

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF TRANSNATIONAL ENTITIES: THE CASE OF DIASPORA

This article partly reflects class discussions conducted at the Mekhitarian Armenian Studies in Los Angeles during the Summer of 1993. As such, it is more a think piece and less a research paper. It also, and didactically pursues and encourages the notion that Armenian politics and policy processes should be included in the mainstream Armenian Studies programs, and attempts to provoke interest in that regard. Programs in Armenian Studies, traditionally designed to fulfill the extensive intellectual needs in the disciplines of History, Arts, Language, and Literature, largely ignored the social sciences in general and political science in particular. At best, social disciplines were treated as somewhat peripheral to the mainstream Armenian interests. However, a minor yet significant attempt in this regard has recently been made by the Mekhitarian Educational Foundation in Los Angeles along with the Mekhitarian Armenian Academy in Venice. In fact, since its inception in 1991, the Mekhitarian Armenian Studies Program has offered classes in contemporary Armenian politics and policy processes. Incorporating political studies into Armenian Studies has been an important breakthrough as these classes stimulated thoughtful discussions about the future directions of political life and relations of both Diaspora and Armenia. It should be noted that generating expressions of appreciation has not been the purpose of Mekhitarian fathers. Their purpose has been heuristic. To understand and explain the current state policies, state-building and developmental schemes and processes in the Armenian Republic, as well as the phenomenal political presence of the Armenian Diaspora are primordial challenges. In an age of profound changes in world politics, emerging movements in both aggregative and disaggregative directions, great dangers, complexities, as well as opportunities, there is a need to go beyond the simple and

ritualized presentation of understanding and practice of Armenian life and situation.

One point of departure in Armenian political studies, one might assert, is the recognition that Armenia and Diaspora, a state and a nonstate entities respectively, are distinct in their character, behavior, structure, and function. Two distinct entities, both undergoing profound changes that have direct bearing on the current changes in the relationships of conflict and cooperation on all global, regional, and domestic levels. Put another way, changes in sociopolitical and economic domains in all global, regional, and domestic levels are having a deep, probably lasting impact upon the Armenian people. To understand the impact of these changes, where they will stop, or perhaps most importantly, where they will take us is a challenging endeavor. The extent to which we must proceed on the basis of underlying perspectives is perhaps best exemplified by the choices we make in appraising the nature of our history and, particularly, the idea that sharp departures from past practices can occur in the affairs of the Armenian people and its communities throughout the world. We can no longer envision schemes without allowing for major turns in new directions and for a readiness to view each current development as possibly another watershed of future status quo. Notably, these are not endemic to Armenian politics. Consider the recent wave of changes and challenges to authority in Estonia, Iran, Poland, Argentina, Hungary, Yugoslavia, the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Somalia, Cambodia, etc. Armenians are but another direct participants of the current turbulence in world politics.

Lack of understanding in this area is in part a consequence of undue attention upon the statics and the dynamics of particular types of international, regional, and domestic systems and regimes, to the neglect of the dynamics of our inter-community and community-environment relationships. Nothing we do in our professional and scholarly lives is more important than shedding new light on how to grasp these changes and to implement our political values throughout the Armenian Diaspora and Armenia, and improve the efficacy of our policy schemes.

Such concerns need to be tackled at the core. First, there is a need to describe more precisely the nature of the changes in all global, regional, and domestic levels, and not quite the same question, the three levels as perceived, evaluated, and explained by the Armenians both in Diaspora and Armenia. What are the directions of various types of changes on these levels? How are the essential structures of our political institutions changing? Are the optimal structures as well as the policies of our institutions relevant to implementing values like justice or independence? If so, what is their impact on our future behavior? Is the change occurring within our

political systems, or are the systems themselves being transformed? What is the pace of change? Does it take place gradually and incrementally, or do our policy schemes emerge in relatively sharp and abrupt transformations?

