
Diasporas and International Relations Theory

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A recent study by the World Bank concludes that “by far the strongest effect of war on the risk of subsequent war works through diasporas. After five years of postconflict peace, *the risk of renewed conflict is around six times higher in the societies with the largest diasporas in America* than in those without American diasporas. Presumably this effect works through the financial contributions of diasporas to rebel organizations.”¹ This is perhaps the strongest formal indication of the influence of diasporas on the international scene, but it is far from being the only one. Both media reports and academic studies point to the influence of diasporas on international behavior in many cases, such as the Armenians, Chinese, Croats, Cubans, Indians, Iranians, Irish, Jews, Palestinians, Sikhs, and Tamils. These diasporas and many others have influenced world affairs in numerous ways, passive and active, constructive and destructive.² In this article we focus on one aspect of such influence: diasporas as independent actors that actively influence homeland (ancestral or kin-state) foreign policies.

Diasporas’ impact is being felt as part of the process of migration and the problem of refugees. Furthermore, as national minorities, diasporas serve as political conduits for conflict and intervention. Diasporas may become the pretext for state-sponsored irredentism—the effort by a homeland government to “recover” territory populated by ethnic kin in a nearby state.³ Theoretically, diasporas have been posited as challenging traditional state institutions of citizenship and loyalty,⁴ and as an important feature of the relationship between domestic and international

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1. Collier and Hoeffler 2000 (emphasis added).
2. Sheffer 1986.
3. See King and Melvin 1999/2000; and Mandelbaum 2000.
4. Østergaard-Nielsen 2000.

politics.⁵ Above all, they are regarded as a force in identity formation. Because they reside outside their kin-state but claim a legitimate stake in it, diasporas defy the conventional meaning of the state. They are therefore defined as the “paradigmatic Other of the nation-state,”⁶ as challengers of its traditional boundaries,⁷ as transnational transporters of cultures,⁸ and as manifestations of “de-territorialized communities.”⁹

Diasporas also operate as ethnic lobbies in liberal hostlands (countries of domicile), and as advocates of a multicultural foreign policy.¹⁰ They campaign to democratize authoritarian homeland regimes¹¹ and are a force in the global economy assisting homelands’ economies.¹² More generally, diasporas are increasingly able to promote transnational ties, to act as bridges or as mediators between their home and host societies, and to transmit the values of pluralism and democracy as well as the “entrepreneurial spirit and skills that their home countries so sorely lack.”¹³ Yet diasporic influence is not always constructive. Diasporic activists may be a major source of violence and instability in their homeland.¹⁴ A recent RAND study argues that in the post–Cold War era, with foreign governmental support to insurgency declining, diasporas have become a key factor in sustaining insurgencies.¹⁵ Just as diasporas can be advocates of peace processes, so too can they be spoilers.¹⁶ Diasporas often support homeland struggles against neighboring states, or kin-communities’ struggles to obtain statehood.¹⁷ Their help may be critical to nation-building and state consolidation in the homelands, making the views of the diaspora regarding national conflict a weighty factor in the deliberations of homeland leaders.¹⁸ Diasporas may also constitute actors in what Samuel Huntington termed the “clash of civilizations,” and can even broaden the conflict by importing it to hostlands or by dealing in international crime and terrorism.¹⁹ Clearly, diasporas matter.²⁰

Given their importance, and their status as a permanent feature in the imperfect nation-state system,²¹ diasporas now receive growing attention from decision

5. See Koslowsky 1999; Shain 2002b.

6. Tölölyan 1991.

7. Cohen 1997.

8. Clifford 1992.

9. Smith 1993.

10. See Saideman 2001; Shain 1995; and Smith 2000.

11. See Shain 1993, 1994, 1994/1995, and 1999; and Weiner 1993.

12. See Desipio 2000; Gillespie, Sayre, and Riddle 2001; and Shain and Sherman 2001.

13. Naim 2002, 95.

14. Weiner and Teitelbaum 2001.

15. RAND 2001.

16. Shain and Wittes 2003.

17. Al-Ali, Balck, and Koser 2001.

18. Woodward 2000, 162.

19. See Huntington 1996; Sheffer 1994; and Weiner 1995.

20. “Diasporas: A World of Exiles,” *Economist*, 2 January 2003.

21. See Connor 1986; and Shain and Sherman 1998.

makers around the world. So, too, the study of diasporas nowadays constitutes a growing intellectual industry, with numerous academic conferences and writings devoted to the subject. Yet despite increasing recognition of the importance of diasporas in international affairs, there has not been, to our knowledge, any serious attempt to incorporate this phenomenon into international relations (IR) theory. This article seeks to fill this void. How can IR theories help to better understand diasporic activities, and how can the study of diasporic international activities enrich existing IR approaches?

We argue that diasporic activities can be better understood by setting their study in the ‘theoretical space’ shared by constructivism and liberalism. Because of their unique status, diasporas—geographically outside the state, but identity-wise perceived (by themselves, the homeland, or others) as ‘inside the people’—attach great importance to kinship identity. Given their international location, diasporas are aptly suited to manipulate international images and thus to focus attention on the issue of identity. Once triggered, this dynamic can be used to influence foreign policy decision making. This is done, *inter alia*, by engaging in the domestic politics of the homeland. Diasporas exert influence on homelands when the latter are ‘weak’ (in the permeable sense of the word), tilting the ‘balance of power’ in favor of the former. To varying degrees, both constructivism and liberalism acknowledge the impact of both identity and domestic interaction on international behavior. We identify this overlap as a shared theoretical space, which can best explain the phenomenon we study. Constructivism seeks to account for actors’ identities, motives, and preferences, while liberalism deals largely with explaining their actions once the preferences are settled.

Beyond emphasizing the contribution of constructivism and liberalism to the understanding of diasporic activities, we also offer ways in which the study of diasporic activities can enrich both approaches. Diasporas are among the most prominent actors that link international and domestic spheres of politics. Their identity-based motivation should therefore be an integral part of the constructivist effort to explain the construction of national identities. Furthermore, diasporic activities and influence in the homeland, despite their international location, expand the meaning of the term ‘domestic politics’ to include not only politics inside the state but also inside the people. For the liberal approach, this is a “new fact” in the Lakatosian sense of the word. Both approaches can and should use the diasporic perspective to deepen the explanations of the phenomena on which they focus.

In the first section, after defining the term *diaspora*, we offer typologies of diasporic international roles and interests. We choose to focus on the role we consider the most theoretically interesting: diasporas as independent actors exerting influence on homeland foreign policies. The second section incorporates the diaspora factor into IR theory, placing it at the meeting point between the constructivist emphasis on identity, which explains the motives of diasporas, and the liberal focus on domestic politics, which explains their venue of influence. The third section theorizes about factors affecting the success or failure of diasporic attempts to impact homeland foreign policies. The fourth section presents the Armenian

case study, and the final section, by way of conclusion, offers a comparison of Jewish and Armenian cases and recommendations for further research.

Throughout the article we use illustrative examples, mainly drawn from the Jewish-Israeli interaction. This case may be seen as a fully developed paradigm of relations between diasporas and their homelands, portions of which often reflect other diaspora-homeland experiences that do not (perhaps, as yet) exhibit the same level of evolution. This, of course, does not indicate that other cases are qualitatively different, but rather that they manifest only part of the full range of the paradigmatic diaspora-homeland nexus. Moreover, the case of the Jewish-Israeli interaction is often viewed and singled out by other diasporas and their kin-states as a model to be emulated.²² In the fourth section, we found it instructive to apply our theoretical insight by delving into Armenia's relations with its diaspora. This case offers a within-case variance in diasporic impact on homeland foreign policy. The comparison with the Jewish-Israeli case also illuminates the variation in the impact of diasporas on homelands' foreign policy.

Although the two cases share many similarities in terms of relations between the homeland and the diaspora, their respective abilities to impact homeland foreign policy diverge significantly. This difference derives from four main elements, on which this article elaborates: permeability of the homeland (state, government, and society); perception of the diaspora by the homeland (and vice versa); the balance of power between the two; and the cohesion of diaspora voices regarding homeland foreign policy.

