The Revenge of Diasporas or Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Ş. Kürşad TURAN[1]

Abstract

Diaspora groups have been a part of the international system since their conception. In a system where the dominant actors were the states, diasporas were more critical for the field of sociology than they were for political science. Changes we experienced in the international system over the past thirty years made it possible for smaller, non-state actors to become active. As a result, diaspora networks gained political power as a bridge between their home and host countries. The addition of a political dimension to the existing economic and cultural dimensions of these relationships elevates the status of these networks in the eyes of nation-states as potential partners. With this increasing power, new responsibilities that complicated these relationships emerged. This study first aims to define the changing meaning of the term diaspora with the addition of new groups. In order to do this, I will evaluate existing definitions and categorizations in the literature. Later on, I will focus on the relationship between diaspora groups and their homeland, as well as the countries they live in. The changing nature of these relationships presents these groups with new opportunities as well as risks.

Keywords: Diaspora, identity, politics, non-state actors

Diasporaların İntikamı ya da İki Arada Bir Derede Kalmak

Öz

Diaspora grupları, ortaya çıkışlarından beri uluslararası sistemin bir parçası oldular. Devletlerin egemen aktör olduğu bir sistemde, diasporalar siyaset biliminden ziyade sosyoloji için önemliydi. Geçtiğimiz otuz yılda uluslararası sistemde yaşadığımız değişim küçük devlet dışı aktörlerin etkili olmasını mümkün kıldı. Bunun bir sonucu olarak diaspora ağları anavatanları ile yaşadıkları ülkeler arasında bir köprü olarak siyasi güç kazandı. Bu ilişkilerde zaten mevcut bulunan ekonomik ve kültürel boyutlara siyasi boyutun da eklenmesi ulus-devletlerin gözünde bu ağları potansiyel ortak durumuna yükseltti. Bu artan güçle birlikte ilişkileri karmaşıklaştıran yeni sorumluluklar ortaya çıktı. Bu çalışma ilk olarak diaspora kavramının yeni grupların katılmasıyla değişen anlamını tanımlamayı hedeflemektedir. Bu amaçla literatürde mevcut tanımları ve sınıflandırmaları değerlendireceğim. Daha sonra, diaspora gruplarının vatanları ve yaşadıkları ülkelerle olan ilişkilerine odaklanacağım. Bu ilişkilerin değişen doğası gruplar için fırsatlar kadar riskler de sunuyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Diaspora, kimlik, politika, devlet-dışı aktörler

[1] Doç. Dr., Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi, İ.İ.B.F. Uluslararası İlikiler Bölümü Öğretim Üyesi, kursad.turan@hbv.edu.tr

Introduction

Movement has been a constant of human experience. The primary motivation behind it was the search for more suitable living conditions. Once political entities with set borders began to emerge and people began to identify with them, these movements became a source of conflict. Despite the limitations put in place by states, the flow of people did not wholly stop, leading to the creation of small communities that did not share the common identity of the land they lived in. Some of these communities qualify as diaspora groups. While its definition is a source of disagreement and has changed over time, the term has ancient roots.

The etymology of the term diaspora means the scattering of seeds (Anthias 1998, 560) and it comes from the Greek root of *speiro* (to sow) and the preposition *dia* (over) which is a translation of the Hebrew term *galut* (Anteby-Yemini and Berthomière 2005, 262). It was initially used for the colonization of Anatolia between 800 and 600 BC (Cohen 1996, 507) and gained the general meaning of "people settled away from their ancestral homelands" (Shuval 2003). In its simplest form, diaspora is defined as "the dispersal of a people from its original homeland" (Butler 2001, 189). While the simple definitions broadly tell us the most essential traits of such groups, there is disagreement on whether all immigrant groups qualify as diasporas.

"The United Nations' (UN's) Population division put the share of the world's population residing outside their nation of birth at almost 200 million people – or approximately 3% of the world's population – in 2007" (Leblang 2010, 584). Clearly, not all international population movements result in diaspora groups. These differ from regular international migration regarding their formation, the circumstances under which they leave their home country and the role they play in their host country.

In order to clarify the difference between diasporas and other transnational groups, Bruneau (2008, 8) argues that diasporas "have been formed, through the course of time, by several waves of migration, each of which could have different or several causes at once. It is this sedimentation in the long run that makes the diaspora, unlike the transnational community, which has been formed recently owing to call for labour, or unlike smugglers who depend on the underground economy."

