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

As we have seen throughout this book, 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. Theoretically, diasporas challenge traditional state institutions of citizenship and loyalty by resting at the nexus of domestic and international politics. Above all, they are regarded as a force in identity formation. Since diasporas reside outside the state but claim a legitimate stake in it, they defy
the conventional meaning of the state. They are therefore defined as the
degenerative Other of the nation-state, as challengers of its traditional
boundaries, as transnational transporters of cultures, and as manifesta-
tions of deterritorialized communities.3

Diasporas also operate as ethnic lobbies in liberal hostlands and as
advocates of a multicultural foreign policy.4 They campaign to democra-
tize authoritarian homeland regimes5 and are a force in the global econ-
omy assisting and changing the character of homelands’ economies.6
More generally, diasporas are increasingly able to promote transnational
ties, to act as bridges or 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.”7 Yet, diasporic influence is not always constructive. Diasporic
activists may be a major source of violence and instability in their homeland.
As actors in conflict, just as diasporas can be advocates of peace
processes, so too can they also be spoilers. Diasporas often support
homeland struggles against neighboring states, or kin communities’
struggles to obtain statehood. Their help may be critical to nation build-
ing and state consolidation in the homelands, making the views of the
diaspora regarding national conflict a weighty factor in the deliberations
of homeland leaders. Diasporas may also constitute actors in what
Samuel Huntington termed the “clash of civilizations” and may even
broaden the conflict by importing it to hostlands or by dealing in inter-
national crime and terrorism.8 Given their importance, and since they are
a permanent feature in the imperfect nation-state system,9 diasporas now
receive growing attention from decision makers around the world. So too
the study of diasporas nowadays constitutes a growing intellectual indus-
try, with numerous academic conferences and writings devoted to the
subject.10 Yet, despite the increasing recognition of their importance in
international affairs, international relations (IR) theory has not ade-
quately incorporated this phenomenon. This chapter seeks to fill that
void. How can IR theories help to better understand diasporic activities,
and how can the study of diasporic international activities enrich existing
IR approaches?

I argue that diasporic activities can be understood better by setting
their study in the theoretical space shared by constructivism and liberal-
ism. 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 iden-
tity. 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 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. 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, I 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, despite their international location, diasporic activities and influence in the homeland, 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. Both approaches can and should use the diasporic perspective to deepen the explanations of the phenomena on which they focus.

The first section offers typologies of diasporic international roles and interests. I choose to focus on the role I consider theoretically most interesting: diasporas as independent actors exerting influence on homeland foreign policies. Next, I incorporate 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 following section theorizes about factors affecting success or failure of diasporic attempts to affect homeland foreign policies. The Armenian case study is then presented. The conclusion offers a comparison of the Jewish and Armenian cases and recommendations for further research.

Throughout the chapter examples are mainly drawn from the Jewish-Israeli interaction. As noted earlier 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 dias-
pora-homeland nexus. Moreover, the case of the Jewish-Israeli interaction is often singled out by other diasporas and their kin states as a model to be emulated. It is instructive to apply our theoretical insight by delving into Armenia’s relations with its diaspora. This case study offers a within-case variance in diasporic impact on homeland foreign policy. The comparison with the Jewish-Israeli case also reflects the variation in the impact of diasporas on homelands’ foreign policy.

Although the two cases share similarities in terms of relations between the homeland and the diaspora, their respective abilities to affect homeland foreign policy diverge significantly. This difference derives from four main elements: 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**

In all my works I have defined diaspora as a people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnoreligious homeland, whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control. Diaspora members identify themselves and/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.11 Members of mobilized diasporas may be divided into three categories: core members, passive members, and silent members. Core members are the organizing elites, intensely 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 but who may mobilize in times of crisis. Diasporas are 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 of home or host governments.12

