV, who inherited the throne after the death of the last of Catherine's sons. But Louis XIV again faced challenges from restive nobles and peasants, forcing the monarch to flee Paris during the Fronde. To further consolidate his rule, the sun king restricted the Huguenots and in 1685 expelled those remaining, thereby aligning himself further with the Catholic Church, which reciprocated by offering offices to idle nobles. The absolutist French state was thus built with the crutch of religious exclusion, except for the notable period when relative peace allowed for toleration under Henri IV's Edict of Nantes.47 By the time of the French Revolution, expulsion had produced relative religious homogeneity allowing for a liberal rhetoric of more inclusive nationalism.

Seventeenth-century England also followed a pattern of religious exclusion enacted in the aftermath of civil war and amid efforts to reconfigure central state authority. Contests for power between monarchy and landholders culminated in civil war and the beheading of Charles I, accused of ignoring Parliament and of Catholic sympathies. When Charles II was restored to the throne, he soon encoded a set of anti-Catholic exclusions, building upon prior anti-Catholic prejudice to unify his core constituency of Protestants across the dividing lines of power contestation. But monarchical power remained contested, particularly in 1686-89, resulting in a repetition of the pattern of consolidating and reconfiguring state authority through exclusion. When rebellion and unrest led to the flight of a Catholic monarch, James II, he was replaced by William and Mary, who further encoded anti-Catholic measures. The exclusion of Catholics to unify Protestants became the bedrock for English nation-building, reinforced later by foreign wars in which the French were seen as religiously linked to the internal "other."48

Specification of the Excluded Group

The prior argument suggests why states may purposefully exclude some category of people to unify others, but it cannot in itself account for which group or category is so utilized. As David Laitin argues, states “piggyback” or “free ride” on social cleavages or prejudices, using tradition as a resource in order to organize and utilize bias.49 But in doing so, elites must select among a variety of groups which may be subject to exclusion; their selection is not fixed.50

Rational choice and coalition theories have put forward an important possible answer to this puzzle of selective exclusion. According to William Riker, for instance, alliances are shaped by the imperative for establishing a coalition of minimum size necessary to win privileges, thereby ensuring that maximum benefits will be shared as narrowly as possible.51 But individuals are not free agents able and willing to change and barter loyalties. Historically informed ideology or prejudice, or the “embeddedness” of identities, pose a constraint on permissible coalitions.52 The deeper the ideological or identity cleavage, the more a winning coalition will be determined by efforts to minimize such differences, rather than being determined by Riker’s “size principle.” Conjunctural background conditions shape the strategic perceptions of elites about what is rational, limiting the possible choices and bargains at moments of high tension. Thus, exclusionary outcomes are shaped by a combination of “rational” and historically determined calculations.

Nationalizing states inherit and are faced with the legacies of prejudice and internal antagonisms, with such challenges to unified rule creating an imperative for state action. States may then act to purposefully exclude a category of people so as to encourage the unity and allegiance of a core, forging a nation so defined by those included. The particular category so employed reflects the historical legacies of antagonism that posed the problem of internal discord in the first place, with an image of the past imposed on the present.53 As Elie Kedourie argues, “nationalists make use of the past.”54 The particular past cleavage that is enforced to encourage unity depends upon imbedded historical ideology and narratives informing strategic debates among elites about what target and form of exclusion will heal pressing internal conflict within a core judged indis-

49 David Laitin, “Hegemony and Religious Conflict” in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 311.
pensable. Precisely because we are not all “geldings,” as Ernest Gellner would have us cut off from our past, bias from our past is reworked to shape exclusive nationalism.\(^5\)

Crucially, when a potential core constituency is divided by one issue or category of antagonism that blocks essential national unity, a different category of antagonism is more likely encoded to overcome that constraint and to unify that core. A group is excluded which is not itself a major faction of the most pressing internal conflict, but whose exclusion can help unify the major factions of a potential core constituency. The form of exclusion used to build national unity must then have sufficient torque to unify those key constituents otherwise in conflict or even at war with each other. For instance, race may be projected to unify across regional or ethnic divides, ethnicity may be used to unify class divisions, or class may be used to unify across ethnic tensions. Minimizing coalition size is not determinant; building a workable coalition that is enforced by past prejudice is. Institutional and selective nationalism then reifies the category of exclusion, reinforcing false but nonetheless believed assumptions of primordial difference. The result is an institutionalized coalition piggy-backing on culture.\(^6\)

