



THE DERECOGNITION OF STATES

By Gëzim Visoka

Although a great deal is known about the recognition of states, less is known about the practice of derecognition of states, namely why and how states withdraw the recognition of other contested and partially recognized states. *The Derecognition of States* offers a global and comparative outlook of this unexplored diplomatic practice. Using original empirical research, it addresses the complex processes, justifications, and consequences of state derecognition. In particular, it provides unique insights into five aspirant states facing withdrawal of recognition: Taiwan, Western Sahara, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Kosovo.

Gëzim Visoka argues that state derecognition is a highly controversial and unstable practice that has less to do with the unfulfillment of the conditions of statehood by the claimant than with the advancement of the self-interest of the former base state and derecognizing state. The derecognition of states is not a rule; rather, it is an exception in international diplomacy, driven by political expediency and is incompatible with original rationales for granting recognition. Yet, the derecognition of states is far more important than previously recognized in shaping the reversal dynamics of secession and state creation and in influencing regional peace, geopolitical rivalries, and the international order. By analyzing the withdrawal of recognition, the book offers a window into the reversal politics of unbecoming a sovereign state and how the arbitrary beginning and the end of diplomatic relations between states take place.

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"*The Derecognition of States* offers an in-depth account of derecognition and contributes to debates on contested, de facto states as well as conflict studies."

—George Kyris, University of Birmingham

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