Diasporic Roles and Interests

We define *diaspora* as a people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland—whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control. Diaspora members identify themselves, or are identified by others—inside and outside their homeland—as part of the homeland's national community, and as such are often called upon to participate, or are entangled, in homeland-related affairs.²³

Members of mobilized diasporas may be divided into three categories: core members, passive members, and silent members. Core members are the organizing elites, intensively active in diasporic affairs and in a position to appeal for mobilization of the larger diaspora. Passive members are likely to be available for mobilization when the active leadership calls upon them. Silent members are a larger pool of people who are generally uninvolved in diasporic affairs (in the discursive and political life of its institutions), but who may mobilize in times of crisis. They are

22. See Cohen 1997, 51; Safran 1991; and Weil 1974.

23. Shain 1989. It is important to remember that the notion of a homeland (and a hostland) is theoretically useful but not a precise term that carries connotations of loyalty, belonging, and obligation.

mostly part of the 'imagined community,' to use Benedict Anderson's expression, often existing only in the minds of diasporic political activists, as well as those of home or host governments.²⁴

Diasporic Roles

Following Milton Esman's early typology,²⁵ we collapse his seven classes of diasporic activity into two major types—active and passive—which then create three role-types of diaspora in the international arena.

First, diasporas can be passive actors when they are interjected into international relations not by their own doing. This may happen for three different reasons. First, it may occur when a diaspora is in need of foreign help vis-à-vis its hostland (for example, assisting Syrian Jews to be allowed to immigrate). A second scenario is when homelands may aspire to represent "their people," including those residing outside the state, regardless of the inclination of diasporic members to be thus represented. While at times authentic, these claims may also be aimed at reinforcing ties between an empowered kin abroad and a needy homeland, or at gaining leverage over internal or external affairs of weak neighbors. To illustrate, an important factor in assessing the policies of the Russian Federation toward the newly independent non-Russian successor states is the position of the ethnic Russian diasporas in the "near abroad."²⁶ Yet a third kind of passive circumstance is when diasporas cannot control their status as perceived members of a remote homeland, and thus become implicated in the homeland's international affairs. The terror attack allegedly perpetrated by the *Hizbullah*—with Iranian backing—against the Jewish community in Argentina in 1994, within the context of the conflict in Lebanon, is a case in point.²⁷

Under all the above circumstances, diasporas play a passive role. The active actors are the homelands or other states. Academic analysis of these cases belongs, therefore, to the 'standard' IR scholarship dealing with foreign policy and international behavior. We shall, therefore, not deal with this role-type in this essay.

Second, diasporas can be active actors, influencing the foreign policies of their hostlands. Diasporas, especially those in liberal-democratic societies, often organize as interest groups in order to influence the foreign policy of their hostland vis-à-vis their homelands. Indeed, this phenomenon is best exemplified in the United States, where, it has even been argued, the power of various ethnic lobbies has

24. Iwńska 1981. Some of the factors affecting the propensity of diasporas to engage in homeland external affairs include the demographic size of the diaspora, its cohesion, its institutional ability to generate a sense of communal identity and sustain it over time, migration politics and the foreign policy of host states, and the homeland legal and ideological approach to outside nationals. All of these factors are always in flux; see Shain 1999, 9–12.

25. Esman 1986, 340–43.

26. Zvelev 2000.

27. *New York Times*, 22 July 2002.

brought about a fragmentation of American foreign policy.²⁸ When addressing the relations between ethnic American lobbies and American national interest, Samuel Huntington and Tony Smith have recently warned against the narrow policy agenda of diasporas that “promote the interests of people and entities outside the United States,”²⁹ and undermine the nation’s “common good.”³⁰ Others, however, challenge the view that ethnic lobbies and transnational ties threaten the coherence of U.S. foreign policy or endanger U.S. national security. They see ethnic lobbies as part of American pluralism or as counterweights to traditional political elites.³¹ Again, there is an extensive body of literature on this topic (albeit apparently focused almost exclusively on the American case).³² Therefore, we shall not deal with this role-type either.

Third, diasporas can also be active actors, influencing the foreign policies of their homelands. Diasporas that achieve economic and political power can, and do, directly affect the foreign policies of their homelands. Diasporas may be the source for recruits, funding, or arms for violent activities on behalf of their kin-states, and can thus play a crucial role in homelands’ decisions to continue fighting or to adopt accommodating policies. Diasporas also exert direct influence through political proxies at home (for example, Armenian or Taiwanese parties). Above all, they may achieve leverage at home by economic means, whether through investments in national projects or through political contributions. In Israel, political contributions have significantly influenced electoral results.³³

This article focuses solely on this role-type of diasporas, as actively influencing the foreign policies of homelands. We do so because this role-type is the least theoretically developed of the three. We posit diasporic activity as the independent variable and foreign policies of homelands as the dependent variable.

Diasporic Interests

As groups ostensibly external to the state, what interest(s) do diasporas have in the foreign policies of their homelands? There are four possible motivations for wishing to exert influence on the homeland. These motives are not mutually exclusive and are often intertwined. The motives may be focused ‘over-there’—

28. Clough 1994.

29. Huntington 1997, 38.

30. Smith 2000.

31. See Shain 1999; Weiner and Teitelbaum 2001, 78; and Lindsay 2002.

32. Even though other countries of immigrants, such as Germany and France, are becoming more susceptible to diasporic influences, the American case (and perhaps the Canadian) remains quite unique in its accessibility and incorporation of diasporic voices. Indeed, even Germany, has started to see the first seeds of such involvement—despite its deep rooted ethnic-based nationalism and its semicorporatist approach in domestic politics to social contracting between state and social institutions. Yet because of its institutional and ideological design, Germany still restrains diasporic lobbying of its government. Thus, large diasporas have little influence over German foreign policy even when they are cohesive in their demands, and well organized. See Ögelman, Money, and Martin 2002, 154.

33. See Beilin 2000, 74; and Shain and Sherman 2001.

outside the hostland (first two types), or ‘over-here’—inside the hostland (last two types).

First, diasporas might view the homeland’s foreign policy as having an impact on the interests of “the people” (the entire kin community inside and outside the homeland). This community’s interests may take a number of forms: a definition of identity (what Martin Buber called a “vocation of uniqueness”³⁴), feelings of solidarity and kinship (for example, the struggle over the right to immigration for Soviet Jews in the early 1970s), maintenance of memory (for example, Armenians and the genocide memory), or financial considerations (for example, policies regarding repayment of Holocaust debts). It is with the first possibility—interest in a definition of the people’s identity—that we offer a theoretical ‘twist’ to the constructivist approach. Identity does not always determine interests, as constructivism posits;³⁵ sometimes identity is the interest. For some diasporas, the people’s identity is not the starting point to be captured in order to influence interests, practices, and policies; identity is both the starting and the end point. In such cases, the only interest is to assert, through the homeland’s foreign policy, a preferred version of kinship and national identity. For example, during the early days of the first Palestinian *intifada* (1987–88), many American Jews preferred to project an identity image commensurate with their perception that “Jews do not break bones.” They therefore pressured Israel to adopt a more moderate response to the Palestinian uprising. Similarly, in August 2002, Britain’s chief rabbi Jonathan Sacks questioned Israeli activities in the occupied territories that he considered “incompatible with Judaism.”³⁶

Second, diasporas may have a strong stake in the ways the homeland’s foreign policy affects the homeland’s future (as separate from the people). Obviously, the interests of the homeland, its existence, its well-being, and its international alliances are ultimately the concern of its government, and thus diasporas are mostly reactive in this domain. Yet diasporas perceive certain policies as either enhancing or endangering the homeland’s security. This is important for diasporas, either in real terms (that is, the homeland as a place they can always move to, should conditions in hostlands become unfriendly, or for less existential reasons), or in terms of their vision of the homeland’s mythical standing (that is, as a place that helps them sustain their fading ethnic identity in an assimilating environment).³⁷

34. Kotkin 1992, 30.

35. Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 60.

36. Yet because Sacks’ words were uttered at a time when anti-Semitism was rising, and Israel and Jewish security worldwide were perceived to be under assault, the chief rabbi was quickly castigated by other Jewish leaders for disloyalty and self-abasement. A 28 August 2002 *Jerusalem Post* editorial calling for Sacks’s resignation expressed another dimension of this position—disgust at the arrogance and pretentiousness of diaspora Jews living a safe distance from the daily dangers Israelis face, agonizing and moralizing about Israeli behavior as though they had something to teach Israelis about moral reflection and the pursuit of justice. “Chief Rabbi Says Views Misunderstood,” Reuters news-wire, 29 August 2002.