Tashmin (2016, 16) makes a distinction between two general approaches to defining what a diaspora is. On the one hand, some scholars use a closed set of attributes in order to determine whether a group qualifies as a diaspora (Cohen 1997). On the other hand, others use the term in a broader sense meaning "the segment of people living outside the homeland" (Safran 1991); or as "a sense of belonging" (Docker 2001).

The experiences of diaspora groups have been subject to a large number of case studies, especially in sociology and political science. But the number of studies that adopt a general approach to the term is more limited. The interest in diaspora groups recently increased and there are two views on why this is the case.

According to some studies (Shuval 2002; Anteby-Yemini and Berthomière 2005), the rising interest was the result of the failure of the assimilation theory that predicted that migrant groups should and would leave their ethnic identities behind, gradually assimilate to their host nation and become indistinguishable from its people. It is clear that to a very large extent this did not happen. Many diaspora groups successfully integrated into the political system of the country they lived in, but this did not mean that their concerns and preferences became identical to other groups they lived together, but still maintained their original identity. The failure of the assimilation theory, combined with the continuing population flows, led to the emergence of various groups with distinct identities living in a given country.

A second view emphasizes the global causes of this new interest. Focusing on the globalization process, these studies argue that the developments we have experienced during the most recent phase of globalization made it easier for these groups to remain in touch with their kin in other countries. At the same time, the relatively free movement of individuals led to the creation of a number of new communities that did not strictly fulfill the existing requirements for a diaspora but were keen on benefiting from the advantages this classification brought.

One can argue that both views are valid and that they look at the same question from two distinct perspectives, one domestic and the other international. After the international system went through changes and sub-state actors became actors in international relations, being recognized as a diaspora group became more salient. It not only increased their ability to organize around common goals, but it also legitimized them as political actors. As a result, we observed a number of groups with different backgrounds and characteristics make the claim. This variation between

diaspora groups made it necessary to categorize them. This study will look at the change in how we perceive diaspora groups and what the practical consequences this shift has regarding their relationship with their home and host countries.

1. Classical Diasporas

As a result of the way the term was defined, until relatively recently, a minimal number of groups were qualified as diasporas. Today we make a distinction between these classical diasporas and the modern meaning of the term that emerged as a result of the globalization process.

According to Bokser Liwerant (2015, 311), in the classical sense, a group needed three components in order to be called a diaspora: "a) dispersion of its members, b) orientation toward an ethno-national center, real or imaginary, considered to be a homeland, and c) host country maintenance of the group's ethno-cultural borders." In addition, the term also had a negative meaning because it emphasized the catastrophic origins of these groups and their uncomfortable outcomes (Cohen 1996, 507).

These groups not only emerged from traumatic experiences that led them to flee their homelands that were followed by an uneasy existence in a foreign land with a society they needed to integrate to. As Cohen (1996, 507) pointed out, even the Old Testament warned that "a 'scattering to other lands' constituted the punishment for a people who had forsaken the righteous paths and abandoned the old ways." With such a stigma attached to the term, many groups did not want to be perceived as diasporas.

The classical approach to diasporas was predominantly based on the Jewish experience because it was considered as the first example of diaspora groups. Cohen (1996) calls the Jewish tradition of diaspora, the victim tradition and argues that four other groups belong to this tradition: Africans, Armenians, Irish, and Palestinians.

As mentioned before, these five groups share a characteristic that is crucial to the meaning of the term: a past trauma. Jewish diaspora experience begins with the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 586 BC by the Babylonians (Cohen 1996, 511). For the African diaspora, the source of the trauma was the slave trade across the Atlantic. Even though the African slave trade existed before that, the scale (10 million people enslaved and shipped to work in plantations) is the main source of the trauma (Cohen 1996, 509). Armenian diaspora differs from the first two

examples because it emerges as a commerce and trade diaspora that only evolves to a victim diaspora following the events of 1915-16 (Cohen 1996, 503). The Irish diaspora is considered to be the result of the migration during and after the great famine (migration between 1845-52) (Cohen 1996, 507). Furthermore, finally Palestinian diaspora emerges following the British withdraw from the region and the war of 1948 that followed.

Another common aspect is that, at least initially, these groups did not have an independent homeland to have ties with and, as a result, were somewhat isolated in the countries they had moved to. What qualified them as diasporas were the, sometimes loose, ties that bound them to other groups in different countries that shared the same origins. This meant that adaptation, if not assimilation, to the hostland was necessary and by the time their homelands emerged as independent political entities they were in a better position to help the homeland.

