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Can conflict-generated diasporas be moderate actors during episodes of contested sovereignty? Lebanese and Albanian diasporas compared

MARIA KOINOVA*

Abstract. Conflict-generated diasporas are considered likely to maintain radical behaviours. This article seeks to explain *why* and *how* they nevertheless adopt moderate claims, especially when advocating highly sensitive issues such as state sovereignty. Focusing on groups in the US I investigate the Lebanese diaspora linked to the pro-sovereignty movement in Lebanon (2000–2005) and the Albanian diaspora linked to Kosovo's independence movement (1999–2008). The contentious episodes take place during the original homeland's post-conflict reconstruction. Embedded in the literatures on diasporas, conflicts, and transnational social movements, this article argues that instrumental approach towards the achievement of sovereignty explains why conflict-generated diasporas adopt moderate behaviours. Diasporas hope that by linking their claims to a global political opportunity structure of 'liberalism' they 'play the game' of the international community interested in promoting the liberal paradigm, and thus expect to obtain its support for the legitimisation of their pro-sovereignty goals. Diaspora entrepreneurs advance their claims in a two-step process. Initially they use frame bridging and frame extension to formulate their existing grievances. Then, an increased responsiveness from their host-state emerges to sustain their initial moderation. While individuals or groups in diaspora circles occasionally issue threats during the contentious episodes, the majority in the diaspora consider moderate politics as their dominant behaviour.

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Introduction

The increased pace of globalisation and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 created new scholarly interest in the role of diasporas in international politics.

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While international migration and diaspora activism have been rooted deeply in history, two important changes took place in the first decade of the 21st century. Global communication networks, particularly the Internet, grew exponentially to incorporate both industrialised and less developed societies.¹ Embedded transnationally in both their homelands and host-lands, diasporas started enjoying simultaneous access to these political contexts, developing the capacity to respond quickly to political projects around the globe and surpass states' abilities to control them. Moreover, engaged in the 'war on terrorism' and hosting a significant number of diasporas, liberal states increased their vigilance of migrant activities because terrorists were mostly of foreign origin and emerged out of diaspora communities in the Western part of the world. Scholarship in the late 20th century concentrated primarily on migrants' integration and assimilation in host societies and on transnationalism and the impact of diaspora remittances on homeland economic development. However, security aspects of diaspora activism remained under-researched and under-theorised. The research program is still dominated by case studies of diasporas engaged in homeland conflicts but international relations and comparative politics theoretical frameworks are being used with growing frequency to develop larger generalisations.² The question of whether diasporas and the specific individuals and groups that constitute them are likely to be radical or moderate actors in world politics has recently preoccupied newer scholarly endeavours.

My account is embedded in this emerging literature and uses works on transnational social movements as theoretical leverage to understand diaspora mobilisation. I focus on diasporas that originated in violent conflicts. Current scholarship views this type of diaspora as more likely to perpetuate conflict in the homelands due to the trauma of displacement, myth of return, and attachment to territory.³ Contrary to such assertions, this study demonstrates that dominant groups among conflict-generated diasporas can act moderately even during contentious episodes marked by an issue of high national sensitivity, such as a pro-sovereignty movement. In contrast to earlier works interested in diaspora engagement with 'hot' phases of homeland conflicts, I focus on contentious episodes taking place during post-conflict reconstruction.

Why and *how* do diasporas become moderate actors? I argue that while securitisation of migration after 9/11, internalisation of democratic norms, and exposure to peace-building initiatives do not explain moderate behaviour, an

¹ Jennifer Brinkerhoff, 'Digital Diasporas and Conflict Prevention', *Review of International Studies*, 32 (2006), pp. 25–47.

² Yossi Shain, *Kinship and Diasporas in International Affairs* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007); Hazel Smith and Paul Stares (eds), *Diasporas in Conflict* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007); Fiona Adamson, 'Crossing Borders. International Migration and National Security', *International Security*, 31 (2006), pp. 165–199; Fiona Adamson, 'Global Liberalism Versus Political Islam', *International Studies Review* (2005), pp. 547–69; Terrence Lyons, 'Diasporas and Homeland Conflict', in Miles Kahler and Barbara Walter (eds), *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2006); Sarah Wayland, 'Ethnonationalist Networks and Transnational Opportunities: The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora', *Review of International Studies*, 20 (2004), pp. 405–26; Christine Fair, 'Diaspora Involvement in Insurgencies', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 11 (2005), pp. 125–56; Daniel Byman et al., *Trends for Outside Support in Insurgent Movements* (RAND Corporation, 2001); Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, *Greed and Grievances in Civil War*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 2355 (2000).

³ Thomas Faist, 'Transnationalization in International Migration', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23 (2000), pp. 189–222; Lyons, 'Homeland Conflict', pp. 112–17.

instrumentalist approach towards the achievement of a pro-sovereignty goal does. Influential diaspora organisations hope that by linking their claims to a global political opportunity structure of 'liberalism', they 'play the game' of the international community interested in promoting the liberal paradigm and thus hope to secure its cooperation to legitimise their pro-sovereignty goals.⁴ An instrumentalist approach prompts them to adopt a peaceful contentious repertoire including lobbying, petitions, non-violent demonstrations, and Internet and media messages. In a two-step process, diaspora organisations initially formulate their claims invoking frames that link sovereignty with discourse on democratisation. They do so without intervention from external actors. However, the second step is the *responsiveness* of their host-state to these claims that helps *sustain* and *expand* their initial moderate behaviour and prevent other diaspora individuals and groups from becoming more radical over time. In addition to the responsiveness of the state, sporadic violence in the homeland helps sustain collective action in the diaspora. This argument derives from an in-depth comparative examination of the Lebanese and Albanian diasporas in the US, linked to the pro-sovereignty movements in Lebanon (2000–2005) and Kosovo (1999–2008) respectively.

I begin by discussing major theoretical findings associated with conflict-generated diasporas and relevant aspects of the transnational social movements literature concerning diaspora mobilisation. The next section lays out the research design and the methodology and discusses how the chosen contentious episodes in the homeland constitute 'strong tests' for moderate diaspora mobilisation. Then I discuss major characteristics of the Lebanese and Albanian diasporas, which differ yet still engage in a similar mobilisation pattern *vis-à-vis* their homelands. The next section rejects three competing hypotheses and lays out the central argument and the processes of mobilisation. I draw on extensive interviews gathered between 2005 and 2007 from lobby and other diaspora groups mainly based in the US. My conclusions link the findings to the latest scholarship on diasporas and conflicts and sketch avenues for future research.

Major theoretical accounts

Various case studies on the perpetuation of conflicts in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Croatia, Ethiopia, Israel/Palestine and Kosovo point to the common practices of diaspora engagement. Diasporas sponsor radical local factions, tax their own members to maintain exiled governments, aid in arms procurement and recruiting fighters, lobby homeland institutions and international organisations to put pressure on homeland governments, disseminate propaganda, exchange information on the Internet, and stage demonstrations to galvanise international support.⁵ Due to their traumatic experiences of displacement, conflict-generated diasporas strive to keep the past relevant, and advance emotional and symbolic rather than instrumental relationships to the homeland, presenting obstacles to

⁴ On liberalism as a global political opportunity structure see Adamson, 'Global Liberalism', pp. 547–69.

⁵ Paul Hockenos, *Homeland Calling: Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Yossi Shain, 'The Role of Diasporas in Conflict Perpetuation and

conflict resolution. Conflict-generated diasporas strive to avoid assimilation and marginalisation in their adopted societies and try to preserve the institutions and causes, such as perpetuation of homeland conflict, that keep diasporas intact.⁶ Institutions built specifically for the purpose of conflict are much more effective in sustaining them than are those advancing a wider range of goals.⁷ Whether generated by conflicts or not, stateless diasporas are highly mobilised and maintain stronger roots to their kin in the homeland than state-linked ones.⁸

Scholars are aware that conflict-generated diasporas differ from those originating in economic and other voluntary migration on the basis that their trauma has become 'frozen in time' in distant lands. Nevertheless, scholars have treated the concept of conflict-generated diaspora rather randomly so far, especially in view of recent evidence that Irish, Kurds and Ethiopians were able to act in moderate ways *vis-à-vis* their homeland conflicts.⁹ A conflict-generated diaspora could support violence in the homeland under certain political circumstances, but act more moderately under others. Thus, discovering the conditions under which diaspora groups mobilise in moderate ways can shed more light on the concept itself.

How much do we know about the relationship between diasporas and their homelands during post-conflict reconstruction? Most of the literature emphasises that diasporas mitigate homeland conflicts by aiding economic development. Between 12–14 per cent of the GDP per capita of post-conflict economies may be sustained by diaspora financial remittances.¹⁰ Nevertheless, diasporas could continue to act as spoilers of peace processes. A large-N study on the economy of civil war demonstrated that the size of a diaspora affects whether conflict will be renewed after civil warfare. Countries that have recently experienced civil war and that have large diasporas in the US have a 36 per cent chance of renewed conflict, while countries with small diasporas have only a 6 per cent chance.¹¹ These accounts demonstrate that diasporas can project multiple behaviours during post-conflict reconstruction but fail to analyse the mechanisms and processes that cause them.

Few scholars of diaspora politics have employed theories of transnational social movements to explain diaspora mobilisation.¹² Transnational diaspora activism is a form of contentious collective action, although it is not based on universal principles and the solidarity of anti-globalisation, feminist or environmentalist movements, but on the particularistic concerns of actors engaged in identity politics and embedded in ideology, nationalism and sectarianism. Borrowing from mainstream collective action theory and more recent political process theory, this new

Resolution', *SAIS Review*, 22 (2002), pp. 115–44; Fiona Adamson, 'Mobilizing for the Transformation of Home', in 'New Approaches to Migration', pp. 155–68; Fair, 'Diaspora Involvement', pp. 125–56; Brinkerhoff, 'Digital Diasporas', pp. 25–47; Byman et al., 'Trends', 2001.