37. Saideman 2001, 138–41.

Diasporas may therefore try to alter such policies to address their concerns. This, of course, is a product of the diasporic vision of its own ideational and associational links with the homeland, namely the centrality of these links to the diaspora's national and ethnic identity.³⁸

For instance, some have argued that the Jewish-American diaspora should not interfere with Israel's security policy, because its members do not pay in blood for such critical decisions, and because diasporic criticism may provide both comfort for Israel's enemies and 'cover' for political pressure on Israel. Others, however, may see their voices as essential "to save Israel from itself." In fact, such voices—Left and Right—may be solicited by Israeli political leaders as they debate critical issues of national security and state boundaries. It is sometimes even the case that homeland leaders define the issue in terms of kinship ("the people") rather than in terms of the security of the state and its inhabitants, and thus invite diasporic endorsement or criticism of state policy. Such a position was articulated by Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in his address to a large gathering at the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC) 2001 annual meeting. Sharon announced that he considers himself "first and foremost as a Jew," and that he sees himself as having been given a mandate to unify not only Israel but also "Jews worldwide." He further declared that "[t]he future of Israel is not just a matter for Israelis who live there. Israel belongs to the entire Jewish People."³⁹

Third, diasporas might view the homeland's foreign policy as affecting the interests of a specific community. These interests may be almost existential or 'merely' material. In the former case, they include the viability, security, image and standing, and self-perception of the diaspora in the hostland. In such cases, diasporic activists may try to alter the homeland's policy to fit with their own priorities (for example, Jewish-American pressure on Israel to sever its ties with the Apartheid regime in South Africa). In the latter—material—case, the community may even claim to represent the people's interests, including those kin members who are residing in the homeland (for example, the American Jewish Congress' campaign to recover the money of Holocaust victims from Swiss banks). In such a case, the community adopts a 'foreign policy' of its own, going so far as to pressure the homeland 'not to interfere.'

Fourth and last, diasporas might view the homeland's foreign policy as affecting the narrow bureaucratic interests of their organizations. Because diasporic organizations are largely focused on homeland-related affairs, a homeland policy that undermines the worth of the diaspora as an asset to the homeland may threaten diasporic organizations' *raison d'être*. Should the Arab-Israeli conflict be resolved peacefully, for example, AIPAC is likely to see its mission greatly diminished,

38. See Shain 2000; and Weiner and Teitelbaum 2001, 77–78.

39. Cited in Shain and Bristman 2002a.

along with its membership, its funding, and the level of attention it receives from elected officials in Washington.⁴⁰

Diasporas are motivated, then, by four types of interests. ‘Over-there,’ away from the hostland, they may be motivated by the people’s or the homeland’s interests. ‘Over-here,’ in the hostland, they may be motivated by communal or by organizational interests. In any case, all of these motives are based on a perception of shared identity, and may lead diasporas to try and exert influence on the homeland’s foreign policies. How can this phenomenon be incorporated into IR theory?

Diasporas and IR Theory

We focus on how diasporas strive to influence the foreign policies of their homelands through the political process in the homeland. The ‘theoretical space’ in which to locate this phenomenon is where constructivism, with its emphasis on identity, meets liberalism, with its focus on domestic politics. The existence of this shared ‘theoretical space’ should come as no surprise, since the two theoretical approaches share assumptions and claims.⁴¹ On one hand, the liberal approach includes an ideational strand that assumes states’ preferences are “identity-based.”⁴² On the other hand, the constructivist approach claims that identities, and therefore interests, are determined by social interaction—in which domestic actors also participate.⁴³ Furthermore, both constructivism and liberalism share concern for states’ preferences,⁴⁴ perceive states as embedded in a larger social context, and acknowledge the importance of a wide variety of nonstate actors.⁴⁵ Given that diasporas are mainly identity-motivated, that they exert influence on homelands mainly through domestic politics, that they are part of a larger international society, and that they are nonstate actors, this shared ‘theoretical space’ is a sound basis for the incorporation of diasporas into IR theory.

Constructivism and Identity

Unlike the traditional ‘rational’ approaches, constructivism views the state as a social actor. States are not assumed to be solely goal-driven, rational actors, seeking utility maximization, and governed by the “logic of consequences.” Rather, states are also rule-driven role-players, seeking identity expression and governed

40. As one senior diaspora activist explained to the authors, “[w]e are an organization that receives [many] million of dollars a year. We must continue to create issues to satisfy our donors and convince them of our importance.”

41. Thomas Risse-Kappen explicitly offers a “Liberal Constructivist Approach.” Risse-Kappen 1996, 365.

42. Moravcsik 1997, 525.

43. Katzenstein 1996, 4.

44. Although liberalism does not study preferences formation, but rather their aggregation from given interest groups’ preferences.

45. Finnemore 1996, 144–46.

by the “logic of appropriateness.”⁴⁶ Constructivism thus opens up two ‘black boxes.’ First, interests are not assumed to be exogenous and constant, but endogenous and varying; the national interest is a variable influenced mainly by national identity. Furthermore, identity itself is also de-bracketed, because it too is a variable shaped by international and domestic forces.⁴⁷ “Variation in state identity, or changes in state identity, affect interests or policies of states.”⁴⁸ Thus to understand international behavior or foreign policy decision making (the dependent variable), one must look beyond the interests (the intervening variable), and focus on identity and the way it is molded (the independent variable).

What is the nature of this variable, ‘national identity’? At its most basic level, as Alexander Wendt points out, it is a personal or corporate identity: “a consciousness and memory of the Self as a separate locus of thought and activity . . . a joint narrative of the Self as a corporate actor.”⁴⁹ Yet, as Roxanne Doty observes, the identity is actually not of the nation but of ‘the people,’ “who constitute the inside of nations and to whom national identities are attached.”⁵⁰ This observation is very relevant to our discussion, because we posit diasporas as part of the people beyond the scope of the nation-state.

Identity is continuously molded through ecological processes—relations between actors and their environment; social processes—relations between the actors themselves; and internal processes—internal characteristics of the actors.⁵¹ Within the social and internal processes—for example, diffusion or in-group/out-group differentiation—the construction of identity “occurs through discursive practices that attempt to fix meanings that enable the differentiation to be made between the inside and the outside [of the people].”⁵² Yet this discourse should not be understood in ‘academic’ terms. “The process of construction is typically explicitly political and pits conflicting actors against each other.”⁵³ This political process, therefore, is a conflict over the power to determine national identity and thus also policy outcomes in the domestic and international arenas. In constructivist terms, however, power is not merely materially based or resource-oriented, but is mainly “the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests, and practices of states.”⁵⁴ Thus the social and internal forces that shape national identity are those actors that gain leverage over this authority.

Within the context of international relations, of the people/nation vis-à-vis others, William Bloom identifies a process of “national identity dynamic: the tendency among the individuals who [identify with the nation]. . . . to defend and to

46. Checkel 1998, 326–27.

47. See Adler 1997, 334–36; Hopf 1998, 176; and Wendt 1994, 83–85.

48. Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 52.

49. Wendt 1999, 224–27.

50. Doty 1996, 125.

51. Kowert and Legro 1996, 470–75.

52. Doty 1996, 127.

53. Katzenstein 1996, 5–6.

54. Adler 1997, 336.

enhance the shared national identity.” This, of course, is part and parcel of the general political conflict over the determination of national identity. Therefore, “it is a permanent feature of all domestic politics that there be competition to appropriate the national identity dynamic.”⁵⁵ By appropriating the dynamic, an actor gains not only the authority to determine national identity, but also to direct state policies toward being compatible, or seemingly compatible, with the predominant identity. How do diasporas figure into this dynamic?

Doty has observed that “[u]nitary claims to a national identity permit the convergence of the state and the people. However, the convergence is never totally fixed.”⁵⁶ This is so because groups ‘outside’ the people become part of the state (minorities), and groups ‘inside’ the people leave or dwell outside the state or their symbolic homeland (diasporas). Both groups, however, “are constantly raising questions as to who should be considered on the ‘inside,’ that is, the ‘people.’”⁵⁷ Indeed, the Jewish-Israeli case is the quintessential expression of divided and overlapping identities and loyalties. Arab Israelis have often been perceived as *nochachim nifkadim*—those present physically but absent from (membership in) the national community, while diaspora Jews are seen as *nifkadim nochachim*—those absent physically from the state but part of the national community by virtue of Israel’s Jewish character and its Law of Return.⁵⁸

Because national identity is both a variable and a resource (the authority to direct policy), it stands to reason that different groups attach varying importance to it. A resource is usually more valued by those lacking in it. In this case, diasporas—outside the state but inside the people—often attach more importance to national identity than those inside the state. While the insiders experience their national identity in their day-to-day lives, diasporic distinctiveness tends to be fluid and more tenuous. Diasporas thus engage in efforts to shape national identity not so much to gain through it leverage over (material) interests, but mainly because it is their interest to insure and sustain an identity that perpetuates and nourishes their self-image.