What globalization brought for diaspora groups was the legitimacy as political actors not only domestically, but also internationally and the means to organize at a larger scale. Globalization created a change in the environment and affected how these groups were viewed and functioned. First, the states ceased to be the only relevant actors and sub-state actors began to have an impact on international politics. Among many new actors of international relations were diaspora groups, including the ones that lacked an extensive international network. This meant increased opportunities a competition from other similar groups and motivated them to organize better. Second was the increased mobility that allowed people to move more freely, strengthening some groups and creating new groups. Finally, was the increasing ease of communication. It helped reinforce the bonds to the homeland, as well as to similar groups in other countries, making it easier to build and maintain cross-border networks.

All these developments meant that these groups could no longer remain solely focused on cultural and economic relations. Diaspora groups, especially better-organized ones, became not only political actors but also policy tools for states in their dealings with each other. All of these led to a change in the meaning we attribute to the term diaspora, making it increasingly positive.

2. Globalization and the Emergence of New Diasporas

Among various definitions of the globalization process, one that best fits the purposes of this study may be the one by Anthony Giddens. He sees it as the 'connections between local and

global (…) processes which are intensifying world-wide relations and interdependence' through four types of change: (1) It stretches social, political and economic activities across political frontiers, regions and continents; (2) it intensifies our dependence on each other, as flows of trade, investment, finance, migration and culture increase; (3) it speeds up the world. New systems of communication mean that ideas, goods, information, capital, and people move quickly; (4) it means that distant events have a deeper impact on our lives (Barbulescu 2008, 84).

There are two opposing views on how nation-states are affected by these changes. Some argue that the power and influence of the nation-state are diminishing in such a way that may lead, at some point in the future, to its demise. Bokser Leiwrant (2015, 314), for example, claims that state sovereignty weakened in various areas and that they can no longer regulate "financial and trade flows, property and authorship rights, universally sanctioned human rights and other cross-border economic, social and cultural transactions." Others contend that the nation-state is still strong and simply going through a transition period during which "state apparatuses survive, grow, strengthen and penetrate new spheres of society. On the other hand, sovereignty, as the supreme and exclusive control, ceases to operate because the State's regulatory capacity is eroded *vis-à-vis* the emerging mechanisms of regulation and governance at a global level" (Bokser Leiwerant 2015, 314).

While these changes take place and roles are redefined a number of new actors emerged. Diaspora groups were only one of these new actors that benefited from globalization. The term went through a transformation that stretched its boundaries well beyond the classical victim diasporas to include a wide variety of groups including lists some of these groups as asylum-seekers, refugees, exiles, forced migrants, immigrants, expatriates, guest workers, trading communities, and ethnic communities of various kinds (Tashmin 2016, 13).

In addition to the simple fact that more and more people migrate away from their homelands today than a few decades ago, three main reasons for this change of identification come to mind. First and foremost, while earlier generations sought to assimilate to their host country's culture and identity, the results were mixed. Their success depended on pre-existing racial and religious similarities and the host society's acceptance of them. As a result, in most cases group members were still seen as foreigners and following generations sometimes opted to maintain their original identity and organize around it, especially when they had a relatively large population.

This was facilitated by the second cause. As a natural result of the globalization process, it became easier to maintain contact with their homeland. This connection helped them nurture their culture and identity even when they were far from their ancestral land.

Third, is the increased political weight of these groups as a result of the changing conflict patterns in the post-Cold War world. Demmers (2002, 86) argued that this increased significance was due to four factors "(1) the rise of a new pattern of conflict; (2) the rapid rise of war refugees; (3) the increased speed of communication and mobility; (4) the increased production of cultural and political boundaries." First, the sharp increase in identity conflicts after the Cold War helped identity-based groups become actors in international politics. These new conflicts were based on differences in race, religion, ethnicity, culture, etc. (Demmers 2002, 87). This contributed to their rising importance in domestic as well as international politics. Second, the end of the relatively peaceful international environment led to a number of conflicts resulting in population movements. These population flows created new diaspora groups and reinforced existing ones. Third, in addition to political changes, the advancement of technology also played an important role by making it easier to connect with the homeland and maintain ties. Finally, in many ways, boundaries were redrawn, not only politically but also culturally. These changed maps and led to divisions within existing political units, creating potential fault lines.

Demmers (2002) also argues that in these identity conflicts, diaspora groups are the obvious target of external mobilization efforts. While Demmers focuses on these groups' experiences in their host country, one can also look at the opposite dimension. These changes also create possibilities for host countries to mobilize diaspora groups in order to influence the domestic politics of home countries.