⁶ Shain, 'Perpetuation', pp. 115–44.

⁷ Fair, 'Diaspora Involvement', pp. 125–56.

⁸ Sheffer, 'Diaspora Politics', 2003.

⁹ Denise Natali, 'Kurdish Interventions in the Iraq War' in 'Diasporas in Conflict', pp. 196–217; Lyons, 'Homeland Conflict', pp. 112–7.

¹⁰ Feargal Cochrane, 'Civil Society beyond the State', *GMJ Mediterranean Edition*, 2 (2007); Anna Lindley, 'Remittances in Fragile Settings', *HiCN Working Paper*, 27 (March 2007); Khalid Koser, 'African Diasporas and Post-conflict Reconstruction', in 'Diasporas in Conflict', pp. 239–54.

¹¹ Collier and Hoeffler, 'Greed', 2000.

¹² Smith and Stares, 'Diasporas in Conflict', 2007; Adamson 'Global Liberalism', 2005; Wayland 'Ethnonationalist Networks', 2005.

scholarship emphasises that political opportunity structures matter in whether and how diasporas mobilise.¹³ Discursive, institutional, or geopolitical political opportunity structures could allow for the activation of latent grievances.¹⁴ Framing processes and mobilising structures of informal and formal organisations can set diaspora grievances in action.¹⁵ I have argued elsewhere that social mechanisms such as attribution of opportunity and threat, brokerage, and emotional responses are a constitutive part of transnational diaspora mobilisation *vis-à-vis* secessionist movements.¹⁶

In order to better understand the moderate mobilisation of diasporas in this study, I draw on works discussing framing processes and their relationship to political opportunity structures. Snow and Benford define a frame as ‘interpretative schemata that simplifies and condenses the “world out there” by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment.’¹⁷ Effective frames demonstrate that the existing *status quo* is not natural, identify a responsible party or parties, and propose credible solutions.¹⁸ Frames usually emerge early during a contentious cycle, but once created, ‘leaders become identified with them and construct their repertoires as variations around themes that have animated successful struggles’.¹⁹ ‘Injustice’, ‘global justice’, and ‘rights’ are considered powerful frames operating locally or transnationally.²⁰ Framing takes place alongside four strategic ‘alignment processes’, among which ‘frame bridging’ is the most common.²¹ Frames do not operate in a vacuum, but are dynamically related to political and cultural opportunities and constraints.²² In the transnational realm, local insurgents capture ‘distant imaginations’ and the support of international actors by successfully ‘matching’ five shared elements with their international counterparts: substantive goals, customary tactics, ethical precepts, cultural attitudes, and organisational needs.²³

Finally, in order to explain why conflict-generated diasporas might engage in moderate mobilisation, I examine three generalisations (discussed in more detail under ‘Competing Explanations’, below). First, securitisation of migration after

¹³ Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Donatella della Porta et al. (eds), *Transnational Protest and Global Activism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005). Aminzade et al., *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Thomas Risse et al., *The Power of Human Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹⁴ Adamson, ‘Global Liberalism’, 2005; Wayland, ‘Ethnonationalist Networks’, 2005.

¹⁵ Wayland, ‘Ethnonationalist Networks’, 2005.

¹⁶ Maria Koinova, ‘Diasporas and Secessionist Conflicts: Mobilization of the Albanian, Armenian and Chechen Diasporas’ *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (forthcoming, 2010).

¹⁷ David Snow and Robert Benford, ‘Master Frames and Cycles of Protest’, in Aldon Morris et al. (eds), *Frontiers of Social Movement Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 137.

¹⁸ Keck and Sikkink, ‘Activists’, p. 19.

¹⁹ Sidney Tarrow, ‘Mentalities, Political Cultures, and Collective Action Frames: Constructing Meanings through Action’, in Aldon Morris et al. (eds), *Frontiers*, pp. 186–97.

²⁰ Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Tarrow, ‘Transnational Activism’, 2005; William Gamson, ‘The Social Psychology of Collective Action’, in Morris et al., ‘Frontiers’, 1992.

²¹ Robert Benford and David Snow, ‘Framing Processes and Social Movements’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26 (2000), pp. 625.

²² Benford and Snow, ‘Framing Processes’, p. 628.

²³ Bob, ‘Marketing’, pp. 28–37.

9/11 and growing fusion between law enforcement and national security missions resulted in increased monitoring of migration.²⁴ These changes have encouraged the majority among certain diasporas, such as the Tamils in Canada, to withdraw their support and dissociate themselves from radical groups sustaining local conflicts.²⁵ A second possible explanation is that after being socialised with democratic values in their host-lands, diasporas may have deeply internalised them and be interested in promoting them back to their countries of origin.²⁶ Finally, it is also possible that leaders of conflict-generated diasporas may have been exposed to peace-building programs aimed at re-framing categorical views concerning the homeland conflicts.²⁷

Characteristics of this study

I limit the scope of study to periods of post-conflict reconstruction and to episodes of contested sovereignty. I chose post-conflict reconstruction for a significant reason. When violence occurs in the homeland, diasporas usually offer unequivocal support.²⁸ However, post-conflict reconstruction offers a wider array of options. ‘Security dilemmas’ and ‘commitment problems’ increase the probability of the initiation and escalation of violence.²⁹ Simultaneously, multiple peace-building agents pursue a general strategy of promoting stable peace and democratisation.³⁰ When political liberalisation and founding elections take place, diaspora groups become emboldened to influence homeland politics due to the low costs of engagement and higher likelihood for success in a volatile transition environment.³¹ Thus, diasporas’ choices matter especially because they act against the backdrop of weak state institutions unable to fully control the activities of local and foreign actors. I further narrow this work’s scope to explore episodes of contested

²⁴ Fiona Adamson, ‘Crossing Borders. International Migration and National Security’, *International Security*, 31 (2006), pp. 165–99; Christopher Rudolph, ‘Security and the Political Economy of International Migration’, *American Political Science Review*, 97 (2003), pp. 603–20; Peter Andreas and Richard Price, ‘From War Fighting to Crime Fighting: Transforming the American National Security State’, *International Studies Review*, 3 (2001), pp. 31–52.

²⁵ Christine Fair, ‘Sustaining Conflict and Pushing for Peace’, in ‘Diasporas in Conflict’, pp. 172–95.

²⁶ Yossi Shain, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Risse, ‘The Power of Human Rights’, 1999; Marta Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, *International Organization*, 52 (1998), pp. 887–917; Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security, Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

²⁷ Lyons, ‘Diasporas in Conflict’, pp. 123–7.

²⁸ Shain, ‘Marketing’, p. 68.

²⁹ James Fearon, ‘Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict’, in David Lake and Donald Rothchild (eds), *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict. Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 107–27; Barry Posen, ‘The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict’, in Michael E. Brown (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 103–25.

³⁰ Roland Paris, *At War’s End* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 19.

³¹ Rey Koslowski, ‘International Migration and the Globalization of Domestic Politics. A Conceptual Framework’, in Rey Koslowski (ed.), *International Migration and the Globalization of Domestic Politics* (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2005), p. 13.

sovereignty, since they constitute strong tests for my theoretical proposition.³² Contested sovereignty is closely associated with substantial nationalist claims, in which diasporas – as identity-based actors linked to a particular homeland – have an important stake. Contentious episodes, even during post-conflict reconstruction, may give incentives to resort to violence and other transgressive practices.

A combination of two methods is employed in this study: most different systems design and process-tracing. In order to explain *why* moderate diaspora behaviour occurs, I use the most different systems design, comparing different diasporas alongside a number of control variables and identifying a common outcome of their behaviour.³³ The most different systems design has an inherent problem in claiming control over all factors that can lead to a similar outcome so its findings are probabilistic. I complement this study with the method of process-tracing in order ‘to relax unrealistic assumptions about the definitive results from the comparison alone’.³⁴ Process-tracing is appropriate to this study for a number of reasons. It explains *how* moderation occurs by unpacking the relationship between the causal and the outcome variables and demonstrating intervening processes. A ‘within-case’ comparison is appropriate in designs where step-by-step sequential logic – such as diaspora mobilisation – is the subject of research. Process tracing also facilitates theory-building in relatively new research agendas by identifying new variables and their causal relationships.³⁵

The dependent variable is *moderate diaspora behaviour*. Under this term I understand the diasporic claims and practices based on what McAdam *et al.* call ‘contained contention’. Under this mode of contention actors employ ‘well established means of claim making’ in episodic, public and collective interaction with other claim makers, oftentimes governments.³⁶ The diasporic ‘repertoire’ is peaceful and includes non-violent rhetoric, petitions, publications, issuance of public documents in the media and on the Internet, non-violent demonstrations and lobby activities to adopt specific policies or legislation. The independent variable is instrumentalist pursuit of homeland sovereignty. Under this term I understand rationalist rather than ideological or emotional motivation for diasporas to advance their sovereignty goal. Leading diaspora groups advance their pro-sovereignty claims on the basis of calculated self-interest. They frame their grievances in democratic discourse that appeals to international counterparts which are ultimately in a position to advance pro-sovereignty aspirations.

This study is based on observations of the Lebanese and Albanian diasporas in the US. I selected them for three reasons. First, they belong to the same sub-type of conflict-generated diasporas that is of theoretical interest to this study. As I will discuss further in the next section, Lebanese were displaced by the protracted Lebanese civil war (1975–1990), and Albanians by the sporadic violence and warfare in Kosovo (1981–1999). While I acknowledge that other diasporas belong

³² A ‘strong test’ is one whose outcome is unlikely to result from any factor except the operation or failure of the theory. Stephen Van Evera, *Guides to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 31.