**Diasporic Roles**

Following Milton Esman’s early typology, I collapse his seven classes of diasporic activity into two major types—active and passive—which then create three role types of diasporas in the international arena.13
First, diasporas can be passive actors. Diasporas are passive actors when they are interjected into international relations not by their own doing. There are three well-known reasons for this as well as a fourth highly important but less recognized one. First, a diaspora may be in need of foreign help vis-à-vis its hostland. For example, Israeli foreign policy has placed a high priority on saving Jews individually and as groups, expending great resources to free Jews in Syria, the USSR, Argentina, Romania, Ethiopia, and elsewhere. Yet this has always been done in the context of the Zionist vision of the ingathering of the exiles, of ultimately uniting the nation inside the state, and not of perpetuating Jewish communities in their foreign domiciles. In a second scenario, homelands may aspire to represent their people, including those residing outside the state, regardless of the inclination of diasporic members to be 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 on internal and/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.” A third kind of passive circumstance is when diasporas cannot control their status as perceived members of a remote homeland, and they thus become implicated in the homeland’s international affairs. The terror attacks allegedly perpetrated by the Hezbollah with Iranian backing against the Jewish community in Argentina in 1994, within the context of the conflict in Lebanon, is a case in point.

A fourth, mostly unrecognized passive diasporic role is perhaps best characterized as political-cultural or even symbolic. The German-Jewish reality today is in many ways a microcosm of the larger web of political influences and processes operating in the international system that helps us to disentangle domestic politics and identity-building processes from geopolitical considerations, multilateral and bilateral interactions, civilizational clashes, and the politics of Diaspora and kinship affinity. The Jewish community in Germany sits at the nexus of the German and Jewish questions: qua Jews, the community is a constant reminder of the past and the challenges of the future. The very idea of a Jewish community in “the land of the perpetrators” still seems unthinkable for many; yet reality has prevailed, with the German Jewish community constituting the fastest growing Jewish community outside Israel. In some people’s minds, this reality marks the beginning of a renaissance of Jewish life and culture in Germany with the potential of reinvigorating European Jewry
once again. Joschka Fischer, the former German foreign minister, expressed the view of many when he said that the rebuilding of the Jewish community in Germany represented the country’s second chance and remained a standard by which Germany would continue to be judged. Most important, the symbolism and the historical memory attached to the reality of Jewish existence within Germany today is a critical dimension and a common link to the transatlantic alliance and the way Germany defines its role in the Middle East. In other words, the meaning assigned to Jewish life in Germany by a variety of international actors has consequences for the conduct of international politics. The point is that the German-Jewish community has not actively chosen this role, but this role is entrusted to it because of the importance assigned to the Holocaust and Jewish issue in the postwar German state and beyond (especially in the American-Jewish community, which often sees itself as a guardian of and a voice for Jewish kinship). Under all these circumstances, diasporas play a passive role. The active actors are the homelands and/or other states and groups. Academic analysis of these cases belongs to the standard IR scholarship dealing with foreign policy and international behavior; I shall not deal with this role type in this chapter.

Second, diasporas can be active actors, influencing the foreign policies of their hostlands. Diasporas, especially those in democratic-liberal societies, often organize as interest groups in order to influence the foreign policies of their hostlands vis-à-vis their homelands. This phenomenon is best exemplified in the United States, where, it has been argued, the power of various ethnic lobbies has brought about a fragmentation of American foreign policy. When addressing the relations between ethnic American lobbies and American national interest, Tony Smith has warned against the narrow policy agenda of diasporas that undermine the nation’s “common good.” Samuel Huntington also views diaspora influence on the foreign policy of the host state negatively, citing instances where diasporas supporting their home governments against the United States become sources of spies to gather information for their homeland governments and serve as a corruptible influence in the American electoral process. He claims that, as with commercial interests, American national interest is increasingly being eroded as a result of U.S. foreign policy being driven by ethnic interests. Others, however, challenge the view that ethnic lobbies and transnational ties threaten the coherence of U.S. foreign policy or endanger its national security. They see ethnic lobbies as part of American pluralism or as counterweights to traditional political elites. Again, there is an extensive body of literature
on this topic (albeit apparently focused almost exclusively on the American case); I shall not deal with this role type either.20

Third, diasporas can actively influence the foreign policies of their homelands. Diasporas that achieve economic and political power can affect directly 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 (e.g., Armenian or Taiwanese parties). Above all, they may achieve leverage at home by economic means, through investments in national projects or through political contributions. Diasporic political contributions have influenced electoral results in many countries including Israel.21