The particularities of the real or threatened social conflict to be redressed via exclusion thus specifies the group to be so excluded as a third party against which intracore factions can be unified. At least in part to avoid class or caste conflict among Hindus no longer as unified by the Congress party in India, Hindus were encouraged in their prejudice against Muslims, a strategy effectively embraced by the BJP in its recent and successful bids for power. Containing regional or class conflict among white Brazilians was achieved by unifying them via discrimination against Afro-Brazilians, the subject of prejudice dating back to slavery. To heal the regional conflict of the U.S. Civil War impelled excluding blacks against whom whites across regions shared a racial prejudice. To heal the ethnic conflict between white South Africans during and after the Boer War, Afrikaners and the English were unified in their common racism against blacks. To contain the early modern conflicts over power between French nobles or between crown and nobles in England, religious minorities were excluded. In England, this exclusion included two monarchs, whose beheading or expulsion allowed for gradual consolidation of constitutional rule. In contrast, France’s exclusion of Huguenots forged the loyalty of Catholic nobles and strengthened the monarchy (even under a convert) as it moved toward absolutism before the then more unified nation turned to revolution.

This argument explicitly borrows from both cultural and instrumental approaches, denying to either sole power. Culturalists argue that inherited or

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Evolving meanings and beliefs about primordial ancestry and linkages have determined national units. However, ideas that appear to come to us from the past change, as do their uses, and such change cannot be explained by some seemingly unchanging inheritance or essentialism. Culture itself varies, and such variation cannot be explained by reference to culture itself. For instance, prejudice and encoded exclusion against blacks, Muslims, Huguenots, or Catholics have in each of our cases varied in salience and practice.

Instrumentalists counter that tradition and belief are a resource for strategic calculations of interest. They reject cultural approaches as essential for implying an unchanging nature and focus instead on how different views are strategically pursued or enhanced for narrow advantage. But beliefs and collectivities often persist even when they become costly rather than profitable. Or more fundamentally, basing analysis on rational calculations of interest takes for granted the preferences so acted upon. Such analysis ironically bends back toward primordialism in assuming that preferences are somehow historically fixed as “the comforts of home.” But again, those discriminatory “comforts” have varied, and exclusions are maintained even when not strictly “rational.”

Rather than reject either form of argument, I am explicitly using and combining both. As Jurgen Habermas has argued, “interpretation and formal analysis are simply dimensions of the same process of inquiry.” In other words, cultural and historically informed identities constrain and identify strategic options, foreclosing and disclosing possibilities. Culture produces preferences that are then acted upon via rational calculation. Put differently, identities make some equilibria more likely. Choice is conceived and interpreted according to past history.

This combining of approaches creates some odd bedfellows. Exclusive nationalism does reflect often long-standing preferences, identities, and prejudices, as suggested by ethnonationalism. But we need not accept that such biases are primordial or fixed to see that people often believe and act as if they are and that this belief is powerful. Karl Marx argued, “the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living.” An in-

60 Hardin, One for All. See also Michael Hechter, Principles of Group Solidarity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 30.
63 Hardin, One for All.
instrumental logic helps to explain this power. As Thomas Schelling has argued, coordination is expedited by signaling and convergence, and that signaling often rests on prominent focal points. Cultural and historical inheritances, even as redirected in current context, can provide such visible focal points as a crutch for coordination otherwise known as nationalism. In other words, culture and historical prejudice may provide a sense of bounded group loyalty that strategic calculation can rest upon. This is where preferences come from that are then rationally calculated. In this sense, cultural and instrumental logic can reinforce each other. Once we recognize that a purportedly inclusive collective good such as nationalism can actually be an exclusive club, then we can see that the rules of such exclusion may reflect strategic calculation building upon cultural signaling.

The process of exclusion occurs under particular circumstances in the universe in which exclusive nationalism emerges. When a polity is threatened, solidarity can be and is reinforced by distancing from or exclusion of an “other.” And once such a demarcation is reinforced, it becomes self-fulfilling in preserving the social order. The conviction of difference may be false, but “by their effects they are real; this is the power of primordial arguments.” Interest groups manipulate culture to solve basic organizational problems and achieve stability in which their interests can be met.