³³ Przeworski and Teune’s ‘most different systems design’ corresponds to John Stuart Mill’s ‘method of agreement’. See *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry* (New York: Wiley, 1970).

³⁴ Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 157–63.

³⁵ George and Bennett, ‘Case Studies’, pp. 205–32.

³⁶ McAdam *et al.*, ‘Dynamics’, p. 7.

to the same universe of cases (Tamil, Irish, Sikh, etc.), the Albanian and Lebanese are comparable since they are linked to homelands experiencing post-conflict reconstruction under conditions of enhanced globalisation in the early 2000s. Second, these diasporas differ significantly. They are linked to two conflict-prone regions, the Balkans and the Middle East. Moreover, their key characteristics of size, spread, nationalist cohesion, and institutionalisation differ as well. The theoretical leverage of my findings is enhanced when diasporas project similar behaviours despite significant differences. Thirdly, I recognise the fluidity of diaspora networks across the globe but focus on two with major concentrations in the US because both have vocally supported pro-sovereignty movements. In addition, since the previously mentioned Collier and Hoeffler's large-N study draws its data from US-based diasporas, my findings could contribute to an already existing debate.

Finally, I need to briefly engage my use of the term 'diaspora', which is far from consensually defined.³⁷ I base my approach on Brubaker's (2005) understanding that diaspora should be 'treated as a category of practice, project, claim and stance, rather than as a bounded group'. A diaspora does not simply consist of the number of immigrants of first, second, or subsequent generations, but of those who proactively make claims about their descent.³⁸ A diaspora has a long-standing presence in an adopted country and maintains durable links with the homeland. I limit the scope of the term to denote claims and stances made by groups formed on the basis of international migration in a location distant from the homeland, rather than by minority groups historically living in lands adjacent to its territory. 'Long-distance nationalists', according to Anderson, often act 'irresponsibly' towards their homeland, since they do not bear the consequences of their actions.³⁹ Organisations, powerful individuals and informal groups all make claims in the diaspora. Some voices in the diaspora are more influential than others when claims are made. Thus, when I use the term 'diaspora' without further qualifiers, I mean those agents in the diaspora whose voices are dominant at a certain point in time. With respect to this study, I mention whose voices in the diaspora were most influential.

Diaspora characteristics and episodes of contention

The political and economic decay of the Ottoman Empire prompted the original migration of these communities at the end of the 19th century from two fringes of the empire: Albanians from the Balkans, and Lebanese from the Middle East. Mostly Maronite and Orthodox Christians left the lands currently associated with

³⁷ Classic diaspora theorists Safran (2005); Scheffer (2003); Cohen (1997); Esman (1996) and Tololyan (1991) view a 'diaspora' in positivist terms. A more recent tendency is to view diasporas as 'contingency'. Francesco Ragazzi, 'The Concept of "Diaspora" and the Transnational Social Space'. Paper presented at EUI/IMISCOE Conference on *Diasporas and Transnationalism* (Florence, Italy, April 2008); Rogers Brubaker, 'The "Diaspora" Diaspora' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28 (2005), pp. 1–19.

³⁸ Brubaker, 'Diaspora', pp. 3–19.

³⁹ Benedict Anderson, 'The New World Disorder', *New Left Review*, 193 (1992), pp. 3–13.

the state of Lebanon.⁴⁰ Settlers on the American continent were given names indicating fluid national identities, such as ‘Syro-Lebanese’ and ‘Turcos’.⁴¹ In contrast to the Lebanese, who had primarily religious identities before the formation of Lebanon under the French mandate in 1920, Albanian migrants had a more pronounced national consciousness, although they were both Muslim and Christian. At the end of the 19th century, nationalism was a much stronger political force in the European parts of the Ottoman Empire than in the Middle East. Although few Albanians had settled in the US by that time, they became organised and actively supported the formation of Albania as an independent state in 1913.⁴²

The subsequent waves of migration mirrored political and economic developments in the respective homelands. The most significant outflow of Lebanese took place during the protracted civil war (1975–1990), when more than 990,000 people or 40 per cent of the entire population left the country.⁴³ This time Sunnite and Shiite Muslims joined the ranks of fleeing Christians, thus diversifying the makeup of their diaspora communities abroad. These migrants were more educated and more politically vocal than their predecessors.⁴⁴ While an anticipated return of post-civil war emigrants failed to materialise in the 1990s, another estimated 200,000 Lebanese skilled workers left the country.⁴⁵ The Albanians experienced three further migration waves. One was dominated by around 30,000 anti-communist exiles that left the Balkans after the end of the Second World War.⁴⁶ The second wave was prompted by the communist regime in the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, which allowed ‘guest workers’ to travel to Switzerland, Germany, UK, Italy, Greece and Turkey, but suppressed Kosovo Albanians since 1981. The end of communism drove the third wave. During the transition period the Serbian regime severely repressed the Albanians of Kosovo, while post-communist Albania became the poorest country in Europe. Albania sent around 900,000 people abroad, or 25 per cent of its total population.⁴⁷

The two diasporas differ in several major characteristics. One is *spread*. The Lebanese diaspora has widely settled around the globe, with large communities living in Brazil, Argentina, Western Africa and Australia. In contrast, Albanians settled mainly within the Western Hemisphere. In the US large Lebanese communities live in the Northeast, Midwest and the Southeast.⁴⁸ Large Albanian communities are located on the East Coast, Detroit and Chicago. Muslims from both communities are concentrated in the Detroit-Dearborn area, considered the hub of Islam in America. Second, the diasporas differ in *size*. As Table 1

⁴⁰ Michael Humphrey, ‘Lebanese Identities between Cities, Nations and Trans-nations’, in Paul Tabar (ed.), *Lebanese Diaspora* (Beirut, Lebanon: LAU, 2005), p. 36.

⁴¹ Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (eds), *Lebanese in the World* (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1992).

⁴² Federal Writers Project, *The Albanian Struggle in the Old World and New* (Boston, MA: The Writer Incorporated, 1939), pp. 63–87.

⁴³ Boutros Labaki, ‘Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975–1989)’, in Hourani and Shehadi (ed.), *Lebanese in the World* (1992).

⁴⁴ John Zogby, ‘Arab America Today’, *Arab American Institute* (Washington D.C., 1990).

⁴⁵ Nicholas Blandford, *Killing Mr. Lebanon* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006), p. 48.

⁴⁶ Hockenos, ‘Homeland Calling’, p. 213.

⁴⁷ Barjaba Kosta, ‘Albania: Looking Beyond Borders’, *Migration Information Service* (August 2005), available at: {<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/print.cfm?ID=239>}.

⁴⁸ US Census, *The Arab Population*. December 2003, {<http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-23.pdf>}.

Diaspora	Spread, global	Size, global*	Spread, US	Size, US Census 2000, ancestry
Lebanese	US, Brazil, Argentina, France, UK, Germany, Australia, Western Africa, Gulf region	Conservative: 4.5 million Inflated: 15 million	New York, Los Angeles, Dearborn, Detroit, Chicago, San Diego, New Jersey, Boston	440,279
Albanian	US, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, UK, Australia	Conservative: 1 million Inflated: 5 million	New York, New Jersey and area, Connecticut, Chicago, Detroit	113,661

* US Census 1980, *Groups Who Reported at Least One Ancestry*

** US Census 1990, *Detailed Ancestry Groups for States*

*** US Census 2000, *Ancestry*

Table 1. *Diasporas: Spread and Size.*

demonstrates, the Lebanese diaspora is much larger than the Albanian globally and in the US. In addition, both diasporas are more numerous than the population remaining in their home countries, which gives them the opportunity to influence homeland politics, so long as the various generations maintain their identity and are eager to mobilise for homeland political causes.⁴⁹

Thirdly, the two diasporas differ in their level of *nationalist cohesion*. Nationalism has been the binding principle of the highly divided Albanian diaspora. Divisions exist along new and old diasporic groups and along place of origin – Kosovo, Albania, and other Albanian-inhabited territories in Macedonia and Montenegro. However, the goal of all has remained the same since 1989: to ensure that Kosovo becomes an independent state. In contrast, sectarian divisions remain strong among the Lebanese. The diaspora mirrors religious divisions in the homeland – Maronite and Orthodox Christian, Sunnite, Shiite and Druze.⁵⁰ Lebanese diasporic identity exists in terms of origins from towns and villages in modern Lebanon and is juxtaposed against other Arab-American communities from the Middle East. Yet there is a weak sense of nationalism as a cohesive political force. This attitude mirrors entrenched competing local visions of what Lebanese nationalism and sovereignty mean.⁵¹

How *institutionalised* are both diasporas? As the biggest and oldest Arab-American community in the US, Lebanese have built more institutions than the Albanians. Mentioning all of them is beyond the scope of this article as they encompass hundreds of interest-based societies. However, three major categories of organisations have persisted over time: Arab-American, denominations, and political parties in Lebanon. Lebanese have often taken the lead in Arab-American institutions that emerged as a response to the protracted conflicts in the Middle East after the end of the Second World War. Until recently, Lebanese led the most

⁴⁹ Since I use a constructivist definition of the term 'diaspora', the numbers provided should be treated as proxies. Not all diaspora members who claim an identity act politically upon them.

⁵⁰ Michael Humphrey, *Islam, Multiculturalism, and Transnationalism* (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1998).