Tsagarousianou (2004, 52) suggests that the new use of the term is a result of its changing meaning from a negative to a positive one. She argues that the emphasis shifted from displacement to connectivity. While before we used to focus on the circumstances these groups were displaced under, now we tend to focus on their level of relationship with their homelands. Of course it is not possible to isolate these two because, at least for relatively new groups, the circumstances of their migration will be an important determining factor on their relationship with the home country.

Regardless, this shift in identification resulted from the change in perception of these groups in their homelands. Groups that were seen as simple immigrants until then were perceived

as a potential resource. They became the unofficial representatives of the homeland in foreign countries whose usefulness to the homeland depended on the position they occupied and the level of organization they achieved in their adopted country.

Accordingly, the term diaspora started to represent a potential empowerment depending on the group's ability organize and mobilize international support and influence in both the homeland and hostland. On the one hand, diasporas acted as lobby groups for their homeland in the country they reside in. This heavily depended on the circumstances of their departure. "Opportunity seeking diasporas" and groups that resided in the host country longer than a generation were much more likely to act as lobby groups on behalf of their homeland. In the case of forced diasporas, their willingness to act on behalf of their homeland depended on whether the conflict that forced them to move away is solved or the length of the time passed since their migration. In cases where the conflict persisted, the diaspora groups still had an influence over their homeland that their home governments did not approve of. These efforts to gain influence in the homeland were to support or destabilize the government depending on the group's past experience. This represented risks and rewards for both home and host countries.

This new environment of enhanced relationships made it necessary to redefine and classify diaspora groups. This is one of the main reasons why a large portion of the literature starting with the 1990s is devoted to the topic. While the abundance of definition and categorizations create a level of confusion newer studies at the same time improve our understanding of diaspora dynamics. Table-1 shows some of the more commonly used diaspora definitions, while Table-2 lists different ways diaspora groups are categorized.

Depending on the focus of the research, it is possible to make a case for any one of these categorizations. This level of variety, however, sometimes limits our ability to draw comparisons between studies and causes confusion. There are two possible ways of dealing with this problem. One, as Butler (2001) does, is to focus on different dimensions of the term and defining each group based on their characteristics in these dimensions. For example, Butler (2001, 195) suggests five dimensions on which we can categorize these groups. These are: reasons for, and conditions of, dispersal; relationship to homeland; relationship with hostlands; interrelationships within communities of the diaspora; and comparative studies of different diaporas. While this may limit the confusion in the field, it does not solve the problem.

The second approach is the one I am adopting here. It relies on a somewhat oversimplification and looks at a single dimension and distinguishes between individuals that left their homeland voluntarily and the ones that were forced out. I argue that this approach makes up for its lack of detail by allowing me to focus on two points. First, because I am interested in these groups' relationships with their homelands, the circumstances under which they left matters. Second, this also allows me to see internal divisions within these groups. While all diaspora groups have some form of ties to their home country, the level and the nature of these relationships vary greatly among the members of the same group. Opportunity seeking groups, for example, may be open to a relationship with their homeland, if they believe that will not harm their status in the host country. Forced groups, on the other hand, have very little incentive to get in touch with the regime that forced them out. So, unless the country has gone through a regime change or a reconciliation process, these groups will be more reluctant to establish ties and support challengers instead.

3. Changing Relationships

The end of the Cold War, combined with the speeding up of globalization, drastically changed the way international politics is organized. The top-down structure of the bipolar system meant that world politics was dominated by alliances led by superpowers, where the nation-state was the only relevant actor and sub-state actors had very little or no influence internationally.

Regardless of how we perceive the system that emerged, whether multipolar or unipolar, it opened the door for new actors at two main levels. One at the regional level with the creation of regional organizations and regimes, the other at sub-state level with the increasing influence of group-level actors.

While the causes of this global change is beyond the scope of this study, it should be mentioned that one of the reasons was the nation-state's declining control over the flow of information, people, and products. This increasing ability to move benefited a number of different actors. Diasporas were one of them that took advantage because they could mobilize in different national settings. Because "one of the central aspects of diaspora is a culture of longing for homeland, while a more specific site for place making is the actual home, dwelling, or geographical community" (Rios and Adiv 2010, 5). As Lyons and Mandaville (2010, 2) point out, "one set of

political tasks (e.g., fundraising, public relations, lobbying) may take place in one country while another set of tasks (electoral or military campaigns, mass mobilization) may take place in another."