The most important and troubling critique of this position is posed by John Comaroff, who argues that such “neo-primordialism,” implying an instrumental use of primordial attachments, leaves “the bedrock of essentialism intact.” Comaroff argues that supposedly primordial ethnicity is based on relations and ongoing historical constructions. But those relations and constructions, particularly in moments of crisis, are often guided by cultural foundations that lay claims to primordial images. Elites are constrained by such established beliefs and values, which they then simplify, distort, and select to serve the purpose of unifying a core group. Primordial imagery is what gives power to this process. That such prejudice or primordial imagery is contested or constructed does not diminish its power. Instead, it is the image of such prejudice coming out of the

72 Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 16, 74.
past that gives to elites such a powerful tool. In terms of the psychology of scapegoating, it is what makes the subject group “visible” and vulnerable.\footnote{Richard D. Ashmore, “The Problem of Intergroup Prejudice” in Barry E. Collins, ed., Social Psychology (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1970), 270.}

Contradictions of Exclusion

Exclusive nationalism does serve the interests of the state in forging and bolstering the allegiance of its core constituency, without which the polity would lose its legitimacy. It and its economy might not survive. Seeking that consequence is the cause of state action. But I do not mean to suggest that exclusive nationalism is static or emerges systemically as a coherent and uniform response by a strong state. That would be too robust or efficient an image of historical processes. At the same time, it is too mechanical an explanation to account for ferocious and deadly outcomes.\footnote{See Hall, Governing the Economy, 6; James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, Rediscovering Institutions (New York: Free Press, 1989), 3; Guibernau, Nationalisms.} Indeed, the state often is itself uncertain, wavering, divided, and challenged by real social pressures. But those divisive pressures may lead state elites at pivotal moments to purposefully, if fitfully, find a resolution to internal divisions with strategic actors making choices within constrained repertoires. Antagonisms within the core often continue nonetheless, as reflected by local tensions and party or class competition, which reinforce the ongoing logic or causal chain of selective nationalism refined in an iterative fashion as a salve for unity. But this outcome emerges from real actors acting intentionally to resolve real problems.

In a sense, my argument fits the criteria for functionalist causality described by Arthur Stinchcombe.\footnote{Arthur L. Stinchcombe, Constructing Social Theories (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 99.} Different behaviors, as in different forms of exclusion, have the same consequence of unity. As situations change, for instance, with more or less antagonism within the core, so does state policy vary between more or less exclusion; but it still aims at fostering allegiance. The more there are intracore tensions blocking this outcome, the more the policy of exclusion is reinforced to unify that core, in a feedback loop. The official reasons for such a policy are generally erratic and unconvincing, referring more to prejudice than to the imperative for core unity.

As much as selective nationalism may serve for a time to build cohesion, in the longer term it may also create its own challenges as an unintended or dysfunctional consequence. Purposeful exclusion may forge and unify a core constituency. Lewis Coser argues that resulting social conflict that appears harmful may in retrospect appear functional after it has been forged.\footnote{Lewis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (Glencoe IL: Free Press, 1956).} Over time, however, such exclusion also gradually unifies and provokes the strategic protest of its victims, creating vulnerabilities not as evident if exclusion were
applied only to foreigners. State actors may make exclusionary deals at crucial moments, but resulting discrimination or codification then becomes part of the infrastructure shaping responses and creating new and unforeseen problems. Institutionalized discrimination shapes the contingent identity of those victimized in a relationship of exclusion, whose cultural understandings are forged by that historical experience.77 “Outsiders” within then push to become “insiders,” often resorting to violence to overcome their codified exclusion. State policy thus creates its own adversaries, as the logic of “political opportunity structures” suggests.78 As Elie Kedourie powerfully concludes, “the attempts to re-shape so much of the world on national lines has not led to greater peace and stability,” at least in the longer run. “On the contrary, it has created new conflicts, exacerbated tensions, and brought catastrophe to numberless people.”79

Again we can illustrate how exclusion can have unintended consequences in fostering counter efforts. Muslims in India resent efforts at their exclusion, though they have been mollified by the BJP’s constraints, and the lack of more rigid discrimination has produced little protest response. Afro-Brazilians have a long history of attempts at protest mobilization, forcing recent discussions of affirmative action, though again the relatively limited form of exclusion has generated a similarly limited protest response.80 Black South Africans and Americans pressed for inclusion through the anti-apartheid and civil rights movements.81 France’s Huguenots resisted their exclusion from afar, notably the Netherlands. Their claims for equal treatment informed the toleration enacted by the French Revolution. England’s Catholics resisted their exclusion and forced the end of the Test Acts in 1829. Irish Catholics continue their resistance.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Official allocations of rights, demarcating who is part of the nation and obliged to serve and be served by the state, have often been internally exclusive. States have thus encouraged selective loyalty rather than uniform allegiance within a territory. The imagined community of the nation has been purposefully constrained by policies or practices bounding who is part of that community. The exclusion of specified “others” has been central to such imaginings rather than tangential, providing a referent unifying those selectively included in the nation-state and thereby solidifying crucial support for states. Most notably, states