⁵¹ Walid Phares, *Lebanese Christian Nationalism* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995).

vocal organisations, the Arab-American Anti-discrimination Committee and the Arab-American Institute.⁵² These organisations, however, treat Lebanese political issues from the vantage point of Arab rather than specifically Lebanese nationalism. Another group is constituted by the Maronite and Greek Orthodox Churches and the Muslim Druze, which have maintained active religious institutions in the US since the late 19th century.⁵³ Lastly are organisations that make claims specifically related to Lebanon. The World Lebanese Cultural Union, an initiative of the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continues to operate in the US although with much less appeal than prior to the civil war.⁵⁴ The American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL) is a second-generation organisation also participating in Arab-American causes. Other organisations include the Lebanese American Council for Democracy, the US Committee for a Free Lebanon (USCFL), Lebanese Foundation for Peace (LFP), and individuals related to political factions of the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), the Lebanese Forces (LF), and the late Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri. This group of politically active diaspora members also includes the magnate Issam Fares, who built a scholarly centre at Tufts University and aspires to political positions in Lebanon. Hezbollah, a political party in Lebanon with close links to Iran and Syria, has been declared a terrorist organisation in the US since 1997 and has no official representation in the country.

The multitude of these groups, coupled with the minimal nationalist cohesion among the Lebanese, complicates the question of whose voices were more influential than others in the diaspora during the episode of contested sovereignty. Christian Maronite groups in the diaspora close to the FPM and the LF were at the core of the pro-sovereignty movement, while Druze and Sunni Muslim religious organisations joined once mobilisation was already in place. Initially the groups with pro-Arab agendas were challenged to support Lebanese independence, since Syria has been an important player in Middle Eastern affairs and annihilating it was not desirable. Nevertheless, Syria's increased coercive policies in Lebanon in the early 2000s, which culminated with the assassination of Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005, also caused some of Arab-American groups to express discontent with Syria.⁵⁵

The institutions of the Albanian diaspora are much less diverse. Vatra, the Pan-Albanian Federation of America, has operated since the first decade of the 20th century and currently maintains offices in New York.⁵⁶ Orthodox and Catholic Albanian churches emerged in the 1920s, and mosques and Bektashi religious shrines were built in the 1940s and 1950s.⁵⁷ In the mid-20th century other groups were formed, especially in Michigan, to represent a newer generation of post-war exiles. With their anti-communist views, they clashed with an older generation congregating around Vatra, which was not opposed to communism in

⁵² Anonymous 1, Official, Arab-American Anti-discrimination Committee, *author's interview* (Washington D.C., 14 August 2006).

⁵³ George Labaki, *The Maronites in the United States* (Notre Dame University, Lebanon: Louaize Press, 1993), pp. 71–81; Jamil Intisar Azzam, *Persistence and Malleability of Ethnic Boundaries: The Experience of the American Druze*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of California, 1995); Irvine, p. 49.

⁵⁴ Anonymous 2, Former Ambassador of Lebanon, *author's interview* (Beirut, Lebanon, 28 May 2007).

⁵⁵ Anonymous 3, Lebanese expatriate, *author's telephone interviews* (May 2007 and February 2009).

⁵⁶ Hockenos, 'Homeland Calling', p. 208.

⁵⁷ Frances Trix, *Albanians in Michigan* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001), pp. 4–5.

Albania. However, the incoming wave of Kosovo Albanians and their grievances from repression reinvigorated the Albanian diaspora in the mid-1980s.⁵⁸ At that time a former congressman, Joe DioGuardi, established the Albanian-American Civic League (AACL), and took the banner of defending Kosovar and Albanian rights in America. He became the most influential diaspora personality. While his lobbying activities during the 1990s and his continued appeal to represent Albanian causes are significant, more recently other major players have entered the political field. The National Albanian American Council (NAAC) originated in 1996 from a discontented faction within the AACL, and moved to Washington DC shortly thereafter. During the 1990s, the Homeland Calling Fund and the Atlantic Battalion emerged to give financial and military aid to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the pro-violence oriented Kosovar resistance against the Serbian regime. The New York based businessmen Florin Krasniqi, former head of the Homeland Calling Fund, and Hari Bajraktari, founder and publisher of the Albanian-American newspaper *Illirija*, have emerged during the 2000s as powerful individuals with political clout in diaspora and Kosovar circles.⁵⁹ Nevertheless no groups have been as influential as NAAC and AACL.

A final word is needed about the *episodes of contention*. McAdam *et al.* define a contentious episode as ‘the continuous streams of contention including collective claims making that bears on other parties’ interests’.⁶⁰ This article focuses on contentious episodes related to the activities of pro-sovereignty movements in Kosovo and Lebanon in the 2000s. For the Kosovo case the episode starts with NATO’s 1999 military intervention and ends with the proclamation of independence in February 2008. For the Lebanese case it starts with the 2000 Israeli withdrawal from the south of the country and the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanese territory in April 2005. Although the goal is to achieve sovereignty in both cases, different aspects of sovereignty are challenged. In Kosovo the major objective is to promote independent statehood, or international legal sovereignty, in Krasner’s conceptualisation.⁶¹ In Lebanon the focus is to achieve domestic sovereignty and self-government free from Syrian influence. Syria had effectively infringed on the domestic sovereignty of Lebanon since the 1989 Taif Accord which put an end to the Lebanese civil war.

Competing explanations

Securitisation of migration hypothesis: In one view, moderate behaviour among diasporas could be induced by enhanced control over immigrants after the terrorist attacks on 9/11. The USA Patriot Act (October 2001) increased law enforcement

⁵⁸ See n. 53 above, p. 213.

⁵⁹ Anonymous, US official, close to the government *author’s interviews* (Washington D.C., 2 August 2006 and 17 July 2007); Andy Balla, ‘US-Albanian Diaspora Bridge Investment Gap in Kosovo’, *Balkan Investigative Report Network*, 9 (2007), {<http://kosovo.birn.eu.com/en/1/70/3611/>}.

⁶⁰ McAdam *et al.*, ‘Dynamics’, p. 24.

⁶¹ International legal sovereignty designates the judicial recognition of an international legal entity. Domestic sovereignty denotes the ability of domestic authority structures to control activities within their territorial borders. Stephen Krasner, *Problematic Sovereignty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 1–52.

powers when dealing with suspected terrorists. The Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act (May 2002) developed more restrictive policies on issuing visas to students from countries considered to harbour terrorism. In 2002 a special government program was initiated to require all males from 'politically sensitive' Muslim countries to register with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).⁶² In March 2003 the US Department of Homeland Security absorbed the INS, transformed it as an agency, and assumed its duties. In addition, police forces began to adopt a more repressive style of protest policing regardless of whether demonstrators were migrants or from other civic groups.

These rapid and drastic measures clearly increased fears among diasporas, put them on the defensive in their host societies, and deterred many who might have considered supporting radical groups at home and abroad. While constituting facilitating conditions for moderate behaviour, these measures nevertheless do not explain why some diaspora actors chose to proactively make moderate political claims *vis-à-vis* their homelands. They could have remained passive and refrained from mobilisation. Moreover, between 1999 and 2001 radicalism in the Albanian diaspora subsided on its own, driven mostly by NATO's military defeat of Serbia, the lack of threat in Kosovo, and exhaustion from having supported the Kosovar parallel structures and internal warfare throughout the 1990s.⁶³ Furthermore, radical activities were not confined to the pre-9/11 period. Among the Lebanese, as the scarce public evidence suggests, there are at least 14 cases under investigation of Hezbollah-related criminal activities in the US.⁶⁴ During the 33-day war between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006, demonstrators in Michigan publicly voiced their support for Hezbollah. Among the Albanians, Florin Krasniqi, former head of the Homeland Calling Fund from Brooklyn, NY went on record to warn the international community that arms continued to be shipped to Kosovo on a small-scale basis in order to prepare for armed action if Kosovo's final status was not seriously considered.⁶⁵ Soldiers of the former Atlantic Battalion who fought in Kosovo in 1999 issued a similar statement in the summer of 2007 warning that if Kosovo's final status was not resolved soon, they were 'prepared to make the same sacrifice a million times over in protection of life, liberty, and democracy for all citizens of Kosova'.⁶⁶ Thus, while diasporas may have avoided associating with radicals in order to avoid law enforcement or the stigma of being branded as 'terrorists' or 'criminals', they still harboured some sympathy for radicalism.

Democratic norms hypothesis: Constructivist scholars in international relations maintain that the promotion of democratic norms has causal effects on international security.⁶⁷ Basic values associated with the liberal creed such as respect for individual freedoms, rights to self-determination and self-government, transparency

⁶² Rudolph, 'Security', p. 616.

⁶³ Anonymous 5, Source close to the National Albanian-American Council, *author's interview* (Washington D.C., 3 August 2006); Anonymous 6, Albanian-American analyst, *author's interviews* (Washington D.C., 12 July 2006 and 12 July 2007).

⁶⁴ Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lightning out of Lebanon* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2006), pp. 109, 226.

⁶⁵ Quirijns Klaartje, *The Brooklyn Connection: How to Build a Guerilla Army*, Documentary, US Premiere on 19 July 2005.

⁶⁶ Atlantic Battalion, *Albanews Archives*, 17 July 2007 available at: {<http://listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0707d&L=albanews&P=2103>}.

⁶⁷ Norms are 'collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors within a given identity.' Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*, p. 5.

and cooperation are transferred from one site to another, and help the formation of security communities and international regimes that advance specific norms. Even after a pronounced shift to the realist paradigm after 9/11, their arguments still resonate, as in the recently developed international treaty banning the use of cluster bombs.⁶⁸ Such arguments have not been applied to diaspora politics in Western societies but could be valid there as well. Diasporas have been socialised with democratic values during decades of presence in their adopted lands and could be expected to have internalised them. As transnational non-state actors – often performing third-party intervention between the host-state and the home-state – they could be inclined to promote such norms.