This chapter focuses solely on this role type of diaspora, as actively influencing the foreign policies of homelands. I do so because this role type is the least theoretically developed of the three. I 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? As we saw in chapter 4, there are four main motivations for wishing to exert influence on the homeland. These motives are not mutually exclusive and are often intertwined. The motives may be focused outside the hostland (first two types), or 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). The diaspora must interface with the homeland government over a number of issues and concerns: a definition of identity—what Martin Buber called a “vocation of uniqueness,” feelings of solidarity and kinship (e.g., the struggle over the right to immigration for Soviet Jews in the early 1970s), maintenance of memory (e.g., Armenians and the genocide memory), or financial considerations (e.g., policies regarding repayment of Holocaust debts). It is the first possibility—interest in a definition of the people’s identity—on which I offer a theoretical twist to the constructivist approach. Identity does not always determine interests, as constructivism posits,22 but 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.

In August 2002, Britain’s chief rabbi Jonathan Sacks questioned Israeli activities in the occupied territories that he considered incompatible with Judaism. Yet because Sacks’s 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. It did not help his case with his critics that these remarks were made in an interview with the *Guardian*, a newspaper noted for the virulently anti-Israel—and some have even alleged anti-Semitic—positions expressed in its pages (at the time that Sacks made his comments, the paper was serializing his latest book). British National Zionist Council co-chair Eric Graus stated, “We are worried that this will be used by the Arabs as an indication that there is a split and that their acts of violence and terrorism are working and that it will encourage more violence.”²³ Rabbi David Rosen, a former chief rabbi of Ireland, expressed similar concerns. *Guardian* columnists staunchly defended Sacks’s comments and his moral authority, even as Sacks himself worked feverishly to distance himself from certain impressions his remarks had created, particularly the sense among some Jews that what he had done reeked of disloyalty and self-abasement. A *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.²⁴

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, well-being, and international alliances are ultimately the concern of its government, and thus diasporas are mostly reactive in this domain. Yet, diasporas perceive certain policies as enhancing or endangering the homeland’s security. This is important for diasporas, either in real terms (i.e., 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 (i.e., as a place that helps them sustain their fading ethnic identity in an assimilating environment).²⁵ Diasporas may therefore try to alter such policies in order 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.26

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—on the left and the right—may be solicited by Israeli political leaders as they debate among themselves critical issues of national security and state boundaries. It is sometimes even the case that homeland leaders define the issue in terms of kinship rather than in terms of the security of the state and its inhabitants, and thus invite diasporic endorsement or criticism of state policy.27

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 (e.g., Jewish-American pressure on Israel to sever its ties with the apartheid regime in South Africa). In the case of material interests, the community may even claim to represent the people’s interests, including those kin members who are residing in the homeland (e.g., 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.

Finally, diasporas might view the homeland’s foreign policy as affecting the narrow bureaucratic interests of their organizations. Since 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, along with its membership, its funding, and the level of attention it receives from elected officials in Washington.28

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 these
motives are based on a perception of shared identity and may lead diasporas to try to exert influence on the homeland’s foreign policies. How can this phenomenon be incorporated into IR theory?

Diasporas and IR Theory

I focus on how diasporas strive to influence the foreign policies of their homelands through the political process in the homeland. The theoretical space 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. On one hand, the liberal approach includes an ideational strand that assumes states’ preferences are “identity-based.” On the other hand, the constructivist approach claims that identities and therefore interests are determined by social interaction in which domestic actors also participate. Furthermore, both constructivism and liberalism share concern for states’ preferences, perceive states as embedded in a larger social context, and acknowledge the importance of a wide variety of nonstate actors. 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.” States are rather also rule-driven role players, seeking identity expression, and governed by the “logic of appropriateness.” 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 debracketed, because it too is a variable shaped by international and domestic forces. In order to understand the dependent variable (international behavior or foreign policy decision making), one must look beyond the intervening variable (inter-
ests), and focus on the independent variable (identity) and the way it is molded.

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.” 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.” This observation is relevant to our discussion, since I posit diasporas as part of the people beyond the scope of the nation-state.

As Doty notes, “constructing the identity of a people is a continual and never-completed project.” 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). Within the social and internal processes, 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].” Yet, this discourse should not be understood in academic terms. As Katzenstein has observed, “The process of construction is typically explicitly political and pits conflicting actors against each other.” 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 resources oriented, but is mainly “the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests, and practices of states.” 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 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.” 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 “unitary claims to a national identity permit the convergence of the state and the people. However, the convergence is never totally fixed.” 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.’” 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. Since national identity is both a variable and a resource, it stands to reason that various groups attach varying importance to it. A resource is usually more valued by those lacking in it. In this case, diasporas attach more importance to national identity, since their identity status is problematic. Furthermore, in terms of foreign policy, “the national identity dynamic can be triggered by international images manipulated by the government or by other actors.” Once triggered, it may be used in order 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.