Many contemporary events provide us with rich opportunities for responding to these questions (both as practitioners and scholars of Armenian political affairs) and, in a collaborative effort, we can make more effective use of existing knowledge to develop a much needed calculus of policy realization. The scope of this article is limited in that regard for the simple reason of time and space shortage (one can easily notice that class discussions of a month long are also too short to respond adequately to these questions). Among these many urgent research problems and study themes, this article chooses to focus on the Armenian Diaspora as a nonstate and transnationally functioning national entity¹, and discuss its political structure as one of its underlying explanatory variables.¹²

It should be noted at the outset that a comprehensive study of the Armenian Diaspora, much like any other state or nonstate political entity or phenomenon, in addition to structural explanation requires four basic classes of explanatory variables which provide a full and an adequate understanding of its politics. These variables can be classified within the following five underlying political concepts. First is political structure which will be the central discussion theme below. Second, political personality which consists of predispositions, motives, and goals of individual Diaspora Armenians and their learned patterns of behavior that come into play over a wide variety of behavioral domains². Here, political

1. The term "transnational entities" in this article is used interchangeably with the terms transnational organizations and nonstate actors (whenever it seems appropriate) and includes transnational ethnic minorities, international organizations as well as multinational organizations, all active across the boundaries of two or more nation-states. Specifically, I use the term "entity" to refer to transnational minorities such as the Armenian Diaspora, or the Kurdish and the Palestinian diasporas for that matter. In addressing particular organizations within these entities such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), I use the term "organizations." A definition of transnational organizations will be provided later in the article.
2. For classic studies in this area see, P. C. SCHWARTZ and S. K. SCHWARTZ, eds., *New Directions in Political Socialization* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1975); J. N. KNUTSON, ed., *Handbook of Political Psychology* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973) and extensive bibliographies included in the handbook; F. I. GREENSTEIN, "Personality and Politics," in F. I. GREENSTEIN and N. POLSBY, eds., *Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 2 (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

socialization, recruitment, and political participation are important components. Third, political culture which refers to the system of meanings incorporated into language and symbols and transmitted from generation to generation in a political system. Culture would represent meanings that arise out of the collective experiences of a group rather than from the wishes of individuals³. Notably, compatibility of culture and structure will eventually be revealed as diaspora structure is discussed below. Important components of culture is ideology as well as preferences, values in political action, hopes, expectations, discontents, beliefs in legitimacy, etc.

The fourth class of variables that relatively recently enters into political explanation is somatology, or the study of the person as a biological organism. This is the study of human nature and the genetic characteristics of the human being as a basis for speculating about the organization of political life. Traditionally, political philosophy had much to say about human nature as an undistinguishable component of political science. More recently, various studies have sought to demonstrate that the state of human organism itself may have a substantial effect on the way in which the individual participates in politics⁴. The final set of variables in political explanation is behavior, or the political processes that go on within the political structure. After all, we are seeking to explain why people, or the Diaspora Armenians for our purpose, act in the way they do politically — participate in organizations, lead, follow, argue, negotiate, vote, make choices, etc. In sum, political scientists have come to recognize the need to take these sets of variables more systematically into account in their efforts to understand and explain politics. Moreover, the significance of these sets of variables can be marked by the fact that they have been areas of specialization or of concentrated interest in

3. DAVID EASTON, *The Analysis of Political Structure* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 34; see also, L. W. PYE, "Political Culture," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd edition, vol. 12, pp. 218-24; H. ECKSTEIN, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," 82, *American Political Science Review* (1988), pp. 789-804.
4. For a representative literature in this area see, E. O. WILSON, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); T. C. WIEGELE, *Biopolitics: The Search for a More Human Political Science* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979); T. C. WIEGELE, ed., *Biology and the Social Sciences* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982); A. SOMIT, S. A. PETERSON, W. O. RICHARDSON, and D. S. GOLDFISCHER, *The Literature of Biopolitics* (Northern Illinois University, Center for Biopolitical Research, 1980); A. ROSENBERG, *Sociobiology and the Preemption of Social Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); A. SOMIT, ed., *Biology and Politics: Recent Explorations* (Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'homme et Maison Mouton, 1976).

political science. Specialized studies in all five areas, thus, emerge as requirements for a comprehensive understanding and explanation of political phenomena, including diasporas.