Depending on their relationship with their home and host countries, diasporas not only became important tools in the hands of a wide variety of political actors but also experienced a shift in their relationships with nation-states.

3.1. Diaspora – Homeland Relations

Traditionally the relationship between groups belonging to the same diaspora and residing in different countries varied depending on a number of factors. Some of these were proximity, the level of organization, their connection to the common homeland, the ties to host countries, groups' relationship with the host country, and the type of diaspora.

Proximity was significantly important when the ability to communicate was limited. Groups could connect with others that lived nearby, but the logistics of organization became more complicated as the distance grew. This had ceased to be a major constraint with gradually improving technology even before the globalization reached its current level. Second, the level of organization determined not only their domestic performance in the host country, but also their international reach. Groups with better means and stronger domestic structures were more likely to organize at the international level. With the decline of the cost of communication and the increasing availability of new means of organization, even groups with limited means are now able to organize internationally. The connection to a homeland was a facilitating factor that sometimes created an organizational framework. Regardless of the existence of a homeland, an organizing structure that represented the common identity these groups shared plays an important role in bringing them together. The relationship with the host country determined whether diaspora groups could seek external connections without risking their status within the host society. Connected to this, the groups also had to take into consideration the relationship their host countries have with other host countries because connections to a group living in a hostile country can damage the members' status where they lived. Finally, the type of diaspora matters. The differences between groups play a major role in whether they can unite and coordinate.

As diasporas went through a transition, so did diaspora-homeland relations. Home countries started to have an increasing interest in these groups. In the past, the relationship was predominantly economic. The remittances sent by diaspora groups were a major contribution to the economies of many developing countries. Lyons and Mandaville (2010, 2) point out that remittances outpace foreign direct investment and official development assistance in many parts of the world, making diasporas pivotal players in economic development. To a lesser degree, the presence of diaspora groups tends to improve the trade between two countries as a result of group members' taste for commodities produced by their home country (Leblang 2010, 584).

Today the contribution of diaspora members to their home country goes well beyond that. One new dimension of this relationship is return migration that provides a flow of knowledge of skills (Leblang 2010, 584). Through this process, countries hope to limit, if not reverse, the damages of brain drain.

In addition, a political dimension also began to emerge. Starting with the 1990s, home countries began to target diaspora groups more thoroughly. "What were sometimes seen as suspect populations in the past are now perceived as partners and assets to promote homeland development in a globalized world" (Lyons and Mandaville 2010, 5).

By turning to their diasporas, home countries not only sought to maximize the remittances they received but also attempted to influence the policies of developed nations through these groups. Waterbury (2010, 136) points to three sources for this increase in interest: first is economic gain through remittances and investment; second is the creation of domestic and international political legitimacy; and finally the utilization of these groups as a cultural and linguistic resource to be used in defining the boundaries of national identity. In order to achieve this, homelands came up with policies and institutions that attempted to strengthen the bonds they have to these groups. Some of these included homeland identification cards, dual citizenship, voting rights, specialized government bureaus, and even government ministers dedicated to the topic.

These new strategies were two dimensional. On the one hand, home countries established domestic institutions that would establish and coordinate the state's relationship with diaspora groups. On the other hand, they attempted to create pro-homeland organizations in countries where these groups lived.

These efforts only had limited success for three reasons. First, the increased number of organized diaspora groups trying to influence policy actually made it harder for their voices to be heard. It became much harder to attract attention to a specific cause. Second, because in most cases such groups are not homogenous to begin with, governments' efforts to organize led to divisions within diaspora groups, which sometimes led to conflict and attracting host state's attention for the wrong reasons. Finally, and most importantly, in some cases, membership in diaspora organizations was interpreted as group members maintaining the identity of their homeland and valuing it above their host country's. This and the possibility that host state's policies can be influenced by "foreigners" led to anxieties and security dilemmas among the host society. Home countries needed to find a balance in their efforts. They had to be effective enough to accomplish their goals, but not too effective that they will threaten host societies.

The interaction between diasporas and the home countries is not always symmetrical. Often one side wields more influence over the other. Diaspora groups have been able to influence home countries when these countries have been relatively weak, meaning open for influence, tilting the balance of power in their favor (Shain and Barth 2003, 451). These were the times when the home country needed them more than they needed its support.