Diasporas have both the motive and the opportunity to exert influence on the identity construction process, especially in its foreign policy facet. Constructivists dealing with this political process should factor in diasporas as actors 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.” Factoring in diasporic input should be done 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.” 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 both 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 captured it. Consequentially, states do not automatically seek fixed interests (security or power or prosperity, as neorealism and institutionalism claim), but rather pursue particular interests preferred by the specific coalition currently in power.

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. 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.

Diasporas either interject themselves or are interjected into this political process, and should be viewed as one of many domestic interest groups. *Domestic* here does not carry the conventional meaning as opposed to international. More often than not, diasporas are considered by the homelands as domestic actors even though they are outside the nation-state, because they are (as noted earlier) 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 liberal insights about the dynamics of domestic politics (in this and in the next section), liberalism helps us to better understand the influence of diasporas on homelands.

Diasporas 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 analyzed in the next section). In any case, as interest groups, diasporas may use whatever clout
they can in order to advance their interests. Like other interest groups, they use their financial resources, especially since members of diasporas are usually richer than their counterparts at home. Aside from exerting indirect influence through donations to various “civil society” projects, they exert more direct influence through political contributions to parties or candidates of their choice. In many cases, their financial input is perceived as justifying a political voice. Jewish diasporic donors often maintain, and some Israelis agree, that their voices should not be ignored by Israel while their wealth is solicited.

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. Since they are not physically present in the homeland, this has always naturally meant that they do not enjoy direct electoral influence. That, 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 important—by allowing dual citizenship, thus encouraging expatriate voting rights. This tendency serves to highlight the domestic politics aspect of diasporic activity.

Yet, beyond seeking to advance their interests, diasporas have an additional role in the domestic political process. From a liberal perspective, Helen Milner 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.” Just as diasporas, given their international location, are aptly suited to trigger a national identity dynamic by manipulating international images (as mentioned earlier), so are they also 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.51

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) impor-
tant to the homeland government as tools of influence vis-à-vis foreign
governments. Analyzing this relationship between diasporas and home-
land 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 (i.e., a diaspora should
both want to exert influence and have the capacity to do so). This capac-
ity 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 dias-
poric 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 balance of power
between the diaspora and the homeland. All these factors are intercon-
ected.

Degree of Motivation

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, usu-
ally varying according to their position vis-à-vis the identity issue. Dias-
poric 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 perception thereof—of dual loyalty.
For example, during the 1956 Suez campaign, American-Israeli relations
deteriorated due to President 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.
Another factor may be related to cultural impediments. Diasporic Chi-
inese, for example, are culturally bound by a tradition of strict noninter-
ference in affairs of others. Yet a third factor can be labeled frustration,
though it encompasses also anger, fatigue, or contempt. 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, in nondemocratic regimes, civil society organizations are at least discouraged if not prohibited. Civil society groups that claim to organize on behalf of a diaspora, an outsider group within the hostland, tend to be doubly discouraged because they are perceived as being inimical to national unity. There might be cases in which such regimes would seek to exploit a diaspora in order to advance its own foreign policy interests (e.g., 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.52

Beyond this direct effect of the regime’s nature, the hostland affects the ability of a diaspora to exert influence on its homeland also indirectly. By the way the state allows the community to exert influence on itself, it affects the worth of the diaspora as a foreign policy asset in the eyes of the homeland (discussed later). A diaspora in a permeably weak state, such as the United States, can exert influence on the state’s foreign policy toward the homeland. The diaspora is perceived as an asset and is therefore better empowered to exert influence on the homeland. All this 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 one is, would not have held much importance to Israel.53

*Nature of the Homeland*

The same “weakness” element important in the hostland comes into play also in the homeland, albeit not necessarily in the same manner. As in the hostland, policy-making is 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. Since 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 weak in terms of ideological, material, and institutional resources. This is the case with failing states. In such states, not necessarily fully democratic (e.g., Armenia) governments need support in order to survive, and powerful diasporas may render this support—for a price. Thus, weak states, whether democratic or not, invite diasporic influence.