Furthermore, in terms of foreign policy, “the national identity dynamic can be triggered by international images manipulated by the government *or* by other actors.”⁵⁹ Once triggered, it may be used to influence foreign policy decision making. Diasporas, given their ‘international location,’ are aptly suited to be precisely these “other actors.” Thus constructivism helps us to better understand identity-based diasporic international activities.

55. Bloom 1990, 79–81.

56. Doty 1996, 125.

57. Ibid., 127. While Doty apparently focuses on ‘outside’ elements, her insight is also applicable to ‘inside’ groups, that is, diasporic communities. Furthermore, it should be noted that ‘inside’ claims by diasporic elements are based only on an ethnic notion of membership; a civic notion, by contrast, negates any claim of membership on the basis of kinship.

58. Shain and Bristman 2002b.

59. Bloom 1990, 79–81 (emphasis in the original).

Diasporas have both the motive and the opportunity to exert influence on the identity construction process, especially in its foreign policy facet. Thus constructivists dealing with this political process should factor in diasporas as actors who are highly motivated and able to engage in the competition over identity construction. This is the manner in which the study of diasporas enriches the constructivist approach, and it should be part of constructivism's response to Yosef Lapid's justified critique that "IR's fascination with sovereign statehood has greatly decreased its ability to confront issues of ethnic nationhood and political otherhood."⁶⁰ Diasporic input should be factored in even though it is difficult to classify diasporas as purely domestic actors. But then, as Peter Katzenstein puts it, "often social environments that affect state identity link international and domestic environments in a way that defies the reification of distinct domestic and international spheres of politics."⁶¹ Indeed, diasporas defy this reification by engaging in the domestic politics of homelands.

Liberalism and Domestic Politics

Liberalism rejects the conventional assumptions that states are the primary actors in international affairs and that they are unitary. Instead, it posits that the primary actors in international politics are individuals and private groups who struggle to promote different interests. The state, then, is not an independent actor, but rather a representative of the transient coalition that has captured it. Consequentially, states do not automatically seek fixed interests (security, power, or prosperity, as neorealism, realism, or institutionalism claim). Rather, they pursue particular interests preferred by the specific coalition currently in power.⁶²

According to the liberal approach, the degree of influence that domestic actors may exert on foreign policy depends on the strength of relations between the state (political institutions) and its society (social organizations). The weaker the former and the stronger the latter, the more influence various groups will exert on governmental policies. In this context, a 'weak' state is a state highly permeable to societal influences on its decision-making process (the United States and its 'inviting' constitutional process being a quintessential example). Indeed, Matthew Evangelista highlights the connection between this approach and constructivism, asserting that the "interaction between a country's domestic structure and the historically derived normative understandings embodied in its society" (that is, between domestic politics and identity construction) is of particular importance.⁶³

Diasporas either interject themselves or are interjected into this political process, and they should be viewed as one of many domestic interest groups.

60. Lapid 1996, 10.

61. Katzenstein 1996, 23–25.

62. Moravcsik 1997, 516–17.

63. Evangelista 1997, 217–23.

'Domestic' here does not carry the conventional meaning of non-international. Diasporas, more often than not, are considered by the homelands to be domestic actors even though they are outside the nation-state, because they are (as noted above) 'inside the people.' This is the manner in which the study of diasporas enriches the liberal approach; it expands the meaning of the key term 'domestic.' On the other hand, by applying (in this and in the next section) liberal insights about the dynamics of domestic politics, liberalism helps one to better understand the influence of diasporas on homelands.

Diasporas, as other transnational actors, thus enjoy a privileged status of exerting influence as an interest group in both the homeland and the hostland, often affecting the homeland *because of* influence in the hostland (as is analyzed in the next section).⁶⁴ In any case, as interest groups, diasporas may use whatever clout they can to advance their interests. As do other interest groups, they use their financial resources, especially because members of diasporas are usually richer than their counterparts at home. Aside from exerting indirect influence through donations to various 'civil society' projects, diasporas exert more direct influence through political contributions to parties and candidates of their choice. In many cases, their financial input is perceived as justifying a political voice. Jewish diasporic donors often maintain that their voices should not be ignored by Israel while their wealth is solicited. Some Israelis agree that, "since 'taxation' is implicitly imposed, 'representation' is only fair."⁶⁵

In the use of financial clout, diasporas are similar to other interest groups. However, unlike 'conventional' interest groups, they can also use their diplomatic value as interest groups in the hostlands. Diasporas also differ from other interest groups in the electoral realm. Because they are not physically present in the homeland, they have not historically enjoyed direct electoral influence—that is, they have not had actual votes. This, however, is changing. Taking notice of the growing financial and political clout of their diasporas, homelands are courting them by creating ministries or departments for diasporic affairs—and more importantly, by allowing dual citizenship, thus encouraging expatriate voting rights.⁶⁶ This tendency serves to highlight the domestic politics aspect of diasporic activity.⁶⁷

64. Diasporas are not alone in this favored position. Robert Putnam, when offering his two-level model, observed that "in some cases, the same actor may appear at more than one Level II (domestic) table;" see Putnam 1988, 459. Putnam was referring to transnational and multinational actors (NGOs, MNCs, etc.) who may appear at many Level II tables. Diasporic communities, as transnational interest groups, appear—like other transnational actors—at more than one table. However, unlike others, they will have interest only in tables representing countries that impact diasporic issues.

65. Susser 1997, 8.

66. One examples of this phenomenon is Turkey; see Østergaard-Nielsen 2000. The phenomenon is most prevalent in a host of Latin American countries: Columbia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, and Peru; see Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994, 467.

67. Weiner and Teitelbaum 2001, 80–81.

Yet beyond seeking to advance their interests, diasporas have an additional role in the domestic political process. Helen Milner, from a liberal perspective, posits an ongoing polyarchic struggle between the executive, the legislature, and interest groups over power and preferences. She highlights the critical role that information plays in this process. *Ceteris paribus*, the executive enjoys an advantage of access to information over the legislature. However, in the domestic political process, interest groups are not just pressure groups; they are also information-providers for the legislature. In this role, they act as signalers, “alerting political actors to the consequences of various policies.”⁶⁸ Just as diasporas, given their ‘international location,’ are aptly suited to trigger a national identity dynamic by manipulating international images (as mentioned above), so too are they important as providers of information on the international impact of foreign policy. American Jews were very influential in changing Israeli policy toward South Africa in the mid-1980s. Their motivation was fueled by concerns ‘over-here’ and ‘over-there’.⁶⁹

To conclude: diasporas are interest groups participating in the domestic political process of the homeland. As such, they seek to advance their identity-based interests, both directly through lobbying and indirectly by providing information to the institutional actors. Furthermore, given their international location, they are singularly (among interest groups) important to the homeland government as tools of influence *vis-à-vis* foreign governments. Analyzing this relationship between diasporas and homeland governments will explicate the potential efficacy of diasporic activity.

Factors Affecting the Efficacy of Diasporic Activity

In order for a diaspora to exert influence on a homeland’s foreign policy, there should exist motive, opportunity, and means; that is, a diaspora should both want to exert influence and have the capacity to do so. This capacity depends on the ability to organize members of the kin community as an influential group (which depends in part on the nature of the hostland regime), and on the receptivity of the homeland’s political system to diasporic influence. Thus the factors affecting the efficacy of diasporic influence include the degree of diasporic motivation, the social-political nature of both the hostland and the homeland, and the strength relations (‘balance of power’) between the diaspora and the homeland. All of these factors are interconnected.

68. Milner 1997, 3–66.

69. Jewish activists provided Israel’s foreign office with warnings, gradually increasing in volume and urgency, that Israel’s ties with the Apartheid regime were fueling growing opposition to its interests, in the administration and Congress, and undermining Jewish relations with the African-American community; see Shain 1999, 148–51.

Degree of Motivation

As noted above, the identity-based motivation element is not dichotomous: different diasporas have, across time and issues, varying degrees of motivation to influence their homeland's foreign policy. Furthermore, within each diaspora there might be significant differentiation between groups, usually varying according to their position vis-à-vis the identity issue. Diasporic activists may be motivated by 'over-there'—interests of the people and/or of the homeland, or by 'over-here'—interests of their community and/or of their organization.