What kind of behaviour would we observe if democratic norms are indeed internalised? Norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality: they are not disputed and often unconsciously acted upon.⁶⁹ ‘Logic of appropriateness’ rather than ‘logic of consequences’ motivates action.⁷⁰ By extension to diaspora politics, this means that agents would act in line with what is considered appropriate by a liberal democratic norm, and would not hesitate to apply it unequivocally when approaching both their host-state and home-state. Testing this proposition in one issue area of the liberal doctrine – minority rights – helps to highlight why internalisation of a democratic norm does not sufficiently explain this behaviour. Diaspora groups invoke discourses on group rights when advocating for their own political integration into the host society, but they clearly hesitate to apply them when aspiring to influence politics in the homeland.⁷¹ Lebanese in the diaspora have traditionally engaged in Arab-American causes and often joined demonstrations advancing the Palestinian cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, it is considered inappropriate to challenge the Lebanese system to allow for more rights for the displaced Palestinians who have been living for decades in camps in Lebanon. For example, the 2002 World Maronite Congress in Los Angeles rejected by overwhelming majority a proposition to discuss the state of Palestinians in Lebanon on the grounds that many Christian Lebanese hold them responsible for ‘the destruction of Lebanon’.⁷² In a similar vein, the Albanians in the US have been advancing a zero-sum game attitude on the national question. The AACL was opposed to the international community’s vision that post-war Kosovo should become a ‘multiethnic society’ through the return of a large numbers of Serbian refugees.⁷³ Responding to sporadic violence in Kosovo in March 2004, most of the politically active diaspora groups either remained silent or made pro-forma statements against it.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, all were in favour of a message initially advanced by major local politicians, such as President Ibrahim

⁶⁸ Shawn Pogatchnik, *AP* (30 May 2008).

⁶⁹ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, *International Organization*, 54 (Autumn 1998), pp. 887–917.

⁷⁰ James March and Johan Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989).

⁷¹ Anonymous 3, author’s *telephone interview* (February 2009).

⁷² Nagi Najjar, *Open Letter to the International Maronite Foundation*, LFP Web-site, 2002, {<http://www.free-lebanon.com/LFPNews/congress/congress.html>}.

⁷³ Sherley DioGuardi, *Kosovo: Official Versus Public Reality* (24 July 2003), {<http://blog.aacl.com/kosovo-official-versus-public-reality/>}.

⁷⁴ An outburst without central planning but with a high degree of local co-ordination swept Kosovo and left 19 people dead, nearly 900 injured, 4,500 displaced, and over 700 minority homes, public buildings and 30 Serbian churches and monasteries damaged or destroyed, ICG, ‘Collapse’, p. 28.

Rugova and Minister of Public Affairs Jakup Krasniqi, who attempted to gain political capital from the situation and argued that if Kosovo's independence were not recognised, extremism was likely to resurface.⁷⁵

One could argue that exceptions in the practice of liberalism are commonplace in Western societies, and that liberalism is itself searching for plausible ways to incorporate group-based rights into an individualist paradigm.⁷⁶ Hence, diasporas – as part of these liberal societies – could potentially not be universal in application of liberal values, but be partially motivated by them, as demonstrated by activist groups among Lebanese and Albanians in the US. As my account posits, if they were not partially motivated by liberalism, they would not reach out to exploit a political opportunity structure of global liberalism. In contrast, diaspora groups sharing similar homeland identity but living in authoritarian or transition-based societies are unlikely to seek liberalism, as in the cases of Lebanese in Western Africa or Albanians living in the Balkans.⁷⁷ However, while actors in the diaspora could be partially motivated by the liberal creed, this does not necessarily mean that they act out of logic of appropriateness. As my account further posits, they use liberalism not normatively but instrumentally and for utilitarian purposes.

Peace-building programs hypothesis: The awareness that conflict-generated diasporas maintain protracted conflicts alerted the policy community that special conflict-resolution measures need to engage diasporas in a dialogue to reframe categorical perceptions of homeland conflicts.⁷⁸ The transformation of attitude of the Irish-Americans, who for decades supported the Irish Republican Army, and a recent positive engagement of other diasporas demonstrate these programs' potential.⁷⁹ However, the ability of such programs to induce change without offering additional incentives and large-scale efforts is problematic as an explanation. Workshops may have persuaded some, but they are usually of limited duration and cannot be expected to easily change a small group, let alone an entire diaspora. For example, the Washington-based NGO 'Search for Common Ground' had an initiative to engage Macedonian and Albanian diasporas for inter-ethnic tolerance.⁸⁰ However, there is no evidence that the program had any impact on the perceptions of the Albanian diaspora *vis-à-vis* the Kosovo conflict, nor that there were attempts to engage the entire Albanian diaspora. Even less has been done with respect to groups in the Lebanese diaspora, apart from the regular exchange of views with US governmental officials, senators and congressmen and their staff during lobbying activities. Thus, peace-building programs are unlikely to be a major explanatory factor.

⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Failure to Protect*, 16 (2004), p. 59.

⁷⁶ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: a Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁷⁷ Discussions with participants in the international conference, 'Politics, Culture, and the Lebanese Diaspora', Lebanese American University (Beirut, Lebanon, May 2007).

⁷⁸ Lyons, 'Diasporas in Conflict', p. 123.

⁷⁹ Jacob Bercovitch, 'A Neglected Relationship', in Smith and Stares, 'Diasporas in Conflict', pp. 17–38; Lyons, 'Diasporas in Conflict', p. 123.

⁸⁰ See n. 69 above.

Instrumentalism, sovereignty, and discourse on democratisation

If securitisation of migration, internalisation of democratic norms, and exposure to peace-building programs are not sufficient to explain moderate diaspora behaviour, does the instrumentalist pursuit of homeland sovereignty do so? I argue that moderation of diaspora behaviour takes place in a two-step political process. In the first step, various actors within the conflict-generated diasporas recognise an opportunity in the opening of previously closed political opportunity structures and expect to pursue their own self-interested goals related to the homeland.⁸¹ Disparate diaspora actors frame their grievances by referring to what some authors call a macro-level ideological structure of 'global liberalism' dominating world politics.⁸² An instrumentalist use of a democratic discourse allows them to promote international legitimacy for their pro-sovereignty movements while 'playing the game' of the international community committed to globally expanding the liberal paradigm. The democratisation discourse becomes common across various diaspora actors, regardless of their particularistic goals. In the second step, moderate claims are sustained by the shift of host-state policies, resulting in increased responsiveness to the existing claims. This shift leads to the passage of important legislation and fosters moderate transnational mobilisation.

Under closed political opportunity structures – both domestic and international – there is a diminished opportunity for activism.⁸³ In the Lebanese case, two major international opportunity structures were closed. One was sustained by the policies of the US and France, two powers with major political relevance for Lebanon. Throughout the 1990s they backed the 1989 Taif Peace Accord which enshrined Syrian military presence in the country. In addition, Israeli troops were positioned in the South of Lebanon until 2000. In the Kosovo case, political opportunity structures were also closed as Serbia suppressed the Kosovo Albanians who organised in parallel government throughout the 1990s. No international organisation or state apart from Albania considered Kosovo's international sovereignty as a viable political option.

The early 21st century marked a period when closed domestic and international political opportunity structures began to open in both political contexts. In the Lebanese case, the window of opportunity opened with the 2000 death of strong Syrian dictator Hafez al-Assad and the ascension of his son Bashar, considered a weak heir. Moreover, in that year Israel withdrew large parts of its military from

⁸¹ *Political opportunity* is defined as 'dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people's expectations for success or failure.' Tarrow, 'Power in Movement', p. 77. *Political opportunity structure* is defined as 'factors that are relatively stable over time, and outside the control of movement actors.' Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper, 'Caught in a Winding, Snarling Vine: The Structural Bias of Political Process Theory', *Sociological Forum*, 14 (1999), pp. 27–54. *Attribution of opportunity* is a causal mechanism. Opportunities and threats are not objective categories but depend on a collective attribution of meaning to them in the mobilisation process. McAdam et al., 'Dynamics', p. 45.

⁸² Adamson, 'Global Liberalism', p. 548; John Ikenberry, *Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition* (London: Polity, 2006).

⁸³ Sikkink defines *international opportunity structure* as the 'degree of openness of international institutions to the participation of transnational NGOs, networks, and coalitions'. *Domestic opportunity structure* refers to 'primarily how open or closed domestic political institutions are to domestic social movement or NGO influence'. Kathryn Sikkink, 'Patterns of Dynamic Multilevel Governance and the Insider-Outside Coalition', in Della Porta et al., 'Transnational Protest', pp. 156–7.

the Shiite-populated south. Most notably, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks US foreign policy shifted to an increased commitment to democracy promotion in the Middle East, treated as a pre-emptive measure against the growth of terrorism.

In Kosovo, major changes took place after 1999 as well. Kosovo was effectively turned into a protectorate or 'neo-trusteeship' where Serbia had no more legal rights to govern.⁸⁴ UNSC Resolution 1244 authorised the building of self-government institutions under the authority of the UN Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the military presence of NATO's KFOR forces. While this resolution was agnostic about Kosovo's final status, its ambiguous wording did not rule out possible independence, thereby changing an international opportunity structure.⁸⁵

It would be exaggerated to argue that diaspora circles alone attributed opportunity to the changing political circumstances, since some of their most active members were closely linked to elites in the homeland and oftentimes followed their lead. Their major function was to become outlets of sentiments which would be punished at home, especially in the Lebanese case. A Western democratic society provided them with the freedom to politically organise, voice their grievances, and by way of 'boomerang' or 'spiral' effects to ultimately use their influence to pressure for the resolution of issues concerning the homeland.⁸⁶ Whether 'rooted cosmopolitans' or embedded in at least two simultaneous political contexts, early on diasporas became involved in the process of interpreting pro-sovereignty claims.⁸⁷ They did not directly cause the contentious movements, but actively shaped them and made them transnational.