81 George M. Fredrickson, Black Liberation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Marx, Making Race and Nation.
have used exclusion as a tool for nation-building, encouraging nationalist loyalty of a specified core constituency by allowing or encouraging exclusions of some other group, which selectively and instrumentally builds upon historical prejudice. The more extreme of such policies has then had unintended consequences, reinforcing major social cleavages along the lines of official exclusion, consolidating subordinated identities, and often provoking their resistance.

This argument has been reinforced and refined here by a preliminary discussion of illustrative cases of how exclusion has been used to forge an alliance of nationalism. And in all these cases, such solutions did not emerge at one time but were instead revised in response to ongoing challenges. Within this framework, a number of patterns emerge. The more violent conflict has, does, or is perceived to present a profound threat to the polity, economy, or ruling elites, then the more likely and stricter will be efforts to avoid or heal such conflict through exclusion of some “others.” Fears of more explosive conflict have been met by allowing or encouraging informal discrimination, as in Brazil or India, but with exclusion remaining relatively limited. Where such violent conflict exploded, with threats to the unified polity defeated but remaining a threat, more strict exclusions and denials of rights have been legally codified, as in South Africa and the United States. Violent conflict among elite factions vying over the construction of central state authority have been resolved through legal restrictions and forced assimilation or expulsion, as in early modern France or England. While these early examples of exclusion predate state capacity for more finely tuned policy, they suggest the applicability of my argument and the imperative for building national cohesion to an era before state and nation were fully institutionalized.

The specific group excluded reflects both the salience of a particular historical prejudice shared by a potential core constituency and a strategic assessment by elites of which prejudice so encouraged or encoded will unify that core with minimum collateral damage. Exclusion of blacks in Brazil, South Africa or the United States, Muslims in India, Protestants in early modern France, or Catholics in early modern England all did serve to unify a core constituency of whites, Hindus, Catholics, or Protestants. Exclusions of other ethnic, racial, or class groups risked losing crucial components of a viable national core.

It is suggestive to note that in none of the examples discussed here was nationalism forged on the basis of an exclusion by class by itself. Elites seeking to solidify national allegiance do so in large part in order to ensure that conflict does not impede economic activity from which those elites benefit. For instance, economically important ethnic groups, such as Jews in nineteenth-century Europe or overseas Chinese, are often spared from full-scale exclusion, though not always: France’s Huguenots, England’s Catholics, and India’s Muslims were economically important but still excluded. To exclude from the nation an entire class, not just an ethnic faction thereof, risks economic dysfunction, as indicated by the travails of those countries that have sought effectively to exclude all capitalists. Instead, where social conflict has superimposed class
and ethnic or racial antagonisms, an ethnic or racial group rather than class per se has been excluded in an effort to adhere to the core other factions of this class.

Where social conflict was more starkly based on class antagonism alone, no group was excluded and a more supposedly civic form of nationalism was built as a form of class compromise. For instance, Mexico around 1910 experienced a violent internal revolution, but postrevolution reconciliation was not based upon any official exclusions of “others.” After the 1920s, Mexico’s ruling party did not represent only the peasants or landed elite, but instead sought compromise that combined limited land reforms with capitalism.

The implication is that class as a social category is less amenable to strategic exclusion, not just in terms of economic requirements. For class based on economic status does not have the primordial imagery of race or ethnicity, which provides greater salience for building national unity. Race and ethnicity are projected and felt as more fixed, more prone to tension and distrust, more amenable to instrumental antagonism, even if they are constructed rather than ascriptive. The very language of ethnicity and race refers to such primordialism, hiding the role of the state and implying boundaries, which remain despite fluidity. Class by itself does not have this implication. Perhaps the assumed changeable nature of economic disparity, allowing for compromise, leaves class per se less salient than cleavages that are projected as more primordial, fixed, or zero-sum. Certainly, ethnicity appears to often “trump” class. The seemingly less ascriptive nature of class—belief in potential class mobility, cooptation of working-class leadership, middle-class ambivalence, and the “extralegal processes” of class differentiation—may diminish its applicability to the logic of exclusionary nationalism, at least in capitalist countries.