The Transnational Nature of Diaspora

Prior to engaging in the structural analysis of diaspora, it seems appropriate at this juncture to build up the conceptual ground for diaspora study in contemporary international setting. This invites an examination of prevailing paradigms in political science, more precisely in the field of international relations, and an intellectual exposure of the ground knowledge as well as the limitations of the prevalent and the relevant paradigm in conjunction to the study of transnational phenomena. What paradigm, or school of thought equip us best to understand and account for transnationally functioning entities (included diasporas) in contemporary international setting? In *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Thomas Kuhn shows that paradigms provide the ground knowledge needed to improve our understanding of the world around us⁵. We use a paradigm for guidance in choosing a research question and constructing an appropriate theoretical framework to study a problem or a political situation.

Without being trivial, it is possible to assert that the dominant paradigm in international politics is the power-politics paradigm, better known as the realist school of thought. Most of the literature in international relations, particularly since World War II, has been inspired by the realist paradigm. Scholars contributing within this paradigm see the international political system as anarchic, with nation-states (which are unified entities) as largely self-sufficient and purposive units that struggle for power in an attempt to satisfy their "national interest."⁶

Early in the 1970s another paradigm, the global politics or multi-centric paradigm, developed largely in the United States. This paradigm began to question, supported by empirical evidence, the viability of focusing on states as the main actors in world politics⁷. It depicts world politics as a

5. THOMAS KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
6. HANS MORGENTHAU, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 5th edition, 1973), p. 5.
7. RICHARD MANSBACH and JOHN VASQUEZ, *In Search of Theory: A New Paradigm for Global Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981); J. VASQUEZ, *The Power of Power Politics: An Empirical Evaluation of the Scientific Study of International Relations* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1981); R. MANSBACH, I. FERGUSON, and D. LAMPERT, *The Web of Politics: Nonstate Actors in the Global*

multitude of imperfectly linked issues to which a variety of actors, including parts of states, give varied degrees of attention.

Other paradigms, such as the world society paradigm and the Marxist paradigm, have also gained plausibility in the study of international relations. The former looks at systems rather than states as units of analysis and pictures a world that is characterized by a great variety of exchanges such as cultural, social, and economic. Around these exchanges the boundaries of the relevant systems are drawn and their structures are studied. The world society paradigm also focuses on the cooperative aspect of international relations and, hence, on the need to study the structures of those systems that would help to increase cooperation in the international system. This normative aspect of the world society paradigm is evident in David Mitraný's classic work *The Functional Theory of Politics*⁸, as well as in the works of various authors, such as Richard Falk, affiliated with the World Order Models Project.

The Marxist paradigm, on the other hand, focuses on the relations between socio-economic classes and not on state-to-state interactions. The Marxist paradigm shares with the world society paradigm the vision of a universal social order transcending the nation-state system. According to the Marxists, states are superstructures and reflect the prevailing economic relationships in societies and have secondary importance. Both the Marxist and world society paradigms had relatively less impact than the realist and global politics paradigms on transnational studies in the field of international politics⁹.

In this multi-paradigmatic discipline, in order to identify and to account for certain political phenomena and resolve certain puzzles, one needs to decide to work within a specified paradigm and utilize its conceptual and instrumental tools. To account for the role, the place, and the relationships of transnational entities on the global scale (i.e., the politics of transnational organizations in international affairs), it seems imperative

System (London: Prentice Hall International, 1976); JAMES ROSENAU, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on the Transnationalization of World Affairs* (London: Frances Pinter, 1980); PHILLIP TAYLOR, *Nonstate Actors in International Politics: From Transregional to Substate Organizations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984); B. BUZAN and B. JONES, eds., *Changes and the Study of International Relations: The Evaded Dimension* (London: Frances Pinter, 1981).

8. DAVID MITRANY, *The Functional Theory of Politics* (London: Martin Robertson and Company, 1975).
9. Numerous versions of the Marxist theory on international relations began to appear since the 1960s. Borrowing from Karl Marx's notion such as dialectical processes, social contradictions, and dependence at the international level enabled neo-Marxists to develop theories such as "dependency" and "world capitalist system."

to see at the outset which instrumental and conceptual tools are most appropriate. Since this paper focuses on nonstate and transnational phenomena (e.g. diasporas), it abandons the state-centric, power politics approach in favor of the global politics approach. The former is primarily concerned with the military and diplomatic relations among coherent units called states and, as alluded to above, focuses on states (or nation-states in the realists vocabulary) as the primary actors as well as initiators and targets of international events. The latter underlies a conviction that the realist approach in explaining international affairs has been inadequate to account for current realities — full of nonstatism and transnationalism.