There is another side to the dual loyalty coin. A homeland may perceive a diaspora as a legitimate part of the people and still reject its interventions in sensitive or 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 in the United States, that since Jewish-Americans do not serve in the Israeli army, they should not try to influence Israel’s policy in national security matters. As mentioned earlier, this receptivity element naturally also affects the degree of diasporic motivation.

**Strength Relations between Diaspora and Homeland**

Since I focus on the influence of diasporas on homelands, the strength relations are actually the degree to which the homeland needs the diasporic resources. This need is measured mostly through financial resources that diasporas can invest in their homelands and/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. Yet need is not everything. In order 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 due to the aforementioned distinction between an “over there” orientation and an “over here” one. To the extent the community is divided, its influence weakens, or it might be applied in different directions. Thus, if the homeland is in need of diasporic support, and if 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.

All these 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 in terms of permeability to societal pressures, and the more cohesive the diaspora is (in terms of its organized voice and determination to affect 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, I 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 is determined by the balance of power between the community and the homeland. This balance, in turn, is determined by three factors: 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 as a liability by the homeland. To test these hypotheses I delve into the Armenian case. As noted previously, this example offers a within-case variance in diasporic impact on homeland foreign policy. 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. Because the new Armenian state is weak and permeable, because the diaspora is generally united on kinship matters, and because it came to be perceived as an asset by the homeland, I expect the diaspora to have considerable influence on Armenian foreign policy. As became evident since the restoration of Armenian statehood in 1991, a complex and difficult interaction developed between Armenians inside and outside the state regarding the most basic questions of how Armenian identity should affect foreign policy. This was especially so regarding the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (an Armenian-populated enclave within Azerbaijan) and regarding Armenia’s relations with Turkey. Who has the right to legitimate and authoritative representation of the Armenian people? Over what group of people does the authority of the newly independent Armenian state extend, and for what purpose or national mission?
Regarding foreign policy, should diasporic Armenians constrain the actions of the Armenian state? In what direction should diasporic identity preferences—over here versus over there—influence the content of foreign policy?

The Armenian Case

National calamities, traumas, and struggles for national restoration inform 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.56

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 USSR) 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.”57

Within the Soviet Union a semiautonomous 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 Armenians’ “cultural center of national identity,” ASSR leaders claimed to speak for the “authentic homeland” and the Armenian people as a whole. 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 they had to adjust themselves to Moscow’s dom-
ination. The exiled Dashnaks also faced the strong desire of other geno-
cide survivors to keep the Armenian people unified despite their divisions
and dispersion. Soviet propaganda manipulated the ASSR as the source
of Armenian national pride and peoplehood, in mobilizing diasporic
financial assistance. Recognizing that Armenian independence was a
distant dream and that diasporic life would be long-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 fad-
ing memory of the genocide were seen as the “white massacre,” while
“knowing Armenian and some rudimentary facts about Armenian history
became the [new] license to [diasporic] leadership.”

By the late 1970s, the diaspora and Soviet Armenia achieved a modus
evivendi in their relations. With communism in the ASSR becoming more
tolerable to the diaspora (in part because after 1965 the Soviets allowed
commemorations of the genocide), and with a new generation of dias-
poric Armenians demanding greater militancy in the struggle for geno-
cide recognition, the Dashnaks shelved their anti-Soviet orientation and
entered a new phase in their national crusade. Armenian terrorism (pri-
marily against Turkish targets) won international attention for the Dash-
naks’ cause and helped to rally the diaspora to demand international
recognition of the genocide, albeit mostly via diplomatic efforts. 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.”