Beyond the distinctiveness of class, we should acknowledge that this argument does not account for all forms of legal exclusion or discrimination. Most notably, state power has often developed with the formal exclusion of women from voting or from rights and duties of citizenship, including military service. Perhaps such gender exclusion provided a template for later, more instrumental forms of exclusion. But often women were so excluded for such instrumental purposes. For instance, in Africa women have often been used as scapegoats by political leaders, who attack women traders or those in modern dress in order to divert attention and conflict over more general economic failure. Urban women

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83 Fearon and Laitin. “Explaining Interethnic Cooperation.”
84 Fredrick Barth, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (Boston: Little Brown, 1969).
often fit the criteria of scapegoats as highly visible, powerless, and seemingly expendable. But we must be careful not to extend the logic of this argument too far, nor to suggest that nation-building explains all cleavages or forms of exclusion.

Finally, the argument outlined here also has important potential implications for the study of democracy, which can only be suggestive at this point. In a major contribution to the literature, Dankwart Rustow argued that national unity was a prerequisite to democracy. The assumption was that such national unity would be inclusive of all within a state’s territory. But I have here argued that such national unity is often exclusive, and when so, it similarly limits inclusion in democracy. Just as nationalism can be exclusive, so can and has been democracy, for boundaries about inclusion in the nation also set boundaries on the rights and privileges associated with democracy, thereby setting the terms for conflicts over inclusion within democracy as well. The liberal assumption of inclusion is then as problematic for democracy as for nationalism.

Conclusions

Analysis of nationalism has often been divided between those focusing on hot-blooded assertion of difference and cold-blooded analysis of strategic interest. To resolve this Gordian knot of nationalism, we must focus on institutionalized outcomes. Ira Katznelson suggests that institutions reify identities often based on or referring to culture, and shape the groups who then seek to maximize their interests within the rules of the institution. Institutions are built and confer identities by polarizing and excluding, though such institutions are themselves caused or built on grounds of identity and interests.

Nationhood is such an institution, as it is codified in more or less formal rules ranging from allowing discrimination, to selective allocation of rights, to forced assimilation or expulsion. These rules are often built on the focal point of cultural/historical divides or conflicts, and then they reinforce and simplify these distinctions. These distinctions in turn become the basis for group interests and collective action. The nation is a set of relations, which not surprisingly refer to inclusion and exclusion. As such, nationhood constitutes the rules that reinforce identity and codify the preferences, which then form the basis for strategic calculation.


The argument presented here is an attempt to combine and refine prior efforts and approaches. Liberals assume nationalism to be inclusive or based on essentialist ethnicity. Others have stressed the imagining of community reinforced by language. Theorists informed by modernization assumptions about the imperatives for economic development similarly see nationalism as inclusive. Yet nationalism is often not so fixed or inclusive. Instead, exclusions have been encouraged or codified by dominant structures that pursue their interest in cohesion and control by building upon prior conflicts and beliefs about identity. The power of nationalism is drawn from its being both hot and cold blooded. It builds on historical passions to serve modern interests as a state-enforced simplification of cohesion.91

Given that “ontology recapitulates methodology” only by including such varied forms of cultural and interest-based analysis can we account for the essence of processes.92 Otherwise, we will remain partial in our understanding and divided by prior assumptions. Progress in the substantive, historical study of nationalism, and in social science more generally, requires that we learn to borrow from various approaches and recognize that human behavior is drawn from as wide a mix of motivations as there are schools of analysis.

I have sought to demonstrate that only by so incorporating varying approaches can we account for the history of nation-building, the most prominent element of mass political engagement during the last half millenium. Efforts to cohere nations from above or below emerged in the context of varying degrees of conflict, with efforts to resolve such conflict building upon both culturally informed passions and strategic machinations. These combined processes not only account for the emergence of political units of allegiance to states, but also for the on-going conflicts and exclusions according to which such units were solidified. The legacies of these processes still plague us, as reflected both in on-going inequalities where nations have been so cohered, and also in the current conflicts and exclusions evident in more recent efforts to build nations or allegiances where they have not been forged earlier. We are not yet free of the inheritances of our past, reverberating and replayed in current tragedies. Such is the awful legacy of the age of the nation-state, which we now fitfully seek to move beyond.*

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