Within the global politics paradigm all organizations (governmental or nongovernmental) that engage in activities across state boundaries play important role in international relations in the sense that they exert immense pressure on state actors in pursuance of their own or some common interests. Thus, one might assert, they supplement but not supplant state actors in the world. As such, a definition of transnational organizations here bears heavy reliance on the globalist view. Stated differently, the definition of transnational organizations provided below contends that, along with national governments, transnational organizations are but some actors (among many) on the international scene¹⁰.

What are transnationally active organizations and how are they structured? By definition, *nonstate actors that carry on operations across two or more states (or nation-states) and pursue their own self-interest without being exclusively national, multinational, or international in character are transnational*¹¹. Given the plethora of nonstate actors today (ranging from individuals to substate groups to international organizations), this definition is confined and concise. It also differs from the broad sweep which Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye give to the term "transnational" in their study¹², and includes organizations, both private and public,

10. For a similar connotation of various types of actors, see DONALD J. PUCHALA and STUART I. FAGAN, "International Politics in the 1970s: The Search for a Perspective," *International Organization* 28 (Spring 1974), p. 350.

11. This definition is broad enough to include organizations from both socio-political and economic domains. Also note that Harvard School of Business developed a list of criteria to determine which businesses qualify as multinational; see RAYMOND VERNON, *Sovereignty at Bay: The Multinational Spread of U. S. Enterprises* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 4-25. One of these criteria include operation in six or more countries. In my definition of transnational organizations this criteria is reduced to operations in two or more countries only to include organizations other than multinationals.

12. ROBERT O. KEOHANE and JOSEPH S. NYE, eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. ix-xxix, 371-398.

as purposive units that act across state boundaries. The term "transnational relations," used and articulated by Keohane and Nye, included all interactions (even nonorganizational interactions, such as travel and trade) across state boundaries in which at least one of the participants is not the agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization. Their emphasis is thus not on the scope of the operation, but on the private or public character of the participants in the operation¹³. As Samuel Huntington says, definitions are needed at least to clarify distinctions¹⁴. And for both conceptual and definitional clarity, transnational organizations (include public as well as private organizations) in this paper appear as collectivities of individuals forming purposive units that interact across the territories of two or more nation-states in pursuance of common socio-political and economic goals¹⁵, and, as alluded to above, they are either multinational, or international, or ethno-national in character. This formulation indicates that all multinational, international, and ethno-national organizations (since and as long as they carry on operations across state boundaries) can be referred to as transnational in character, but not all transnational organizations are exclusively multinational nor they are only international or ethno-national in character.

The term "transnational organizations" thus encompasses the terms "international," "multinational," and "ethno-national" organizations. However, to minimize obscurity and maintain some critical distinction,

13. SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON, "Transnational Organizations in World Politics," *World Politics*, 25 (April 1973), pp. 333-368.

14. Ibid.

15. The relevant references on collectivities of individuals forming purposive units include: EARL LATHAM, *The Group Basis of Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952); ROBERT T. GOLEMBIEWSKI, "The Group Basis of Politics: Notes on Analysis and Development," *American Political Science Review* 54 (December 1960), 962-71; GABRIEL A. ALMOND, "A Comparative Study of Interest Groups and the Political Process," *American Political Science Review* 52 (March 1958), 270-82; FRED W. RIGGS, "The Theory of Developing Politics," *World Politics* 16 (October 1963), 147-71; JOSEPH LA PALOMBARA, "The Utility and Limitations of Interest Group Theory in Non-American Field Situations," *The Journal of Politics* 22 (February 1960), 29-49; MANCUR OLSON, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (New York: Schocken, 1969); HAROLD R. ISAACS, *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977); LOUIS L. SNYDER, *Macro-Nationalisms: A History of the Pan-Movements* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984); DONALD L. HOROWITZ, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); EDWARD A. TIRYAKIAN and RONALD ROGOWSKI, *New Nationalism of the Developed West: Toward Explanation* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985).