While the political dimension of the homeland-diaspora relationship initially emerged from diasporas' ability to lobby on behalf of their home country, it also resulted in homelands opening themselves for political influence by diaspora groups. One example is the homelands' struggle with insurgent and/or separatist groups. Such groups have been relying on the mobilization of diasporas for support for a long time (Lyons and Mandaville 2010, 3). Especially among diaspora members that were forced out of their homelands insurgent and separatist groups can more easily find a base to support their cause. This support becomes significant relative to the often limited means of these movements and can be the determining factor for success. A "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" (Shain and Barth 2003, 450). Insurgents increasingly relying on support from their kin in other countries. The support provided by diaspora groups make some civil wars more protracted and difficult to resolve" (Lyons and Mandaville 2010, 5).

Similarly, with the increasing ease of communication, patron-client networks also gained an international dimension, allowing access to a global network. By allowing political and/or social influencers to maintain their control even when they are out of the homeland and by opening new groups abroad to their influence new diasporas facilitated the formation and preserving of these patron-client networks. According to Lyons and Mandaville (2010, 4) "diasporas sometimes engage in a kind of romantic 'long-distance nationalism' that prioritizes divisive symbolic issues rather than engaging in the pragmatic horse-trading of interest-based politics." This is possible because these distant groups have little at stake when it comes to the daily challenges of the homeland.

As a result, the influence of diasporas on their homelands has been mixed. While, on the one hand, they supported opposition movements and promoted change, on the other hand, they supported traditional power and authority structures like patrimonialism, sectarianism and hyper-nationalism (Lyons and Mandaville 2010, 4).

Due to these developments, we entered a period where homeland-diaspora relations are becoming increasingly complex, where the stakes increased for both sides. There may be serious consequences for both sides that will stem from their closer relationship regardless of the nature of those relationships. For diaspora groups, the most important risk is a negative change in their relationship with their host country and society.

3.2. Diaspora Hostland Relations

A quick review of the existing literature shows us that the main dimension of concern for the majority of these studies is the relationship between diaspora groups and the countries where they live. This dimension is also going through a transition. Up until now the main topic these studies focused on has been the adjustment process of these groups to host societies whether through integration or assimilation.

These groups' relationship with the host society varies according to a number of factors. The size of the group determines its status in the host country relative to other similar groups and the group's sustainability as a distinct entity. Smaller groups are less likely to be able to maintain its identity not only because they will have to compete with much larger groups, but also because they will have to rely on others in order to survive and succeed. Second is group homogeneity. A

homogenous group regarding their identity, as well as members' attitudes toward the homeland, will more easily come together and organize as an effective diaspora group. A third factor is the strength of identity. The strength of the group's shared identity is an important determinant of the group's level of integration to the host country's identity. Even though groups with a strong identity can still integrate, they will be much harder to assimilate. Next is the group concentration. While its importance may be in decline, a group's ability to organize and maintain its common identity has been significant. With the ability and speed of communication, a concentrated population has become less important. And finally, the ties the group has with its homeland are important in determining their relationship with their host country. Closer ties with the homeland may limit the group members' willingness to integrate and the level of their acceptance by the host society.

While these are some of the factors the nature of this complex relationship, the list is by no means exhaustive. Until recently, diaspora groups enjoyed a limited ability to network and the nature of their ties were mostly cultural with a gradually increasing economic dimension. By also becoming political actors with international influence, the way these groups were viewed by nation-states began to change. As diasporas began to better organize and lobby, home as well as their host countries started to feel the need to take them into account in their policymaking.

We can evaluate this relationship in two dimensions: international and domestic. Internationally, diaspora groups can have an economic and political impact on the ties between the home and host countries.

Economically, the knowledge these communities possess about the homeland's economy is valuable for the investors in the host country. They can influence the decision of investors and guide host country investment toward or away from the homeland. In addition, "diaspora networks can have an indirect effect on investment because they may have knowledge about investment opportunities, information about regulations and procedures, or familiarity with language and customs that can decrease the transaction costs associated with cross-border investment" (Leblang 2010, 584-5).

Politically, one area where diaspora groups could be useful was the promotion of conflict resolution and reconciliation at their home country with the support of their host government. Because they lived in a different country, they might have been able to overcome any political

778

polarization present in their homeland and bring the two sides of the conflict together. Lyons and Mandaville (2010, 4) point out that this is rarely the case. There are two possible reasons for this. First, the resolution of the conflict may not be either in the best interest of the host country or, it may not be a priority. Second, is the result of these groups' fragmented nature. Each group is likely to contain fractions that support different actors in the conflict. While each fraction lobbies for the host country's support, the host country can become involved in the conflict according to its own interests and justify it by the presence of these lobby efforts. In either case, diaspora groups become a policy tool for host countries. This process sometimes extends to regime change efforts in authoritarian homelands either by the initiation or the support of the host country.