In the Lebanese case, the driving engine among diaspora circles in support of the pro-sovereignty movement were two Christian diasporic groups linked to traditional rival political formations: FPM of Michel Aoun and LF of Samir Geagea.⁸⁸ The group close to the FPM was linked to its exiled leader in France, while followers of the LF abroad enjoyed good relations with the Maronite Patriarch Butros Sfeir based in the homeland, although their connections were not explicit. These and other diaspora groups were active prior to the beginning of the contentious episode. They lobbied congressmen and senators especially from New

⁸⁴ James Fearon and David Laitin, 'Neo-trusteeship and the Problem of Weak States', *International Security*, 28 (2004), pp. 5–43.

⁸⁵ ICG, *The New Kosovo Protectorate*. Balkans Report 69 (20 June 1999), p. 2.

⁸⁶ On diaspora association in liberal democracies: Adamson, 'Transformation', p. 162; Koslowski, 'Globalization of Domestic Politics', p. 12. On 'boomerang' effects under closed opportunity structures: Keck and Sikkink, 'Activists', p. 13; On 'spiral effects': Risse, 'Human Rights', 1999. On adaptation of boomerang effects to diaspora mobilisation: Wayland, 'Ethno-nationalist networks', p. 411.

⁸⁷ 'Rooted cosmopolitans' primarily think of themselves as locals embedded in a host-land while maintaining transnational ties. Tarrow, 'Transnational Activism', p. 40. In contrast, works on transnationalism maintain that diasporas are embedded simultaneously in two political contexts, of the homeland and the host-land. Glick Shiller et al., *Nations Unbound* (New York, Gordon and Breach, 1994).

⁸⁸ Christian groups supporting former General Michel Aoun (FPM) and Samir Geagea (LF) fought bitterly against each other during the Lebanese civil war yet supported Lebanon's independence from Syria in its aftermath by different means. After an unsuccessful 'war of liberation' (1988–1990) Aoun fled to France. Marie-Joelle Zahar, 'Peace by Unconventional Means', in Donald Rothchild et al. (eds), *Ending Civil Wars* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), pp. 572–5. Samir Geagea openly resented Syrian domination from within Lebanon, yet his LF were banned in 1994, and he and many sympathisers were imprisoned while others fled in exile. Blanford, 'Killing', p. 59.

York and Michigan to pass non-binding resolutions asking for Syrian and Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. Nevertheless, diaspora activism remained contained under the then-existing political opportunity structures.

With the emergence of new political opportunities in 2000, activism increased. Operating out of Lebanon, Patriarch Sfeir was among the first to voice implicitly (since 1997) and explicitly (since 2000) his criticism of Syria and its reluctance to withdraw militarily in two years after the inception of the Taif Agreement, as postulated therein. In addition, close to the 2000 legislative elections, other local actors voiced dissatisfaction: a Maronite candidate called for 'cleaning-up' Syrian-Lebanese relations, a Druze leader advocated 'readjustment', and an Orthodox deputy called for the 'end of occupation'.⁸⁹ The contention added a transnational element when in 2000 the group close to Michel Aoun initiated lobbying activities in the US which led to the passage of the Syrian Accountability Act (SAA) in 2003.⁹⁰ Moreover, the Patriarch used his March 2001 US visit to appeal to diaspora gatherings for actions in favour of a sovereign Lebanon.⁹¹ Back in the homeland several months later, he launched landmark reconciliation with the Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, creating the first formal pro-sovereignty coalition.

Three important diaspora-related activities ensued in 2000–2002. Encouraged abroad and locally, supporters of the FPM and LF launched massive street protests in 2001, which were brutally crushed.⁹² Diaspora activists close to the USCFL wrote a report advocating US military intervention to force Syria out of Lebanon and to disarm its alleged weapons of mass destruction.⁹³ Diaspora activists close to Michel Aoun continued lobbying for the SAA, enlisting the support of congressmen associated with the Israeli lobby. Criticised for involving pro-Israeli interests in Lebanon's independence struggle, Aoun openly claimed: 'Passing the SAA means that the Americans oppose handing Lebanon to Syria on a plate [...] Does this not deserve speaking with supporters of the SAA even if they are Jews?'⁹⁴ Moreover, the 2002 World Maronite Congress in Los Angeles developed into an opposition gathering. It incorporated a large pool of Christian political activists from Lebanon and the diaspora, and reiterated appeals for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon and support for the SAA.⁹⁵

In the Albanian case, after the removal of the Serbian threat to Kosovo's Albanians in 1999 and institutionalisation of UNMIK, Albanian diaspora and local elites considered that the road to independence had been paved. For organisational and informal diaspora groups alike, the international community was considered to be the last hurdle to statehood. It needed to be convinced to open final status negotiations. Thus, diaspora activists adopted a pragmatic

⁸⁹ Elizabeth Pickard, *Lebanon. A Shattered Country* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 2002), p. 199.

⁹⁰ Anonymous 7, Lebanese expatriate, *author's interview* (Washington D.C 27 July 2007).

⁹¹ Nagi Najjar, 'Open Letter to President George W. Bush' USCFL web-site, 2001, {<http://www.freelebanon.org/articles/a112.htm>}; Anonymous 4, Lebanese expatriate close to the LF, *author's interview* (Washington D.C, 31 July 2007).

⁹² Pickard, 'Shattered Country', p. 199; Freedom House, *Lebanon 2002, Overview*, {<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=1>}.

⁹³ Daniel Pipes and Ziad Abdelnour, 'Ending Syria's Occupation of Lebanon: The US Role?', *Middle East Forum* (2000).

⁹⁴ Ziad Abdelnour, 'The Syrian Accountability Act and Lebanon', *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, 4 (2002), {http://www.meib.org/articles/0210_13.htm} quoting *Al-Nahar* from 4 September 2002.

⁹⁵ LFP, 'Informal Minutes on Developments at the World Maronite Congress in Los Angeles for 18 June', (2002), {<http://www.free-lebanon.com/LFPNews/congress/congress.html>}.

approach and stated that ‘if democratization is the game to play in order to achieve independence, then the Albanians will play it’.⁹⁶ Although some Washington-based organisations were more patient than those in New York or Chicago about the time-frame to achieve statehood, they all accepted the ‘institutional path to independence’ which was the dominant approach of elected Kosovar politicians.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, violent alternatives remained a possibility especially in view of the prolonged UNMIK’s presence that delayed final status negotiations.

In the beginning of the contentious episodes, diaspora entrepreneurs linked their pro-sovereignty grievances to a discourse on democratisation. Their proactive moderate claim-making challenges the literature’s assertions on conflict-generated diasporas by demonstrating that dominant voices within these two diasporas were capable of formulating democratisation frames without intervention from external actors. Although, as noted above, marginal elements voiced some threats, moderate politics was viewed on the whole as the major vehicle for achieving substantive goals. Diaspora entrepreneurs utilised *frame bridging* and *frame extension* as processes of frame building.

Frame bridging refers to the ‘linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem’.⁹⁸ Sovereignty and democracy are ideologically congruent, since national self-determination has been a major part of the democratic creed since US President Woodrow Wilson formulated his 14 points at the end of World War I. In both cases diasporas linked sovereignty and democracy, aspiring to resonate both with US policy makers interested in global promotion of democracy and with the cultural predispositions of Lebanese-Americans socialised with democratic values but also interested in challenging the political *status quo* in their homeland. While rivalling and acting without sustained coordination, Lebanese diaspora organisations nevertheless adopted a similar pro-democracy stance: ‘Help Lebanon to regain its place among democracies of the world [...]’ appealed Najjar to George W. Bush in 2001.⁹⁹ Delegates of the 2002 World Maronite Congress joined forces to ‘speak with a common voice and to advocate a Free and Sovereign Lebanon [...] free to elect a democratic government where all are equal [...]’¹⁰⁰ They and numerous other diaspora organisations advocated opening the Lebanese electoral system to diaspora voting, arguing that this is a practice among democratic countries in the world. The USCFL, close to neoconservative individuals in the George W. Bush administration, was also vocal about the linkage between Lebanon’s sovereignty and democratisation in the Middle East. Supporters of the FPM lobbied American counterparts by emphasising that Lebanon partners the US in building democracy in the Middle East.¹⁰¹ During his 2003 testimony in

⁹⁶ Anonymous 6, Albanian-American analyst, *author’s interviews* (Washington D.C., 12 July 2006 and 12 July, 2007); Anonymous 8, Kosovo Albanian student leader, *author’s interview* (Washington D.C., 14 July 2007).

⁹⁷ ICG, *Kosovo After Haradinaj*. Europe Report 163 (2005), 26 May; Anonymous 8, Source close to the US government, *author’s interview* (Washington D.C., 24 July 2007).

⁹⁸ Benford and Snow, ‘Framing Processes’, p. 625.

⁹⁹ Najjar, ‘Letter to George Bush’ (2001).

¹⁰⁰ LFP, ‘The Fourth World Maronite Congress’ 2002, *Press Release*, {<http://www.free-lebanon.com/LFPNews/congress/congress.html>}.