it becomes imperative to stress that transnational organizations are not necessarily controlled by representatives of two or more nationalities as in the case of international organizations (consider for example, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, International Council on Social Welfare - ICSW, etc.), nor do they necessarily involve people from two or more nationalities participating in their operations as in the case of multinational corporations (International Business Machines - IBM, General Motors - GM, for example). In the context of distinguishing transnational organizations from multinational and international organizations, the term transnationalism first points to the operational character of the organization rather than composition and control and, second, it exists in combination with multinationalism and internationalism or their national opposites¹⁶. Examples from both economic and socio-political domains will support the definition given in the preceding paragraph as well as its distinction. IBM, for example, is a multinational corporation (since it involves people from various nationalities) yet highly transnational in its operations (carried across state boundaries). The Kurdish social and political organizations represent the plight and the aspirations of the Kurdish people and constitute a national entity. They (and the Kurdish people as a whole) are transnational in operations and cause major disturbances across Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqi borders. Both these entities (the IBM and the Kurds) are different in composition, yet they are operationally transnational.

The type of nonstate actors considered through such a formulation can be referred to as transnational organizations and include transnational corporations, international organizations, and transnational minorities represented by organizations they comprise (or transnational ethnic groups as referred to by some scholars)¹⁷, such as the Armenian, the Kurdish, or the Palestinian, diasporas. These transnational minorities or transnational ethnic groups, as the term implies, are nations of people (ethnically defined) who live in two or more nation-states (none of which they control). In addition, they exhibit at least one political organizations (e.g. Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Kurdish Democratic Party, Palestine Liberation Organization) and employ both violent and diplomatic means in their efforts to attain goals ranging from recognition to local autonomy to the creation of new nation-state.

16. See, for example, SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, "Transnational Organizations in World Politics," p. 336.

17. See, for example, PHILLIP TAYLOR, *Nonstate Actors in International Politics: From Transregional to Substate Organizations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984).

Political Structure

A structural discussion in this section departs from the consideration of the need for all polities, including the simplest ones, to have some form of governmental structure in order to function effectively and endure. This consideration also suggests that all political entities attempt to develop a cohesive political structure in order to comprise the society they form into a unified actor. In this context, for transnational actors, and particularly the transnational minorities, to launch a significant, viable, and enduring activity on all domestic, national, and international levels and to have effective policy outputs the need to develop the necessary cohesive structure (e.g. hierarchical) becomes more acute.

Not all transnationally active entities¹⁸, however, have hierarchically structured and centrally directed bureaucracies. Unlike IBM, the Kurdish tribes and their emerging socio-cultural and political organizations by no means are directed by a central governing body. The Armenian Diaspora also lacks a hierarchical structure. The Jewish population for centuries functioned across state boundaries through what Daniel Elazar called "the covenantal form of political organization [emerged] out of agreements among equals."¹⁹ The covenantal form of transnational entity, as Elazar explains it, derives from equal partnerships for purposes of political organization.

It does not presuppose a territory, a clear chain of command or organic development in a particular place. On the contrary it is flexible in form ... and it is capable of binding people who cannot be bound by force or by custom because they are not bound to a particular territory²⁰.

The Jewish Diaspora, the Armenian Diaspora as well as the Kurdish people are examples that illustrate the decentralized structure, or, the covenantal form of some transnationally operative entities.

Both state and transnational actors in the global political system can be projected as acquiring one or another of three basic forms of political structure and organization, namely, hierarchical, organic, and covenantal.

18. The term "entities" rather than "organizations" is preferably used here for our conceptual purposes to include people dispersed throughout the world forming diasporas, such as the Armenians or the Kurds.

19. DANIEL ELAZAR, "The Jewish People as the Classic Diaspora: A Political Analysis," in GABRIEL SHEFFER, ed., *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), p.219.