A number of factors may counter potential motivation to influence the homeland. One is the problem—or perceived problem—of dual loyalty. For example, during the 1956 Suez campaign, American-Israeli relations deteriorated because of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's demand that Israel withdraw its forces from the Sinai peninsula. Nahum Goldman, President of the World Jewish Congress, warned Prime Minister Ben-Gurion not to expect Jewish Americans to mobilize support against the administration.⁷⁰ Another factor may be related to cultural impediments. Diasporic Chinese, for example, are culturally bound by a tradition of strict noninterference in the affairs of others.⁷¹ Yet a third factor can be labeled frustration, though it also encompasses anger, fatigue, or contempt.⁷² Thus the degree of motivation depends mainly on the interaction between the basic identity-motivating element and the experience the community has with the receptivity of the homeland. If engagement in a homeland's foreign policy is perceived by diasporas as identity-reinforcing and by the homeland as legitimate, then diasporas will be motivated to exert influence on the issue. These factors depend, of course, on the nature of the hostland and the homeland.

Nature of the Hostland

The basic nature of the hostland regime determines the ability of a diaspora to organize influence; indeed, it determines the ability to organize at all. Generally,

70. Ben-Zvi 1998, 56–57.

71. Pye 1985, 252.

72. Mexicans in the United States were known to be angry at the incompetence of the Mexican government—which also resented them—and therefore opted to refrain from contacts with it. This is now changing in light of Mexico's democratization policies and its efforts to build strong ties with the huge Mexican-American community; see Shain 1999/2000. Similarly, many Turks in Germany who have long been alienated from Turkish politics now welcome the Turkish government's rapprochement towards its pro-Kamalist diaspora. Altogether, the Turkish diaspora in Germany is deeply divided on homeland politics along the cleavages existing inside Turkey; see Ögelman, Money, and Martin 2002. Likewise, Ukraine's inability to show significant progress toward democracy, market economy, or governmental transparency—as well as its diaspora's failure to effect changes in the homeland, despite its initial enthusiasm in enlisting on behalf of the newly independent state—led to diasporic "Ukrainian fatigue;" see *Economist*, 20 January 2001, 44. In the face of corruption and other state failures, "Diasporian fatigue" has also crept into the minds and hearts of many in the Armenian diaspora; see Simonian 2001.

in nondemocratic regimes, civil society organizations are at least discouraged, if not prohibited. This is all the more true with respect to diasporas, which, by definition, have 'erosive' effects on national unity—so central to authoritarian regimes. There might be cases in which such regimes would seek to exploit a diaspora to advance their own foreign policy interests (for example, the Iraqi government and the Iranian exile community during the 1980s). Such cases, however, fall outside the purview of this essay, because these diasporas are not independent actors.⁷³

Beyond this direct effect of the regime's nature, the hostland also affects the ability of a diaspora to exert indirect influence on its homeland. The way the state allows the community to exert influence on itself affects the worth of the diaspora as a foreign policy asset in the eyes of the homeland (see below). A diaspora in a 'weak' (permeable) state, such as the United States, can exert influence on the state's foreign policy toward the homeland. A diaspora in this case is therefore perceived as an asset and is thus better empowered to exert influence on the homeland. This also assumes that the hostland's foreign policy is important to the homeland; a hypothetical Jewish community in Kenya, even if as influential in the hostland as the American community is, would not hold much importance to Israel.⁷⁴

This factor, then, may be summarized as follows. If the hostland's foreign policy is important to the homeland, and the hostland is receptive to the diaspora's efforts to influence its foreign policy, then the diaspora's ability to influence the homeland's foreign policy is enhanced.

Nature of the Homeland

The same 'weakness' element that is important in the hostland also comes into play in the homeland, albeit not necessarily in the same manner. As in the hostland, policymaking is more susceptible to diasporic influence the more democratically permeable the homeland is. Yet this is not the only manner in which a state may be 'weak.' Because in this context weakness means permeability, a 'weak' state is not only one that is 'too democratic,' but also one that is permeable because it is poor in ideological, material, and institutional resources. This is the case with failing states.⁷⁵ In such diasporic states, which are not necessarily fully democratic (for example, Armenia), governments need support to survive, and powerful diasporas may render this support . . . for a price. Thus 'weak' states, whether democratic or not, invite diasporic influence.

73. Other than that, we are unaware of instances of diasporas in nondemocracies that were/are able to organize and exert influence on homelands' policies. To the extent that they exist, they are not independent.

74. These, then, are the two reasons why most of the literature dealing with ethnic foreign policy lobbies is focused on the United States. This country is the most influential nation in international relations, and its foreign policy decision making is highly permeable to societal pressures.

75. True, failed states are beyond the pale; there is no policymaking and therefore no opening for exerting influence. Failing states, on the other hand, are another matter.

An additional element is the other side of the dual loyalty coin. A homeland may perceive a diaspora as a legitimate part of the people and still reject its interventions in sensitive and crucial matters, particularly those relating to ongoing conflicts. Homeland leaders and publics may feel that their direct stake in the outcome of a conflict with their neighbors should trump any diasporic preferences. For example, it has been said often by Jews, both in Israel and the United States, that because Jewish Americans do not serve in the Israeli army (IDF), they should not try to influence Israel's policy in national security matters. As mentioned above, this receptivity element naturally also affects the degree of diasporic motivation.

In sum, if the homeland is 'weak,' and is receptive to diasporic input, then the ability of a diaspora to influence the homeland's foreign policy is enhanced.⁷⁶ In turn, receptivity is a major component in the following—and last—factor.

Strength Relations Between Diaspora and Homeland

Because we focus on the influence of diasporas on homelands, the strength relations are actually the degrees to which the homeland needs the diasporic resources. These needs are measured mostly through financial resources that diasporas can invest in their homelands or through political support they can mobilize in their hostlands. Given the poor Armenian economy, Armenian diasporas in the West are a critical financial asset to Armenia. Given Israel's diplomatic isolation, the Jewish community in the United States is a crucial political and diplomatic asset.⁷⁷ Yet, need is not everything. To exert effective influence on homeland foreign policy, a diaspora must be united in its position on the issue. Different groups within the community might have diverging (if not opposing) views about the appropriate direction of a homeland's foreign policy. This is usually because of the aforementioned distinction between an 'over-there' orientation and an 'over-here' one. To the extent that the community is divided, its influence is weakened, or might be applied in different directions. Thus if the homeland is in need of diasporic support, and the diaspora is united about the direction the homeland's foreign policy should take, then the ability of the diaspora to influence that direction is enhanced.

76. At times, there might be a potential endogeneity problem regarding ideational receptivity. "Diasporic communities might frame their recommendations for homeland policies in such a way that they resonate with the homeland's ideational features." We are grateful to one of the reviewers for contributing this insight.

77. During the Oslo Peace Process, when Israel's economy was thriving, some Israeli leaders rejected the need for diasporic assistance. Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin told diaspora Jewry to spend their money on Jewish education abroad, as Israel would no longer want to be treated as a charity case; see Rosenthal 2001, 175. It was at this juncture that American Jews intensified the redirection of their financial assistance to Israel from state to civil society causes. This trend was partially reversed beginning in 2001, when perception of acute Jewish insecurity inside and outside Israel galvanized the United Jewish Communities' emergency campaign that quickly raised about \$300 million "to help educate diaspora Jews about the [Middle East] crisis, keep them connected with Israel, and raise money to help Israel;" see *Jerusalem Post*, 27 June 2002.

All the above factors affecting the efficacy of diasporic influence interact in the following manner: given a democratic hostland, the opportunity for organizing and exerting diasporic influence is present. The 'weaker' the homeland is, both in terms of need for diasporic assets and permeability to societal pressures, and the more cohesive the diaspora is (in terms of its organized voice and determination to influence policy), the greater influence the community will exert on the homeland. In a nutshell, and quite intuitively, if the strength relations between the diaspora and the homeland favor the former, then the diaspora will be better able to influence the homeland's foreign policy.

Thus on the basis of the aforementioned set of assumptions shared by both the constructivist and liberal approaches, we offer the following theory. For diasporic influence to be exerted on homeland foreign policy, two antecedent conditions must be present: a democratic hostland and an identity-based motive. Given these two, the influence of a diaspora on the foreign policy of its homeland (dependent variable) is determined by the balance of power between the community and the homeland (intervening variable). This balance, in turn, is determined by three factors (independent variables): the strength or weakness of the homeland (materially, ideologically, and in terms of permeability); the degree of cohesion in the diaspora regarding homeland foreign policy; and the degree to which the diaspora is perceived as an asset or liability by the homeland.