Despite certain policy advantages diaspora groups represent for host countries, their increasing number and influence also pose a threat to the nation-state. Traditionally, in dealing with ethnic diversity, nation-states demanded: "exclusive citizenship, border control, linguistic conformity and political obedience" (Cohen 1996, 531). The international system we are living in is challenging all of these. Social identities do not necessarily overlap with national boundaries and this leads to competing loyalties. Cohen (1996, 532) describes the new structure as "the world is being organized vertically by nation-states and regions, but horizontally by an overlapping, permeable, multiple systems of interaction." These social identities provide individuals with most of what the national identities did until recently only at a smaller scale. With globalization, this scale is becoming greater and the cross-border nature of diaspora identities create certain opportunities that the nation-state cannot compete with.

Until recently, the number of diaspora groups powerful enough to influence their host country's policies was limited. These were mostly groups that left their homeland a long time ago and that benefited from a network of similar groups of the same origin. The long period of time had allowed group members to establish themselves in their new community and improve their status gradually. As a result, they had better access to economic and political resources.

However, the passage of time, by itself, does not appear to be sufficient. Not all groups that migrated in the distant past are equally effective. There are two other factors that play a role. These are the number and concentration of group members. While a larger group can tolerate certain divisions, members that are concentrated in an area will more easily organize internally before they focus on international networking.

To these factors, we can add two new factors that act as multipliers. The first is the group's ability to establish ties with the homeland. This not only increases the resources available to diaspora groups, assuming these relations are friendly but also elevates their status in the eyes of their home country from a purely economic one, as a source of remittances, to one that also has a political dimension. The second is the ability and ease to establish networks with groups that share the same identity but live in different countries. This also influences the availability of resources, but more importantly, it helps reinforce the common identity.

While these factors contribute to the strength and effectiveness of diaspora networks, they can also be a source of conflict between group members and the host society they live in by raising questions on identification and loyalty. Increasing interactions with other states and external groups may lead others to regard the group and its members with suspicion. This results in a diaspora security dilemma where various groups attempt to organize in order to benefit from the diaspora status, elevating their importance in the eyes of their home country, only to find that their identity and loyalty are questioned by the host country and society. This security dilemma is likely behind the reluctance of some such groups to advance their ties to their homelands.

Under these circumstances, it is hardly beneficial for a homeland to have its diaspora groups marginalized and excluded from the policymaking processes in the country they live in. One way to deal with this problem for homelands is to support these groups and their members to establish themselves in their host country before placing expectations on them and avoid over-eagerness that may cause uneasiness in host countries.

This may require them to develop different policies when they target different sections of the diaspora group. Shain and Barth (2003, 450) divide the members of the mobilized diasporas into three categories: core members, passive members, and silent members. The core members are the elites that lead the organization efforts and are more active, hence can appeal for mobilization of the larger diaspora. These are the members that also have a higher status in the host society. Home countries have to be more careful in their dealings with them in order not to damage their position in the host country. The second category, passive members are likely to be available for mobilization. Even though they are not active in the daily affairs of the group, they are conscious of the common identity and first to mobilize when they are called upon. Finally, silent members are the group of people who share the same identity but are not involved in the organization. They

tend to mobilize when a crisis occurs. This is the second group home countries need to focus their policies on. Identification and organization of these members is bound to increase the strength and effectiveness of diaspora organizations and core members that represent them.

Conclusion

What we understand from the term diaspora went through a period of significant change over the past few decades. Partly as a result of the changes in the international system, partly because of the improvements in technology, more and more groups claim diaspora status. This changed the way we define and categorize diasporas. With a number of competing definitions and categorizations available, the literature on the topic expanded greatly.

The emergence of new diaspora groups as new actors led to more practical issues as well. Being recognized as a diaspora group changes how their homelands view a group improving its status in their host country. Consequently, in addition to group members attempting to create networks, homelands also became active in organizing diasporas. This, in turn, sometimes led to conflicts between diasporas as well as diasporas and their host societies.

It is yet unclear how the process will advance. An optimist view suggests that "liberal democracies can construct 'an egalitarian multi-cultural society' where 'it is possible, without threat to the overall unity of the national society, to recognize that minorities have a right to their own language in family and community contexts, the right to practice their own religion, the right to organize domestic and family relations in their own way, and the right to maintain communal customs'" (Cohen 1996, 533). This view sees the identities of diaspora groups as a richness and focuses on their contribution to their host society.