20. *Loc. cit.*

Hierarchical forms require "a high concentration of power within a power pyramid,"²¹ a centralized decision making body, and a clear chain of command. They are "particularly useful for the governance of peoples concentrated within a single structure and clearly subject to the authority of those who dominate."²² The government in this political form maintains the cohesiveness of the whole entity and enables it to function as a single and unitary actor.

Polities that are organic in form presuppose a territory and presume populations rooted in one place. They "presume a gradual and continuous development of political institutions serving a population rooted in one place, into a political system which can continue to function as long as the population is so rooted, but which once detached no longer has the wherewithal to survive."²³

The covenantal forms of political organizations, as mentioned above, are neither hierarchically nor organically structured, but derive from equal partnership of dispersed units. Table 1.1 below tentatively refers to the form of political structure that determines the level of activity of a polity. Nation-states (NS) are both hierarchically and organically formed polities since they have developed a centralized decision making structure and are rooted in a territorially defined place. They are active on national as well as international levels. Multinational corporations (MNC) by definition involve people from two or more nationalities participating in their operations and, hence, are active on international level. Also by definition, they can neither be organically rooted in one place nor covenantally structured and therefore, cannot be characterized merely by national activity nor can they confine their activities subnationally. Similarly, international organizations (IO) are neither organically rooted in one place nor covenantally structured and, by definition, they are controlled by representatives of two or more nationalities and are active on international level. Nonstate nations (NSN), or transnational minorities, on the other hand, are either hierarchically or covenantally structured entities. Those that are hierarchically structured (the Palestinian people represented by PLO, for example) are capable of functioning on international level since, one might assume, they have developed centralized decision making bodies to maintain the cohesiveness of their entities and improve the degree of their accessibility to international political agenda, and increase their level of efficacy in rule making and rule application.

21. *Loc. cit.*

22. *Loc. cit.*

23. *Loc. cit.*

Table 1.1
ACTORS IN THE GLOBAL POLITICAL SYSTEM

FORM	ACTOR			LEVEL	
Hierarchical	NS	MNC	IO	NSN	International
Organic	NS				National
Covenantal		NSN			Subnational
	State actors	Nonstate actors			

NS : Nation States

MNC: Multinational Corporations

IO : International Organizations

NSN : Nonstate Nations (including the organizations they comprise)

Covenantally structured transnational minorities are active on sub-national or regional levels (e.g. the Kurdish and the Armenian diasporas). The organizations and institutions within these entities function as equal partners in different parts of the world and, most importantly, the absence of a centralized decision making structure renders them less significant internationally and less accessible to international agenda politics. Stated differently, the absence of a centralized decision making body which would have otherwise acted as a representative body on international level, and the absence of a power pyramid which would have otherwise maintained the cohesive unity of these entities render them less effective on international level.

The Jews for centuries provided the classical example of covenantal form of political organization and contributed to the recognition that not all polities are states. However, it was not until the late nineteenth century, when the World Zionist Organization (WZO) emerged, that the Jews became active on the international level. Seyom Brown notes that Zionist activism on behalf of reconstituting homeland was "a unifying force among the world Jewry."²⁴ The WZO, in other words, played the central role in directing the worldwide Jewish polity and became the centralized decision making force. The Armenian people in Diaspora and the Kurdish people, on the other hand, are also worldwide nonstate polities with covenantal political relationships. The sense of common fate among the

24. SEYOM BROWN, *New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics* (Glenview, Ill: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1988), p. 205.

members of these people led them to concrete efforts to identify themselves with their polity and define the particular form of political relationship that is embraced beyond the nation-state. In the meantime however, these polities lacked any centralized decision making bodies confining them to subnational political relations, and rarely to national level activities.

Centralized decision-making structures have been a feature not only of nation-states, but also of many transnational business enterprises and other nonstate actors. Political centralization often emerges largely related to cultural and socio-economic factors. States are obviously one form of political centralization and many nonstate actors, on the other hand, are also readily analyzed in terms of the nature and character of relations between the central power (whether it is culturally, socio-economically, or politically defined) and the society it comprises. Both IMB from the business world and PLO from nonstate nations are good examples of centralized and transnationally active organizations. These organizations comprise different subsidiaries or communities around the world that operate in a collaborative fashion to give the organization a unitary functional apparatus. Within this apparatus a hierarchical distribution of power was legitimized and both organizations began to function in a manner that was traditionally known to be a characteristic of states. Furthermore, the centralized decision-making structure of the PLO and the IBM brought the political impact and efficacy as well as the legitimacy of these actors onto the international arena, and the size of their operations enabled them to act on the governmental scale.