In the two largest Western centers of Armenian diaspora—the United
States (more than a million) and France (roughly a half million)—activists
focused their efforts on keeping and spreading the memory of the geno-
cide, in the face of Turkey’s refusal to take responsibility for the atrocities
or even to admit they ever happened. Since 80 percent of diasporic Arme-
nians were descendants of genocide survivors, the memory of this atro-
city became the most important vehicle to transmit a cross-generational
sense of kinship, solidarity, and identity. The Armenian Church also pro-
vided an institutional structure for group cohesiveness and ethnic mobi-
lization. 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 Levon Ter-Petrossian and the Dashnaks, 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 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.63 Thus, Ter-Petrossian earned the ire of the diaspora when he 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. 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.” 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?” Ter-Petrossian 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.64

Ter-Petrossian argued that the diaspora should not intervene in Armenian politics. Yet, he eagerly pursued diasporic funding to build his state-controlled Hayastan All-Armenian Fund and solicited diasporic lobbying efforts in hostland states. One observer wrote that diaspora activists resented the fact that they had become little more than a sugar daddy for the Armenian government.65 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 which exist and function outside their country is unnatural.”66 Since 1991, the diaspora has joined the domestic political scene. In addition to the Dashnaks’ Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), both the ADL-Ramkavar and the SDH were imported from the diaspora.

All parties were slow to build grassroots support and were initially marginal in the face of Ter-Petrossian’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. After a short diaspora-home-land rapprochement, the Dashnaks became Ter-Petrossian’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-Petrossian 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-Petrossian their support.

The Dashnaks, in turn, responded aggressively. 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 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-Petrossian 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 forgo Turkish recognition of its culpability for the genocide. He even lost standing among diasporic sympathizers for underestimating the risk of another genocide without fundamental changes in the policies of Turkey and Azerbaijan.67 In the face of these domestic, international, and intrakin failures, Ter-Petrossian was ultimately forced to resign in 1998. By many accounts, the diaspora was highly instrumental in his removal.68

Clearly, Ter-Petrossian’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. While initially strengthening his position, Ter-Petrossian’s efforts to suppress these influences eventually proved costly. The strong state that he envisioned failed because it had become increasingly dependent on diasporic support and thus more permeable to the preferences of overseas Armenians. Indeed, since independence, Armenia’s economy experienced a rapid collapse in GDP and in national currency and became one of the poorest countries in the world. This economic catastrophe increased Armenian dependence on its diaspora and 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 American foreign aid and is the key factor in persuading Congress to pass and sustain a ban on any foreign aid to Azerbaijan. In fact, only due to diasporic inflow of humanitarian aid, remittances, and private transfers, and diasporic success in extracting disproportionately large amounts of U.S. assistance to Armenia, could the homeland stay afloat. Ter-Petrossian’s domestic failures, compounded by his inability to elicit a positive Turkish response to his overtures, highlighted Armenia’s dependence on diasporic support at the very time he persecuted the Dashnaks. The resulting conundrum eventually led to his downfall.

The newly installed president, Robert Kocharian, quickly recognized the power of the diaspora in defining Armenia’s national goals. Moreover, he emphasized the pursuit of genocide recognition as an integral part of Armenia’s foreign policy agenda. Ronald Suny has written,

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.72

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 powerfully diasporas affect national images of states. Indeed, Armenian diasporic groups have been in the forefront of presenting the case for recognition of the genocide 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.73

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 that ultimately removes 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. 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 ongoing suffering is not felt by the diaspora.74 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, rather 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 chapter focused on the role of diasporas as independent actors exerting influence on their homelands’ foreign policies. Within IR scholar-
ship, I 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 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, tilting the balance of 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 mobilization in their countries of domicile, and 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 successful in lobbying American elected officials to support their respective homelands. Yet, the two diasporas diverge greatly when it comes to influencing their homelands’ foreign policies. This divergence stems from the relative strengths of the homelands vis-à-vis the diasporas, which affect 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 “the poor relative whose very existence was uncertain.” Israeli authorities were mostly viewed as having the moral legitimacy both 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 refrain 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. 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 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. 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, weaken the state’s claim to speak in the name of the Armenian people as a whole, and they make 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 a crucial factor in replacing 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, I 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 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 the term domestic politics to include constituencies not only inside the state but also inside the people. Both approaches can and should use the diasporic perspective to deepen the explanations of the phenomena on which they focus.

In the third section, I 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. 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? Does the fear of being cut off and losing identity push diasporas to advocate more ideational and less compromising homeland policies, in order to gain a sense of belonging?
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 national identity as the tie to the people at large and/or to the homeland would push for a policy that accentuates national particularism at best, and national aggrandizement at worst. Communities focused on kinship identity as part of an effort to integrate within 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. True, 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. 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 but also because they truly believe that it is the best approach for the state of Israel.

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