On the opposite side of the same coin, a pessimist view would argue that "certain values and ways of life that are imported are simply incompatible with the way in which western liberal democracies (in particular) have evolved" (Cohen 1996, 530). We are clearly seeing the signs of this view in some political parties and movements that have been on the rise over the past decade or so.

A more realistic approach is presented by Lyons and Mandaville (2010, 5) who point out that "diasporas are not pre-destined to play one or another political role because, like political parties, interest groups, civil society organizations, and insurgencies, they are mobilized as

instruments to influence political agendas across the spectrum." As a result, one needs to focus on the actors that benefit from the use of these instruments, home and host countries. The future of diasporas and diaspora politics will be determined by the structure of the relations they establish with their home and host countries.

References

Anthias, F. (1998). Evaluating `Diaspora': Beyond Ethnicity? Sociology, 32(3), 557–580. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038598032003009

Barbulescu, Roxana. (2008). What is the Tool of Globalization Good for? Supra-National Actors and the Integration of the Jewish Community/Diaspora in Contemporary Germany. 2 (1), 82-101.

Bruneau, Michel. (2008).

Cohen, Robin (1996) *Diasporas and the nation-state: from victims to challengers.* International Affairs (London), Vol.72 (No.3). pp. 507-520.

Bokser Liwerant, Judit. (2015). Globalization, Transnationalism, Diasporas: Facing New Realities and Conceptual Challenges in *Penser Global: Internationalisation et Globalisation des Sciences Humaines et Socialies* eds. Michel Wieviorka, Laurent Lévi-Strauss, Gwenaëlle Lieppe. Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.

Butler, Kim D."Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse." *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, vol. 10 no. 2, 2001, pp. 189-219. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/dsp.2011.0014

Jolle Demmers (2002) Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, Long-Distance Nationalism, and Delocalisation of Conflict Dynamics,Javnost - The Public, 9:1, 85-96, DOI: 10.1080/13183222.2002.11008795

Leblang, David. (2010). Familiarity Breeds Investment: Diaspora Networks and International Investment. *The American Political Science Review,* 104 (3), 584-600.

Lyons, Terrence and Peter Mandaville, Diasporas in Global Politics. *George Mason University Center for Global Studies Policy Brief*, June 2010, 1-6.

Rios, Michael and Naomi Adiv. (2010). Geographies of Diaspora: A Review. *UC Davis Center for Regional Change.*

Shain, Yossi and Aharon Barth. (2003). Diasporas and International Relations Theory. *International Organization,* 57 (3), 449-479.

Tashmin, Nushrat. (2016). Diaspora and Multiculturalism. *World Scientific News,* 28, 13-29.

Tsagarousianou, R. (2004). Rethinking the concept of diaspora: mobility, connectivity and communication in a globalised world. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, (1), 52–65. DOI: http://doi.org/10.16997/wpcc.203

Table – 1: Diaspora definitions

Safran (1991)	Cohen (1997)	Butler (2001)
• Dispersal to at least two locations. • A collective vision, memory and myth of a homeland. • Alienation from hostland. • A hope for returning to their homeland. • An ongoing relationship with homeland.	• The dispersal of the group must be the result of a traumatic experience, a pursuit of work or trade, and colonial ambitions. • A commitment to the homeland's maintenance, restoration, safety, prosperity, and even in some cases its creation. • A group consciousness sustained over a long period of time including a sense of empathy and solidarity with other members of the group in the hostland. • A potential for contribution to the hostland when a tolerance for pluralism is present.	• Multiple destinations for the dispersal because diaspora requires a scattering, not a transfer • Some relationship with an existing or imaginary homeland • Self-awareness of the group's identity • Existence over at least two generations.

Table – 2: Diaspora categories (Source: Anteby-Yemini and Berthomière (2005))

Medam (1993)	Sheffer (1993)	Bruneau (1995)	Cohen (1997)
• "Crystallised diasporas," where there is an efficient network in place. • "Fluid diasporas," where the group's is not quite as clear, often leading a to looser network.	• "State-based diasporas" that have a homeland in existence. • "Stateless diasporas" that do not.	• Religious. • Entrepreuneurial. • Political diasporas.	• Victim diasporas. • Labor diasporas. • Imperial diasporas. • Trade diasporas. • Cultural diasporas.