Those transnational entities that lack centralized decision-making structure, the Armenian and the Kurdish diasporas, for example, would best be characterized as fragmented and less capable of functioning as cohesive political entities on the international level. The dispersal of the Kurds and particularly the Armenians took them to a great number of countries. There are over twenty Armenian communities around the world concentrated in European, North and South American, and Middle Eastern regions. "The largest disposed communities settled in North America, mainly in the United States, in Canada, France, Lebanon and Syria. Other, smaller communities went to South America (Argentina and Brazil), and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, for example)."²⁵ The Kurds, on the other hand, are mainly divided amongst four states; namely, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. There is also a Kurdish minority in Armenia. Both these transnational minorities with strong

25. GERARD CHALIAND and YVES TERNON, *The Armenians: From Genocide to Resistance*, translated by Tony Berrett (London: Zed Press, 1983), p. 1.

nationalist ideology and through their interactions with the environment that surrounds them often emerge as subnational and regional actors in the contemporary world system. The fact that they are highly dispersed and lack a centralized decision-making structure renders them less active internationally.

Unlike the vertically chained governmental structure of the Palestinian people, or unlike a centralized transnational business entity, the Armenian and the Kurdish diasporas comprise loosely knit communities in different parts of the world that might be seen as horizontally and tacitly linked. This despite the evidence that both peoples show strong desire to maintain national affiliation, and through a strong national identity they attempt to rationalize and legitimate the means of participation within their polities. The fear of domination by the host society is an additional strong motivator for resisting integration and maintaining the national identity. Rather than being subordinated to the state-based nationalism, the geographically dispersed communities of these people, "brought into contact again by the new technologies of communication and transportation, are vigorously reweaving their bond across and between continents."²⁶ The resurgence of national identity of these polities is clearly related to the fear of the loss of cultural identity. In the case of the Armenians, this is particularly true in regard to religion and language.

Both the Armenian and the Kurdish cases also resemble the Jewish Diaspora in the sense that they not only lack any hierarchical structure, but can be looked at as covenantally formed political entities in terms of socio-political equality among the groups and institutions they comprise. Here, we need only stress that diaspora should be looked at as an entity (or a unit) rather than the sum total of communities and organizations with the same national heritage in different parts of the world. To understand the structural composition of diaspora it would be insufficient to look at these communities as being engaged in a simple struggle for survival within state boundaries, since they are also linked by common rules and institutions across boundaries. Their social, political, and religious institutions are organized so that they are portable from one community to another and do not need to be attached to the national soil in order to function²⁷. The diaspora, in this context, connotes a society of communities of the same national entity with linkages between the communities that set the parameter of the diaspora. The communities with their rules

26. SEYOM BROWN, *New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics*, p. 201.

27. ELAZAR, "The Jewish People as the Classic Diaspora," p. 219.

and institutions become the principle political reality in the diaspora and the interactions among the institutions create horizontal linkages that maintain the diaspora entity. The immediate members of the diaspora society are the institutions and the various socio-political and cultural organizations within the communities rather than individual human beings because the individuals are not attached to the territory where they function or, to use Elazar's term, they are not "organically rooted" in the place where they function, but are (or should be) closely attached to their institutions or organizations.

It should cautiously be pointed out that the Kurdish people on the Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqi borders is also organically rooted in the territories on which it is inhabited for centuries. However, it still can be characterized as covenantally formed political entity in which the individuals are identified not by a centralized governing body, but by their tribes and various social and political institutions.

