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Diaspora Activism and the Dynamics of Voice

The fact that social movements reach across state borders to instigate change in places where their members do not reside is not a new phenomenon (Foner 1997; Maney 2000). As Karl Marx, a founder of sociology and an émigré himself, argued in *The Communist Manifesto*, international solidarity has always been necessary to combat authorities who abuse their populations behind a shield of state sovereignty (Marx 1978[1872]). Even so, the fruits of global capitalism have made cross-border connectivity faster and cheaper in recent years. During the Beijing student movement in 1989, democracy advocates had to fax missives, page by page, to their Chinese compatriots in California.[1] Today, video footage of Black Americans being killed at the hands of police and attacks against democracy protesters in Hong Kong travel instantaneously through internet-based media to portable, super-computing smartphones. Likewise, activists disseminate movement names, slogans, and hashtags across these media, bringing recognition to movements such as Black Lives Matter and #MeToo and inspiring others to follow suit. Equipped with these tools, even Luddites can become whistleblowers by spreading information on a global scale.

This chapter draws on advances in the study of transnational movements and migration to illustrate how activists reach beyond their proximate contexts to advocate for change across borders. While diaspora activism is centuries old (Green and Waldinger 2016; Moya 2005), globalization has enabled dispersed populations to forge and sustain transnational communities, both real and imagined (Anderson 2006[1983]), and contest authoritarian regimes more easily than ever before (Bauböck 2008; Østergaard-Nielsen 2001; Vertovec 2005).

[1] I thank Dr. Yang Su, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of California, Irvine, for pointing this out.

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Yet, relatively little is known about how diaspora movements emerge or why their transnational political practices change over time. This chapter presents a framework to help fill these gaps by drawing inductively on the Arab Spring abroad. Adopting Albert Hirschman's (1970) heuristic vocabulary of *exit*, *voice*, and *loyalty*, I propose the conditions under which diaspora movements become empowered to act on their loyalties and wield voice after exit against authoritarianism. Specifically, I show how *transnational repression* and *conflict transmission* suppress voice; how *quotidian disruptions* give rise to it; and how *resource conversion* and *geopolitical support* transform voice into the means of contentious political action. In so doing, this book demonstrates why anti-authoritarian diaspora mobilization is a contingent, and even fragile, force for change in a highly globalized world. The conceptual and theoretical warrants for these arguments are elaborated below.

1.1 THE TRANSNATIONAL TURN IN MOBILIZATION AND MIGRATION STUDIES

The study of how contentious politics operate transnationally has expanded rapidly in the decades since Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane (1971, 1972) declared that the cross-border interactions of non-state actors are an essential dimension of contemporary politics. Since that time, the transnational turn in the study of social movements has demonstrated that activists mobilize trans-nationally in different ways.[2] Local movements savvy to the need for inter-national support do so by engaging in "scale shift" (Tarrow 2005), by redirecting their claims from the local arena to supranational, state-regulating actors. The purpose of scale shift is to mobilize international institutions and agencies to come to the defense of movements and their constituents (Tarrow 2005). As Keck and Sikkink's (1998) landmark research demonstrates, the ties between local movements, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and inter-national bodies such as the United Nations can grant activists important forms of leverage. By "naming and shaming" relevant authorities, activists persuade human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International to take up their claims and condemn regime crimes (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2007). They also lobby governments and international bodies to exert corresponding pressure on offending authorities to change their practices and policies (Brysk 2000; Carpenter 2010; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2007; Keck 1995; Tsutsui 2004, 2006, 2018). Bestowed with an internationalized set of "political opportunities" (Kay 2011; Tarrow 2001) – a relatively stable set of conditions that facilitate activism – transnational

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[2] For related works on the interactive dynamics of transnational social movements, international organizations, and state-regulating institutions, see Boli and Thomas (1999), Della Porta and Tarrow (2005), Keck and Sikkink (1998), McCarthy (1997), Risse et al. (2013), Risse-Kappen (1995), Ron et al. (2005), J. Smith (2008), J. Smith and Johnston (2002), and Tsutsui (2018).

practices help activists overcome domestic political constraints. In this way, besieged movements can gain life-saving forms of attention and build cross-national alliances that address local problems (Bob 2001, 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998).

Movements also become transnational by forming networks and coalitions with other grassroots actors dedicated to addressing a common cause (Ayoub 2013, 2016; Kay 2011; von Bülow 2010). Social movement groups sharing feminist, LGBTQ+, labor, environmental, and religious values and missions, to name just a few examples, join forces to increase their numbers and commitment (Tilly 2004). They also form coalitions to contest harmful practices, such as austerity policies imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the use of sweatshops by Google and Nike, imperialistic wars waged by the United States in Vietnam and Iraq, and the corporate and state-fueled practices driving climate change (Meyer and Corrigall-Brown 2005; J. Smith 2008). So too do activists join forces at international conferences, from those sponsored by the United Nations to the World Social Forum, in order to exchange stories and tactics. By building cross-border alliances, activists demonstrate the moral imperative of working collectively on the basis of human beings' shared fate (Russo 2018; C. Smith 1996). Studies of movement diffusion and spillover demonstrate that the spread of social movement campaigns can grant vulnerable allies attention and leverage in a highly stratified world system (J. Smith 2008; Soule 2004, 2013).