To test these hypotheses, we delve into the Armenian case. As noted above, this example offers a within-case variance in diasporic impact on homeland foreign policy, because of a shift in the way the diasporic input was perceived by the Armenian government. It also comes close to reflecting the wide range of paradigmatic diaspora-homeland nexus.

Both antecedent conditions are clearly met in the Armenian case, given that the Armenian diaspora in Western democratic states is large and well-organized, and that it has long been identity-driven. The new Armenian state is weak and permeable, and the diaspora is generally united on kinship matters. Initially, Armenia's first president, Levon Ter-Petrossian, sought to secure the diaspora's financial support while neutralizing its ideological and diplomatic impact, which he perceived as a liability. Consequently, the diasporic voice on Armenian foreign policy (regarding Nagorno-Karabakh and relations with Turkey) was marginalized. The ensuing political clash between the diaspora and Ter-Petrossian contributed to the latter's downfall. The new president, Robert Kocharian, recognized the diaspora's power, viewed it as an asset, and brought Armenian foreign policy in line with its preferences.

The Armenian Case

National calamities, traumas, and struggles for national restoration informed Armenian consciousness and politics in the twentieth century. The experience that has most centrally defined recent Armenian history is the genocide of 1915, in

which about 1.5 million of the 2 million Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire perished in massacres and forced deportations orchestrated by the Turks. In their “genocidal approach” to achieve “national homogenization,” Turkish authorities created the modern Armenian diaspora, as the surviving half million Armenians were forced into exile.⁷⁸

Following the genocide and the collapse of the first Armenian Republic in 1920, and throughout the Soviet era (three-fourths of the world’s surviving Armenians lived in the former Soviet Union), Armenian diasporic leadership was generally split between the conservative bourgeoisie (whose wealth and political ambition were left intact) and militant intellectuals, urban workers, and former peasant soldiers represented by the Dashnak Party. The Dashnaks dominated the elected government of the first Armenian Republic before surrendering to the Red Army and fleeing abroad, first to Persia and ultimately to France. While in exile, Dashnak’s leadership claimed to be the sole legitimate representative of the Armenian nation and retained an independent exile government that occasionally resorted to acts of violence and terrorism. The aim was to remind the world that “the Genocide was still an issue, that Armenian territories would be reclaimed someday, and that exiles still had one of the characteristics of government, armed forces, however puny.”⁷⁹

Within the Soviet Union, a semi-autonomous Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was created on one-sixth of the territory of historic Armenia. With time, the ASSR developed into the most homogeneous of all the Soviet republics. With the city of Yerevan emerging as the Armenians’ “cultural center of national identity,” ASSR leaders claimed to speak for the “authentic homeland” and the Armenian people as a whole.⁸⁰ This claim was not readily accepted by segments of the diaspora, especially by Dashnaks who rejected the Soviet Armenian regime. Yet even the Dashnaks had to accept the fact that Soviet Armenia was a homeland base, however truncated, and had to adjust themselves to Moscow’s domination. The exiled Dashnaks also faced the strong desire of other genocide survivors to keep the Armenian people unified despite their divisions and dispersion.⁸¹ Soviet propaganda manipulated the ASSR, as the source of Armenian national pride and peoplehood, in mobilizing diasporic financial assistance.⁸² Recognizing that Armenian independence was a distant dream while diasporic life would be long-

78. Roshwald 2001, 110.

79. Tölölyan 1991, 183.

80. Panossian 1998, 155.

81. The diaspora was divided along class, religious, and political lines, and was influenced by the political and cultural pressures of the different surroundings in which Armenians lived. Unlike the Dashnaks, the diasporic bourgeoisie cooperated with Soviet Armenians in communal matters; see Panossian 1998, 156–57.

82. The Soviets “portrayed the Armenian SSR as the homeland and exclusive source of national identity, where the nation was being conserved and advanced . . . Soviet Armenia was presented as a concerned homeland providing cultural nourishment for the diaspora, so that the latter could preserve its weakening ‘Armenianness’ in foreign lands. . . . In this view, the earlier roles of donor and recipient were reversed. The homeland became the ‘aid’ provider, while the diaspora needed assistance for its national ‘survival’”; see Panossian 1998, 159–60.

lasting, diaspora activists shifted to an emphasis on identity retention (focusing primarily on the memory of the genocide) ‘over-here’ (in the diaspora) at the expense of national aspirations ‘over-there’ (in the ASSR). Assimilation and the fading memory of the genocide were seen as the “white massacre,” while “[k]nowing Armenian and some rudimentary facts about Armenian history became the [new] license to [diasporic] leadership.”⁸³

By the late 1970s, the diaspora and Soviet Armenia achieved a *modus vivendi* in their relations. With communism in the ASSR becoming more and more tolerable to the diaspora (in part because after 1965, the Soviets allowed commemorations of the genocide), and with a new generation of diasporic Armenians demanding greater militancy in the struggle for genocide recognition, the Dashnaks shelved their anti-Soviet orientation and entered a new phase in their national crusade. Armenian terrorism (primarily against Turkish targets) won international attention for their cause and helped to rally the diaspora to demand international recognition of the genocide, albeit mostly via diplomatic efforts.⁸⁴ One scholar notes that “the true audience of Armenian terrorism [was not Turkey and its NATO allies but] the Armenian Diaspora, whose fraying culture is constituted to a remarkable degree by old stories.”⁸⁵

In the two largest Western centers of Armenian diaspora—the United States (more than a million) and France (roughly 500,000)—activists focused their efforts on keeping and spreading the memory of the genocide, in the face of Turkey’s refusal to take responsibility for the atrocities or even to admit they ever happened. Because 80 percent of diasporic Armenians were descendants of genocide survivors, the memory of this atrocity became the most important vehicle with which to trigger a national identity dynamic. The Armenian Church also provided an institutional structure for group cohesiveness and ethnic mobilization. Tens of millions of dollars were raised to sustain Armenian day schools, churches, and other institutions in their efforts to nourish a viable diaspora. Millions were also channeled to family members in the ASSR, especially during the 1988 Armenian earthquake.

Diasporic mobilization intensified and took a critical turn with the achievement of Armenian independence in 1991. The new state was facing serious international challenges, most immediately the conflict over Karabakh and the nature of relations with Turkey. These issues quickly became the main focus of diasporic politics. A collision was brewing between President Ter-Petrosian and the Dashnaks,

83. Libaridian 1998, 124.

84. Inspired by Third World ideology and the international attention given to political terrorism in the Middle East and Europe, young Armenians in Lebanon established the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA). In numerous acts of terrorism against Turkish facilities and diplomats (as well as against Western targets allegedly associated with the “fascist regime in Turkey”), ASALA’s violence reenergized the Armenian cause in the international arena. The organization’s visibility posed a challenge to the older Dashnak leadership, and the diasporic party responded by establishing its own terrorist arm known as the Justice Commando for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG); see Kurz and Merari 1985.

85. Tölölyan 1987, 232.

who quickly established themselves inside the homeland as a transnational, pan-Armenian organization that viewed itself as the guardian of Armenian identity.

While the genocide was the most central issue to the diaspora's identity and its organizational agenda, it was less important to the homeland community, which for the most part had escaped the trauma. Moreover, while virtually no diasporic Armenians in the West were from Karabakh, they were still very conscious of the historical memory of losing lands and lives to Turkish nationalists throughout eastern Anatolia between 1915 and 1923, and they therefore insisted that no more Armenian land be lost.⁸⁶ Thus when Ter-Petrossian formulated a foreign policy that refused to recognize the self-declared independence of Karabakh, rejected calls for its annexation, and defined the conflict as one between local Armenians and the government of Azerbaijan, he earned the ire of the diaspora. Even more controversial was his policy of downplaying the genocide as a central issue in establishing relations with Turkey. His so-called "realist-pragmatist" policy meant that "the steps of the Armenian people must be proportionate to the degree of [their] strength."⁸⁷ This reasoning dictated that "the Armenian genocide should be left off Armenia's political agenda." The president also advocated "normal" relations with Turkey instead of so-called "dreams" based on "radical interpretations of the past." He even posed the rhetorical question: "Let's say that all states and the United Nations were to recognize that they slaughtered us; what then?" The president maintained that, if Armenia wished to achieve political democracy and real independence from Russia, it should open up to Turkey. It was, in his opinion, an illusion that Russia could ensure the security of Armenia.⁸⁸

Ter-Petrossian viewed the diaspora's resources as an asset, but its ideological-diplomatic approach as a liability. On one hand, he argued that the diaspora should not intervene in Armenian politics. On the other hand, he eagerly pursued diasporic funding to build his state-controlled Hayastan All-Armenian Fund and solicited diasporic lobbying efforts in hostland states. One observer writes that diaspora activists resented the fact that they had become "little more than a sugar daddy for the Armenian government."⁸⁹ Indeed, the Armenian Fund became the mechanism through which Ter-Petrossian sought "to tap and direct the resources of the diaspora." This policy intended to "depoliticize" the notion of 'outside the state but inside the people' by blocking and circumventing the impact of transnational diasporic parties. In Ter-Petrossian's own words, "the concept of national political parties that exist and function outside their country is unnatural."⁹⁰ Indeed, since 1991, the diaspora has been part of the domestic political scene. In addition to the Dashnaks' Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), both the

86. This point was made by Armenian diasporic expert Khachig Tölölyan in a letter to the authors, 4 October 1999.

87. Astourian 2000/2001, 18.

88. *Ibid.*, 18–19.