¹⁰¹ Anonymous 7, ‘Interview’ (2007).

front of the US Congress, FPM's leader Aoun espoused these views.¹⁰² Individuals linked to the LF, with their imprisoned leader Samir Geagea in mind, maintained that human rights abuses in Lebanon should not be tolerated, and argued that they occur because Syria suppresses the domestic opposition.¹⁰³

Like the Lebanese, Albanian diaspora organisations also held personal and institutional rivalries but adopted a clear stance linking Kosovo's international sovereignty to democratic discourse. AACL's president Joe DiGuardi, who enjoys strong ties with less moderate parties in Kosovo that emerged out of the former KLA, including war veterans, congratulated Kosovo Albanians for their 'disciplined behaviour' in the 2000 municipal elections and claimed that it established that 'Kosova is ready for a democratic society and self-governance'. He also claimed he wanted to 'see leaders who are ready to demonstrate that Albanians are ready to solve problems [...] thus 'speeding Kosovo's democratization and solidifying international support for its independence'.¹⁰⁴ NAAC, more closely related to parties that emerged from the non-violent Democratic League of Kosovo, emphasised the need to develop the rule of law, and launched programs for the democratic education of Kosovars that will pave the way to independence.¹⁰⁵ Diaspora groups also shared a rejection of UN policy 'standards before status', developed in 2002 to give leverage to the international community in speeding the democratisation process including the respect for minority rights. Echoing arguments from Kosovo, diaspora groups interpreted this policy as a mechanism to delay negotiations. They argued that regardless of intentions, it *de facto* prevents Kosovo from becoming more democratic: self-government without membership in international institutions creating opportunities for economic development is difficult to sustain. Thus, diaspora groups continued to advocate democratisation, albeit not under the international community's terms.

Frame bridging was complemented by the process of *frame extension*. When the latter process occurs, the interests of a social movement are depicted beyond its primary interest to include concerns of importance to potential adherents.¹⁰⁶ In the cases of this research, sovereignty was linked to a variety of threats to US foreign policy. In the Lebanese case, sovereignty was related to the 'war against terrorism'. Various web-based diaspora sources argued for Lebanese to stand by the US in this war, and against Syria, which infringes on its interests in Iraq by supporting the insurgency. In addition, Christian diaspora groups made a concerted effort to distinguish themselves from Hezbollah. Some even distanced themselves from Aoun after he entered an alliance with Hezbollah upon his return to Lebanon in 2005.¹⁰⁷ In the Kosovo case, independence was linked to threats to peace in the Balkans. It was asserted that without closure on the Kosovo statehood question, local radicals would grow more impatient, small arms would continue to be supplied from abroad, and diaspora-based activists would prepare to return to

¹⁰² Elias Bejjani, *General Aoun*, LF Blog (2006), {<http://www.ouwet.com/lf-boston/political/general-aoun-by-elias-bejjani/>}.

¹⁰³ Anonymous 9, Lebanese expatriate, *author's interview* (Washington D.C., 31 July 2007).

¹⁰⁴ Zeri Weekly, 'A Strong Man on the Side of Kosova. Interview with Former Congressman Joe DioGuardi' (Prishtina, Kosovo, 25 October 2000), AACL web-site available at {<http://www.aacl.com/Diaspora.html>}.

¹⁰⁵ Anonymous 5, 'Interview' (2006).

¹⁰⁶ Benford and Snow, 'Framing Processes', p. 625.

¹⁰⁷ Bejjani, 'General Aoun' (2006).

Kosovo and fight for its independence. If another wave of violence occurred among Albanians, it might spill over to other Balkan countries with Albanian populations, most notably Macedonia, where interests of regional and global powers had traditionally clashed and might again erupt into violence. Thus, a negotiation-based solution was advocated as the right choice for all actors involved.

It is of theoretical interest to understand how diaspora entrepreneurs overcome the collective action problem and further mobilise. While nationalist cohesion among the Albanian diaspora was definitely a factor enabling easier cooperation among disparate diaspora groups unlike the highly fragmented identities among the Lebanese, two other factors – both exogenous to the diasporas – impacted their collective action problem. One was the *responsiveness* of the host-state to the initial diaspora mobilisation, and the second was the *sporadic violence* in the homeland – the 2004 riots in Kosovo, and Syria's continued repression of Lebanon culminating in the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005.¹⁰⁸ Both factors strengthened feelings of unity among the two diaspora communities without building specific institutions to sustain mobilisation in the long-run.

While diasporas attributed opportunity to the opening of earlier closed political opportunity structures and approached the achievement of sovereignty pragmatically by framing existing grievances in the language of democratisation, *their initial moderate mobilisation was unlikely to be sustained without responsiveness from the host-state*. As Brockett points out, the state's failure to respond to contentious claims, or to respond with less vigour than expected or desired, can create a new socio-political grievance reinforcing the original one.¹⁰⁹ Lobby groups and larger diaspora circles enjoyed access to the US Senate, Congress and administration in the early years of the contentious episodes, yet the administration did not respond at that time. Although US foreign policy *interests* were relatively close to the diasporic claims of sovereignty and democratisation, they were not necessarily foreign policy *priorities*. Promotion of democratisation in the Middle East was selectively enforced with respect to various states and often trumped by geopolitical or security-based concerns. Thus, the US became clearly anti-Syrian only in 2003 when Syria started allowing Iraqi insurgents to regroup and draw resources to sustain warfare in Iraq.

In the Kosovo case, US responsiveness to Kosovo's pro-sovereignty claims declined after NATO's military intervention and especially after the downfall of the Milosevic regime in 2000. At that time Serbia enjoyed for the first time a government that promised to advance liberal democracy. Thus, an additional challenge to the domestic political process, such as the sensitive Kosovo final status question, was deemed unnecessary. Moreover, US foreign policy priorities shifted away from the Balkans and towards the Middle East, and the EU was delegated more responsibilities. This increased Kosovar fears that Albanians might be losing their most important ally and that Europe, traditionally hostile to Kosovo's independence, could postpone final status negotiations indefinitely. The lack of US

¹⁰⁸ Anonymous 3, 'Interview' (February 2009); Anonymous 8, *author's telephone interview* (February 2009).

¹⁰⁹ Charles Brockett, *Political Movements and Violence in Central America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 56.

responsiveness to claims for international sovereignty created a new grievance that exacerbated the original one: now UNMIK was considered the new occupying power preventing Kosovo from becoming independent.

Second, and more specific to the Lebanese case, US responsiveness was challenged by the mutually exclusive claims advanced by diaspora members on sectarian grounds. Thus, US officials were more receptive to the claims of one man who commanded vast economic power, Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.¹¹⁰ However, on the sovereignty question, Hariri and his representatives in the diaspora maintained a low-key stance and according to some diaspora sources even opposed the passage of the SAA.¹¹¹ Other groups in the diaspora, making Arab-American rather than narrowly Lebanese claims, opposed the SAA as well, or directly supported Syria.

Alignment between foreign policy priorities and existing pro-sovereignty claims helped sustain moderate diasporic activism and expand the pool of moderate actors. In the Lebanese case, the US administration moved on to endorse the SAA in 2003.¹¹² At that time officials from the State Department increased consultations with diaspora groups who had previously been ambivalent or hostile. They acted as brokers among diaspora groups to establish a unified pro-sovereignty stance and helped expand the pool of activists who would support Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, or at least remain neutral. The policies of the Task Force for Lebanon are a good example of such changes. While during a congressional hearing in 2002 its representatives opposed withdrawal on the grounds that Syria would retaliate, during a second hearing they became neutral. The administration's interest in this act also expanded the pool of non-Lebanese supporters. Most notably, while the act was initiated with the help of a congressman close to the Israeli lobby, more pro-Israeli congressmen joined its endorsement in 2003.

The introduction of the SAA expanded the political opportunities for transnational mobilisation. Christian Lebanese diaspora groups redirected their efforts to lobby the UN for Resolution 1559 (October 2004), while opposition and civic groups in the homeland were encouraged to further challenge Syria from Lebanon. At this point Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri joined the pro-independence bandwagon, although never explicitly. The US and France vigorously supported UN Resolution 1559 despite ongoing disagreements over US policies in Iraq, so it is believed that Hariri's close relationship with French President Jacques Chirac promoted France's support for the resolution.¹¹³ Nevertheless, Hariri's more sympathetic treatment of the pro-sovereignty movement was not nationalist, but a result of his domestic struggle with politicians backed by Syria. The biggest conflict ensued at the end of 2003 when Hariri's archrival, Syrian-endorsed President Emile Lahoud, pronounced his ambition to be re-elected for president in 2004.¹¹⁴ Another less salient conflict took place between Hariri and his deputy Prime Minister Issam Fares, a

¹¹⁰ Anonymous 3, Lebanese expatriate, *author's telephone interview* (May 2007).

¹¹¹ Anonymous 10, Lebanese expatriate, *author's interview* (Washington D.C., 24 July 2007).

¹¹² The bill was introduced in Congress in 2002, but did not pass. It was reintroduced for consideration in 2003 when it was adopted.

¹¹³ Norton, 'Hezbollah', p. 126.