The diaspora political entity, whether it is hierarchically or covenantally formed, expresses a common identity of interest between the communities, and the interactions between the communities project a tacit agreement to maintain the social and cultural homogeneity among the communities and reveal a cohesive political behavior with an emphasis on political socialization as a process of maintaining and perpetuating the diaspora political behavior and culture from one community to another. Family ties, schools, cultural clubs, religious institutions, social and political organizations with various branches in different parts of the world that function under the same rules and regulations guide the behavior of their constituencies and provide the tools of this socialization. This process of political socialization, in other words, welds a cohesive political culture which, in turn, conditions and determines the political behavior of the whole diaspora.

The activity of the diaspora on the whole, and in general, can be characterized by horizontal interactions (between the branches of the same organization, for example) cutting across the boundaries of states, and generally, by cultural as well as socio-political intercourse between one community and another. The very nature of cutting across state boundaries reveals the transnational character of the diaspora politics. A prescription for the diaspora conduct is that all communities, in their dealings with one another, are bound by the institutions of the society they form and are bound exclusively by imperatives of nationality.

In sum, the consideration of transnational politics, including diasporas, thus, contributes to the emerging redefinition of what constitutes the globalist context for political linkages and action, namely,

The recognition that there are other forms of political relationship than those embraced within the nation state, that polity is a far more complex condition than statehood, and that it can involve multiple relationships, not all of which are territorially based²⁸.

Moreover, and as mentioned earlier, the consideration that transnationally active organizations exist in combination with ethno-nationalism (as in the case of organizations within diasporas), multinationalism, or internationalism (see table 1.2 below) points out that they are commonly characterized by their operational nature rather than by their composition. As table 1.2 indicates, all multinational and international organizations, as well as ethno-national organizations (and the diaspora entities they represent) that function across state boundaries, can be characterized as transnationally active despite the fact that they comprise different structural composition (as well as private or public character). Stated succinctly, by composition transnational organizations can be either multinational, or international, or ethno-national in character, and operationally they all perform functions across state boundaries. Diaspora polities seem to fit nicely in this formulation.

Table 1.2

THE COMPOSITION OF TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS²⁹

TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS		
MULTINATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL	ETHNO-NATIONAL
IBM	HABITAT	Kurdish Organizations
GM	UNFPA	(KDP, PKK, Komala, etc.)
GE	UNESCO	Armenian Organizations
	ECOSOC	(ARF, ARS, AGBU, etc.)
	ICSW	Palestinian Organization
	UNCTAD	(PLO)

28. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

29. The examples of international organizations used in this Table are as follows, United Nations Center on Human Settlement (HABITAT), United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Finally, the consideration of the increasingly pervasive transnational trends in current world affairs suggests that it would be erroneous to interpret transnational activities confined within the contour of interstate relations, or interpret them simply as tools in the hands of state actors. Both the vitality of the Armenian, Kurdish, and Palestinian communities at the subnational or international levels and, particularly, the variety of international conflicts in the last decade or so brought important changes and elevation in the actions of these transnational minorities. Also, and on the one hand, the immense economic power of transnational corporations that translates into significant amounts of political power and often serious problems for many of the underdeveloped countries, and on the other hand, the increased national sentiments by transnational minorities apparent in various relevant crises (consider, for example the crises in Karabagh, in Iraq and Turkey, and in the West Bank), allude to the changing and the crucial role of transnational entities in international affairs. Whether they are highly fragmented or structurally centralized these entities not only began to fulfill their roles, in their diasporas, of maintaining an identity, but also revealed aggressive foreign policies. Guerrilla operations, organized arms attacks as well as heavy lobbying and diplomatic efforts are but few indicators of aggressive foreign policies undertaken by these nations. If these aggressive actions helped to erase the feeling of powerlessness of these nations, power politics, on the other hand and as the proponents of global politics paradigm point out, no longer accounted for anywhere near the full variety of significant international events and decreased dramatically as the primary political concern of nation-states. The nature of contemporary international system is no longer one in which nation-states as sovereign entities are the dominant actors, but one in which a process of global political and economic integration as well as fragmentation has transformed it into a complex and highly interdependent community of various types of political groupings and institutions. Consequently, these diasporas and many other transnational entities, regardless of their composition and purpose, began to function effectively, influence state policies, and affect the lives and welfare of people in almost every country of the world.

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