89. Simonian 2001.

90. Panossian 1998, 171.

Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (Ramkavar) and the Social Democratic Hunchakian Party (SDHP) were imported from the diaspora.

All parties were slow to build grassroots support and were initially marginal in the face of Ter-Petrosian's popularity and strong presidency. At the outset, the president made gestures toward the diaspora by appointing some of its members to senior positions—including the U.S.-born Raffi Hovannisian as Foreign Minister (he resigned in 1992). Yet after a short diaspora-homeland rapprochement, the Dashnaks became Ter-Petrosian's most ardent opposition, as they challenged his state-sanctioned legitimacy to determine the core issues of Armenian identity, memory, and aspirations. After the Dashnaks precipitated agitated debates over fundamental foreign policy issues (Karabakh, the genocide, and relations with Turkey) Ter-Petrosian responded by outlawing their party as a "foreign organization controlled from abroad." Many Dashnak activists were arrested and expelled, to the chagrin of other diasporic forces that were ready to lend Ter-Petrosian their support.

At this point, the balance of power between the diaspora and the homeland became critical. The Dashnaks responded aggressively to Ter-Petrosian's actions. They funded newspapers, media campaigns, and demonstrations inside and outside Armenia that vilified the president as "treasonous." They also capitalized on the government's domestic failures, such as the collapse in the gross domestic product (GDP) in the early 1990s, runaway inflation, growing poverty, corruption, and lack of democratic accountability. In the face of massive migration out of Armenia, the president was accused of propagating "antinational" policies that were emptying the newly independent homeland. Ter-Petrosian was also discredited for his opposition to the diaspora's initiative for dual citizenship. His credibility was particularly damaged when Turkey refused to establish relations with Armenia, despite his willingness to forego Turkish recognition of its culpability for the genocide.⁹¹ He even lost standing among diasporic sympathizers for underestimating the "risk of another Genocide" without fundamental changes in the policies of Turkey and Azerbaijan.⁹² In the face of these domestic, international, and intra-kin failures, Ter-Petrosian was ultimately forced to resign in 1998. By many accounts, the diaspora was highly instrumental in his removal.⁹³

Clearly, Ter-Petrosian's policy of soliciting financial and diplomatic resources from the diaspora while striving to neutralize diasporic voices on international matters exacerbated his relations with the hard-nosed Dashnaks. His efforts to suppress these influences, while initially strengthening his position, eventually proved costly. The strong state that he envisioned failed, having become increasingly dependent on diasporic support and thus more permeable to the preferences of overseas Armenians. Indeed, since independence, Armenia's economy experienced a

91. Libaridian 1999, 30–31.

92. See the message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Armenian Assembly of America in the 1998 Annual Report. Armenian Assembly of America, Inc. 1998, Annual Report, 3.

93. See Astourian 2000/2001; and Libaridian 1999.

rapid collapse in GDP and in national currency, becoming one of the poorest countries in the world.⁹⁴ This economic catastrophe increased Armenian dependence on its diaspora and its permeability to diasporic influence, and thus changed the balance of power between the two.

In contrast to the Armenian state, the diaspora is strong and well-organized. It counts many affluent members who contribute money to homeland causes. The diaspora also boasts an elaborate lobbying network in the United States and in Western Europe, which secures diplomatic sympathies toward the homeland. The American-based diaspora has been Armenia's major source of support throughout the country's conflict over Karabakh. The mobilized diaspora in key states (California, Massachusetts, and New Jersey) continues to guarantee Armenia substantial U.S. foreign aid, and was the key factor in persuading Congress to pass and sustain a ban on any foreign aid to Azerbaijan (known as Legislation 907).⁹⁵ In fact, only because of diasporic inflow of humanitarian aid, remittances, and private transfers, as well as diasporic success in extracting disproportionately large amounts of U.S. assistance to Armenia, could the homeland stay afloat.⁹⁶ Ter-Petrosian's domestic failures, compounded by his inability to elicit a positive Turkish response to his overtures, highlighted Armenia's dependence on diasporic support even as the Dashnaks were persecuted. The resulting conundrum eventually led to his downfall, largely orchestrated by the diaspora.

The newly installed president, Kocharian, quickly recognized the power of the diaspora in defining Armenia's national goals. Moreover, he emphasized the pur-

94. A 1995 study of the World Bank shows that "in June 1994 the average wage in the state sector stood at about \$2 a month—equivalent to one kilogram of meat—and \$4 to \$5 economy-wide; the average monthly pension was about \$1;" cited in Astourian 2000/2001, 8.

95. The U.S. Congress adopted Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in 1992 during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, banning U.S. government aid to Azerbaijan until it relieved pressure on Armenia and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Ten years later, after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, the United States lifted the ban as part of its efforts to enlist Azerbaijan in the war against terrorism. On 25 January 2002, President George W. Bush waived Section 907 after Congress passed legislation—as part of the foreign operations appropriations bill—granting him the authority to do so. The White House Office of the Press Secretary announced on 30 January 2002 that "President Bush and his Administration worked closely with both the Senate and the House of Representatives, with members of the Armenian American community, and with the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia to develop a waiver that is effective, fair, and balanced. The waiver clears the way for the United States to deepen its cooperation with Azerbaijan in fighting terrorism and in impeding the movement of terrorists into the South Caucasus. The waiver will also provide a foundation to deepen security cooperation with Armenia on a common anti-terrorist agenda." Statement distributed by the Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Available from <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02013006.htm>. Accessed 14 April 2003.

96. According to one estimate, diasporic financial transfers to Armenia from the West amount to \$175 million annually, about 15 percent of the GDP for 1998; see Astourian 2000/2001, 41–42. Even though American foreign aid budget is dropping, the Armenian lobby has managed to increase aid to Armenia, and has turned its homeland into the second largest recipient (after Israel) of aid per capita. Armenia receives about \$120 million annually. "Despite plentiful evidence of corruption and a patchy record on democracy and human rights;" see Michael Dobbs, *Washington Post*, 24 January 2001, A1. Also see Freinkman 2001.

suit of genocide recognition as an integral part of Armenia's foreign policy agenda. Ronald Suny has written that,

Almost immediately the new government reverted to a more traditional nationalism, one more congenial to the diaspora. . . . Armenia . . . reemphasized the genocide issue, always a source of pain and emotion for Armenians and a powerful wedge between Armenia and Turkey. As a consequence, a profoundly risky attempt to reorient the national discourse ultimately failed before intractable obstacles both domestic and foreign. . . . The power and coherence of the Armenian national identity, the popular projection of the images of genocide onto the Karabakh conflict, and the closing off of the Turkish option all contributed to the fall of a once-popular national leader, whose move beyond the limit of Armenian identity choices and national discourse did not bring the expected political payoff.⁹⁷

The critical role played by diasporic Armenians in shaping Armenian national identity—and consequently the state's foreign policy—manifests itself most powerfully regarding the possibility of a peace settlement with Azerbaijan. This influence exemplifies how powerful diasporas affect national images of states. Indeed, Armenian diasporic groups have been at the forefront of presenting the case for genocide recognition to the Western media, academic community, and governments. Its international location allows the diaspora to influence public opinion regarding Armenian identity. Diasporic lobbies have also succeeded in pushing European parliaments and American legislators to pass genocide resolutions despite Turkey's denials, protests, and diplomatic efforts to thwart such pronouncements.⁹⁸