¹¹⁴ Gary Gambill, 'Hariri's Dilemma', *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, 5 (November 2003), {http://www.meib.org/articles/0311_12.htm}.

diaspora billionaire with close ties to Syria. The turning point was when Syria indeed managed to extend Lahoud's term, prompting Hariri's resignation in October 2004 and assassination in February 2005.¹¹⁵

The contentious episode of the Lebanese pro-sovereignty movement ended with the withdrawal of Syrian military forces in April 2005, marking an end of 29 years of military presence in the country.¹¹⁶ To all observers it was clear that this could not have been achieved without Hariri's assassination and the massive popular protests against Syria that ensued in March 2005. Hundreds of thousands swept the streets in what became known as the 'Cedar Revolution'.¹¹⁷ The US-based diaspora took pride over the civic achievement in Lebanon especially because the demonstrations were non-violent and took place against the backdrop of other non-violent revolutions aimed at changing illiberal regimes, most notably the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the popular rebellion was not nationalist, since massive counter-demonstrations organised by Hezbollah and other pro-Syrian parties indicated that some other mobilised groups in Lebanon do not object to Syrian influence.¹¹⁸ The pro-sovereignty movement, driven by an alliance between Christians, Druze, and Sunni Muslims together with their representatives in Western diaspora circles, only partially succeeded. The movement caused the withdrawal of Syria's troops, but not its political or social influence.¹¹⁹

Popular participation was not the trademark of the end of the contentious episode in the Kosovo case, but triggered the US government to change their responsiveness to pro-sovereignty claims. Although US government officials and international policy makers publicly asserted that they would not be pressured by violence, the events of March 2004 and the reiterated threats of further violence made them realise that the local threat was real. The speed with which the violence occurred and subsided made foreign observers suspicious that extremists were closely linked to the local politicians who officially condemned the violence.¹²⁰ There was indication that radicals had planned to call demonstrations, block institutions, and proclaim independence in 2005 or 2006 should the international community fail to reinvigorate its interest in negotiating Kosovo's final status.¹²¹

The change of approach within US governmental circles took place in late 2004 and helped sustain moderate diaspora political claims until the end of the contentious episode. Negotiations were back on track when in November 2005 UN Special Envoy Marti Ahtisaari was authorised to develop a plan for internal

¹¹⁵ See n. 103 above.

¹¹⁶ USA Today, 'Syrian Withdrawal from Lebanon Nearly Complete', 24 April 2005, at {http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2005-04-24-syria-lebanon_x.htm}.

¹¹⁷ Maria Stephan and Rudy Jaafar, 'Lebanon's Independence Intifada', unpublished manuscript, 2006.

¹¹⁸ Norton, 'Hezbollah', p. 128.

¹¹⁹ Since its military withdrawal, Syria continues to interfere in Lebanon's affairs. It obstructed a UN-launched investigation into the assassination of Rafiq Hariri and was allegedly behind the assassinations of high profile anti-Syrian politicians, journalists, and activists. The 33-day war between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006 ended with no side defeated, while the local reputation of Hezbollah increased due to its ability to sustain a major attack and quickly recuperate. Hezbollah has been part of the opposition to the US-backed local government and has obstructed the political process through demonstrations and by seizing large parts of Beirut in May 2008 in order to advance its preferred presidential candidate.

¹²⁰ ICG, 'Collapse', p. 28.

¹²¹ ICG, 'After Haradinaj', p. 9.

settlement and new international presence in view of a supervised independence. Although not completely convinced of the merit of respect for minority rights, diaspora groups became more receptive to them within the scope of the new plan for Kosovo's future.¹²² Also, while the renewed negotiations made some diaspora circles in New York even more impatient and inclined to advocate unilateral proclamation of independence without negotiations, their voices became marginalised by the efforts of more pragmatic diaspora activists who enjoyed better access and acceptance in Washington because of their moderate views.¹²³ While the UN Security Council never passed a new resolution because of resistance from Russia and China, the negotiation process somewhat appeased Serbia and Russia and prevented them from using military force in reaction to the unilaterally declared independence in February 2008. Backed by the US and major European countries, within the first month Kosovo was recognised by 28 states as a new member of the international system.¹²⁴ Although the final settlement of Kosovo *vis-à-vis* Serbia is not yet complete, since political tensions and violence exist in the Serbian-dominated north, the proclamation of Kosovo's independence could be considered the end of the contentious episode, since it marks the achievement of statehood.

Conclusion

This article sought to explain *why* and *how* conflict-generated diasporas adopt moderate claims, especially when advocating highly sensitive issues, such as state sovereignty. I limited my inquiry to diasporas linked to polities experiencing post-conflict reconstruction, and more narrowly to episodes of contested sovereignty, since under such conditions diasporas face a range of choices to support moderate or radical claims, and their choices matter. I argued that securitisation of migration in the US after 9/11, internalisation of democratic norms, and exposure to programs aimed at reframing diasporic categorical views of homeland conflicts are not sufficient to explain why dominant voices both in the Lebanese and Albanian diasporas made proactively moderate claims. I argue that the explanation lies in their instrumentalist pursuit of sovereignty, linked discursively to a global political opportunity structure of liberalism, and aspiring to appeal to the US and politicians in other liberal democratic states to advance their pro-sovereignty claims. The two diasporas advanced their goals in a two-step process. First, when previously closed international and domestic political structures opened, they used *frame bridging* to link sovereignty and democratisation, and *frame extension* to link sovereignty with various threats to US foreign policy. Second, while diasporas formulated their moderate claims without the intervention of external actors, an increased *responsiveness* of their host-state emerged to sustain the moderate mobilisation and expand it transnationally. Along with the responsiveness from the host-state, sporadic violence in the homeland also prompted diaspora circles to overcome existing problems of collective action. While disparate groups within the diasporas did not view moderate politics as the only way to

¹²² Anonymous 4, 'Interview (2006).

¹²³ Anonymous 4 and Anonymous 8, interviews in 2007.

¹²⁴ ICG, *Kosovo's First Month*, Europe Briefing 47 (18 March 2008).

achieve sovereignty, and some occasionally voiced threats, the diaspora on the whole saw moderation as a dominant mode of behaviour.

This article contributes to the major literatures in which it is embedded. It adds four important nuances to the current scholarship on diasporas and homeland conflicts. First, it emphasises the need to discuss conflict-generated diasporas not generally, but how they relate to particular political contexts in their homelands. Their trauma of displacement matters both when they link to violent and non-violent periods in the homeland, but it is less pronounced and more subjugated to instrumental politics during post-conflict reconstruction. The fact that diaspora behaviour can be an outcome of contentious collective action in response to political opportunity structures demonstrates that it is questionable whether a traumatic identity is the best way to understand the salience of diaspora. Second, this study adds primary empirical material to two cases, the Albanian and Lebanese diasporas, which have not yet been researched in this particular context. Numerous interviews with policy-makers and activists develop the texture of my evidence and argumentation. Third, the comparative approach adopted here is still rare in a scholarship dominated by single case-studies. Thus, it claims more theoretical leverage if diasporas that differ in a number of core characteristics formulate similar claims. Fourth, I raise awareness of a variable that has not yet received proper scholarly attention: nationalist cohesion of diasporas. Albanians enjoyed strong cohesion, while the Lebanese did not. Counter-intuitively, I maintain that while nationalism is usually viewed as a negative phenomenon for diaspora behaviour, in the case of the Albanians participating as transnational actors in the episodes of peacefully contested sovereignty in their homelands, nationalism was positive. Nationalism united them internally and did not allow for transgressions against a commonly adopted pragmatic approach towards achieving independence. In contrast, the Lebanese needed external intervention from their host-state and resentment against the sporadic violence inflicted on Lebanese politicians by Syria to achieve some unification on the sovereignty question. With a weak sense of a common identity, the pro-sovereignty claims were in essence particularistic claims, and the pro-sovereignty movement was based on interest-based coalitions, not on common ideology. This was very clear in the case of Rafiq Hariri, who joined the pro-sovereignty movement late due to his personal clashes with Syria. It was also true of Michel Aoun, who secured support for the SAA from the Israeli lobby, but once allowed to return to Lebanon from his exile in 2005, entered an alliance with Hezbollah, a force traditionally hostile to Lebanon's independence from Syria.

This work contributes to the emerging literature on diasporas and transnational social movements by developing a process-oriented account linked to various levels of political opportunity structures. I argue that a global political opportunity structure of global liberalism must exist, to which diasporas could link their pro-sovereignty claims, whether they have deeply internalised democratic norms or not. Thus, this article furthers Adamson's argument that the international system is constituted of several global opportunity structures, one of them being liberalism.¹²⁵ I also contribute to a discussion arguing that global technology, migration, and universal values do not necessarily erode state sovereignty, but are

¹²⁵ Adamson, 'Global Liberalism', pp. 547–69.

able to strengthen it.¹²⁶ My findings indicate one concrete mechanism by which diasporas utilise the universalist project of liberalism for their particularistic ends related to state sovereignty. I also show that even when a global opportunity structure of liberalism is present, it cannot be invoked for moderate claims unless international and domestic opportunities structures open to allow for diaspora mobilisation. The death of Syria's President Assad and the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, as well the US foreign policy shift towards aggressive democracy promotion to the Middle East constituted such openings in the Lebanese case. Serbia's defeat by NATO in 1999 and the passing of UNSC Resolution 1244 opened possibilities for the pro-sovereignty movement of Kosovars. Finally, the emerging scholarship using the transnational social movements approach to explain diaspora mobilisation has so far failed to offer more theoretical clarity about the different stages of the mobilisation process. With my account I have demonstrated that diasporas can formulate their own moderate claims, which must be sustained by a responsive host-state.

This article focused on explaining the causes of moderate diaspora behaviour. It illustrated that the pro-sovereignty movements were not caused by the diasporas but were actively shaped by them. Over time, diasporas also helped expand the pro-sovereignty movements transnationally, and assist them in achieving some degree of independence. A natural further step in the scholarly inquiry would be to investigate not the causes of diaspora mobilisation, but its consequences. How did the adoption of moderate claims by diaspora-based organisations shape the policy actors in Lebanon and Kosovo? Was diaspora framing influential in how actors presented themselves to their constituencies in Beirut and Prishtina? Answering these questions would constitute a subject of future research.

¹²⁶ Lori Brainard and Jennifer Brinkerhoff, 'Sovereignty under Siege, or a Circuitous Path for Strengthening the State? Digital Diasporas and Human Rights', *International Journal of Public Administration*, 29 (2006), pp. 595–618.