As much as Kocharian recognizes the critical role of the diaspora, he has found himself squeezed between the potential advantage of improving relations with Turkey and the diasporic veto power. Moreover, as much as Kocharian contemplates the idea of striking a deal with Turkey (that gives attention to the genocide in a way as to ultimately remove the issue from the political realm), he fully understands that without the high profile that the genocide gives the Armenians, his country may not receive the international attention for which it still yearns. In sum, Kocharian perceives the diaspora both as an international asset and as a powerful domestic lobby. Undoubtedly, many homeland Armenians are likely to welcome a "new realism" in foreign policy, even though they may resent the fact that their

97. Suny 1999/2000, 158–59.

98. Gerard Libaridian, an Armenian-American who served as a senior foreign policy advisor to President Ter-Petrossian, argues that the politicization of the genocide by the diaspora "had served, wittingly or unwittingly, to create the mentality and psychology that Turkey, through its nonrecognition of the genocide, is likely to repeat it, that Turkey is the eternal enemy. If Turkey is the eternal enemy, then Russia is the eternally necessary friend. And this then creates pressures on your policy of independence;" see Libaridian 1998.

ongoing suffering is not felt by the diaspora.⁹⁹ To some extent, one can argue that in the mind of the diaspora, Armenia as a homeland has served more as a notion, perhaps a mythical vision, than as a concrete sovereign state. This diasporic vision, so entangled with the memories of the genocide, has been inserted into the weak Armenian state to such a degree that it now overwhelms foreign policy decisions.

Conclusions

This article focuses on the role of diasporas as independent actors exerting influence on their homelands' foreign policies. Within IR scholarship, we placed the diasporic factor in the 'theoretical space' shared by constructivism (with its emphasis on identity) and liberalism (with its focus on domestic politics). Given their unique status, diasporas—outside the state but inside the people—attach significant importance to kinship identity. Given their international location, diasporas are aptly suited to manipulate international images and thus to trigger a "national identity dynamic," as the Armenian diaspora has done with their image as genocide victims. Once triggered, this dynamic can be used to influence homeland foreign policy decision making. This is done by engaging in the domestic politics of the homeland, something that diasporas can do because, while being outside the state, they are still perceived as inside the people. Diasporas exert influence on homelands when the latter are 'weak' (in the permeable sense of the word), tilting the 'balance of power' in favor of the former.

In both the Jewish and Armenian cases, the homeland regards the diaspora as an integral part of the kin community and strives to cultivate its support. Both diasporas consider their ties to the homeland critical to their identity and to their mobilization in their countries of domicile, and both place the homeland at the top of their kinship agenda. Both diasporas, particularly in the U.S. context, are strong (materially and politically), well-organized, and very successful in lobbying American elected officials to support their respective homelands. Yet the two diasporas diverge greatly when it comes to influencing homeland's foreign policy. This divergence stems from the relative strengths of the homelands vis-à-vis the diasporas, which influence and contribute to the greater or lesser permeability of the homeland to diasporic influences.

From the time of Israel's establishment, the country, its leaders, and the diaspora all considered the homeland community as the vanguard of the Jewish people, even though American Jews were "the uncle in America" and Israel was "the

99. As Mehmet Ali Birand, a leading Turkish observer, has written: "What bothers the Armenians in the shops and markets is not whether Turkey will accept the genocide allegations or not. They are more concerned with how to fill their stomachs and how to win their daily grind;" see Birand, *Turkish Daily News*, 2 February 2001.

poor relative whose very existence was uncertain.”¹⁰⁰ Israeli authorities were mostly viewed as having the moral legitimacy to make life and death decisions for the state, and also, to a large degree, to speak on behalf of the Jewish people as a whole, as long as Israeli leaders refrained from interfering in the internal affairs of American Jews. As Israel’s democracy flourished, integrated other Jewish communities, triumphed over its enemies, and thrived economically, the homeland increased its standing in the homeland-diaspora relationship. The Six Day War in particular embellished the status of Israel in the eyes of the diaspora, resulting in the “Israelization” of its agenda. Even though Israel is a ‘weak’ state—in the sense of permeability to societal influences—its susceptibility to diasporic influence on foreign policy was limited by the fact that it was ideologically strong; that is, Israel led the way on a kinship agenda while being a source of pride and empowerment for the diaspora ‘over-here’. Since the late 1970s, the diversification and erosion of automatic diasporic support for Israeli foreign and domestic policies became evident. Growing divisions within Israel regarding peace with the Arabs and Palestinians were mirrored by a similar fracturing within the diaspora. These internal diasporic divisions (lack of cohesion) on homeland foreign policy further undermined the possibility of Jewish-American influence on Israeli foreign policy.

By contrast, diasporic Armenians still consider themselves the vanguard of the nation, and they lack “an ideological foundation for supporting Armenia as there is with Zionism.”¹⁰¹ Most critically, the state of Armenia is much too weak politically, economically, and culturally to assert its own leadership of the transnational Armenian community. Armenia’s endemic corruption and its culture of violence, which drove so many Armenians to migrate, weakens the state’s claim to speak in the name of the Armenian people as a whole, and makes Armenia significantly more permeable to diasporic influences. Finally, when it comes to Armenian foreign policy, the Dashnaks have dominated all other diasporic voices. The Armenian diaspora was therefore a crucial factor in replacing President Ter-Petrossian with Kocharian, causing an intentional shift in Armenian foreign policy toward a more militant anti-Turkish line.

Beyond emphasizing the ‘theoretical space’ shared by constructivism and liberalism, we have offered ways in which the study of diasporic international activities can enrich both approaches. Diasporas are among the most prominent actors that link international and domestic spheres of politics. Their identity-based motivation should therefore be an integral part of the constructivist effort to explain the formation of national identities. Furthermore, diasporic activities and influence in the homeland, despite their international location, expand the meaning of

100. Beilin 2000, 72. From the outset, Jewish American funds were Israel’s mainstay, covering half of its balance-of payment deficit during the 1950s and 1960s. The funds also secured the resettlement and rehabilitation of Jewish refugees. Ben-Gurion insisted that Israeli sovereignty should not be compromised by diasporic funding, and ensured that only his government determined how the funds were used; see Shain and Sherman 2001, 24; and Weibe 2002, 187.

101. Freinkman 2001.

the term 'domestic politics' to include constituencies not only inside the state but also inside the people. For the liberal approach, this is a "new fact" in the Lakatosian sense of the word. Both approaches can and should use the diasporic perspective to deepen the explanations of the phenomena on which they focus.

In the third section, we theorized about factors affecting the efficacy of diasporic activity, that is, what determines diasporic success in influencing homelands' foreign policies. For further research, the next step would be to shift from process to content. The question is, in what direction do diasporas try to push their homelands' foreign policies? Can a generalization be made on this point? Are diasporas generally more militant than their homelands? Do the fears of being cut off and losing identity push diasporas to advocate more ideational and less compromising homeland policies, to gain a sense of belonging?¹⁰²

At this stage of the research, it is difficult to answer this question. On one hand, theoretically, the answer would be that it depends on the identity focus of the diaspora. Communities focused on 'over-there' (national identity as the tie to the people at large or to the homeland) would push for a policy that accentuates, at best—national particularism, and at worst—national aggrandizement. Communities focused on 'over-here' (kinship identity as part of an effort to integrate into hostland society) would push for an accommodating policy, in line with the norms of the liberal society in which they live. On the other hand, empirically, the paradigmatic case of Jewish Americans does not necessarily support this preliminary hypothesis. While Orthodox Jews are less inclined to integrate fully into American society and were generally anti-Oslo; liberal secular Jews, striving for complete integration, were pro-Oslo.¹⁰³ Yet it would not be accurate to claim that liberal Jews are more moderate because they are focused on 'over-here.' They prefer moderate Israeli policy not only because it helps sustain their preferred image 'over-here,' but also because they truly believe that it is the best approach for the state of Israel 'over-there.'

Altogether, more empirical studies should be conducted to provide a valid, generally applicable answer to the question of the direction in which diasporas push. As migration flows accelerate, and diasporas increase both in numbers and in political access to their homelands, answering this question becomes all the more important in understanding the future directions of homeland foreign policies.

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102. Gunawardena 1999, 31.

103. This division, by the way, may partially explain why, despite its enormous political/diplomatic and financial importance to Israel, American Jewry has influenced Israeli foreign policy only on the margins. As mentioned in section three, the cohesiveness of the community is an important factor in the overall 'balance of power' between the homeland and the diaspora. The above division works to tilt this balance in Israel's favor.

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