Diaspora movements who mobilize transnationally in order to induce changes in their places of origin play an important role in this internationalized civic realm (Adamson 2002; Al-Ali and Koser 2002; Fadlalla 2019; Rudolph and Piscatori 1997; Wald 2009). They pose formidable challenges to home-country regimes by naming and shaming immoral and illegal practices, remitting cash to freedom fights, lobbying for intervention, and disrupting regimes' monopolies on information and public goods. They also articulate alternative loyalties to the homeland in ways that challenge regimes' monopolies over the *meaning* of loyalty to the nation.[3] When operating "in the relatively free environment of democratic host states with much better forms of communication and international recognition," Shain argues that diasporas do not just

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[3] As Shain (2005[1989]: 164) writes,

Political exiles often find themselves in a uniquely difficult posture, because they are removed from the domestic political order from which they must draw their loyalists, and also because they are vulnerable to charges of disloyalty. An important part of the exiles' struggle is therefore to challenge the home regime's attempts to impose its own interpretation of national loyalty both at home and abroad. In Albert Hirschman's schema, the home regime maintains that "exit" from the national soil, especially when followed by "voice" against the existing authorities in the state, is an expression of national "disloyalty." Exiles contest this view, maintaining that their "exit" was not an alternative to internal "voice" (opposition) against the regime, but indeed a sine qua non for the exercise of "voice."

act as the homeland's "tail" but "may dominate the wagging" (2005[1989]: xv; 2007: 125). Accordingly, their movements can stoke sectarianism and prolong civil wars, as well as contribute to conflict resolution and reconstruction (Chalk 2008; Cochrane et al. 2009; Davis and Moore 1997; Fair 2005; van Hear and Cohen 2017). Thus, despite their displacement – and indeed because of it – diaspora members' enduring loyalties reshape the political terrain at home and the international responses to conflicts therein.[4]

1.2 EXIT AND VOICE: UNPACKED

As the transnational turn in the mobilization and migration literature makes clear, exit can facilitate voice against abusive regimes when diaspora members' transnational ties promote loyalty to the people and places left behind (Duquette-Rury 2020; Hoffmann 2010). By voice, Hirschman means the literal words and actions that express discontent, from grumblings to violent protest (1970: 15). For diaspora members, voice can take many forms, including postings on social media, public protests that call for host-country governments to intercede, and direct interventions in home-country wars and charity.

Writing on voice against authoritarian regimes, political scientist Guillermo O'Donnell (1986) usefully suggests that voice varies according to whom it is directed. The first dimension is what he calls "horizontal voice," which signifies the ability to express dissent *within* one's community without the fear of sanctions. One expresses horizontal voice when Tweeting complaints about the majority political party and when expressing a political preference to a friend or neighbor. Horizontal voice is premised on what scholar Phillip Ayoub (2016: 23) calls interpersonal *and* public visibility. Visibility is required so that aggrieved persons can locate each other, communicate with one another, and forge social movements based on common grievances and aims. In other words, visibility enables persons with common grievances to rally around shared identities and claims without repercussions and be recognized by the wider society and the state. Perhaps there are some exceptions to this rule, as in the case of online anonymous groups that hack corporations. Nevertheless, without horizontal voice, collective action on behalf of shared causes becomes unlikely.

The second dimension is "vertical" voice (O'Donnell 1986). Vertical voice is directed toward authorities and powerholders through actions such as protest and lobbying. By mobilizing to gain the attention of policymakers, the media, NGOs, and other influential actors, activists work to "draw in the crowd" into the fight (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1983; Lipsky 1968; Schattschneider 1960).

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[4] The struggle for "freedom, self-determination, and national identity" has been "paradoxically" transnational (Field 1971: 5) owing to the opportunities that activists gain in advocating for change from afar and owing to the role that exiles play in long-distance nationalism (Anderson 1998; Hockenos 2003).

They also indirectly wield vertical voice against authoritarian regimes by launching insurgencies and undermining regimes' attempts to control information and resource distribution. In these ways, movement actors talk back to regimes through their actions.

By emigrating to freer societies, exit facilitates the survival of movements in the wake of repressive crackdowns in the home-country and allows movements to survive in "abeyance" (Taylor 1989). Exit to democracies also presents "political opportunities" for activists to engage in new types of resistance (Quinsaat 2013; Sökefeld 2006; Tarrow 2005). Political opportunities signify changes to actors' contexts that make them more inclined to enact voice, whether owing to the reduction in risks or because of their potential to make alliances with decision-makers, or both (McAdam 1999[1982]; McAdam et al. 1996; Meyer 2004; Tarrow 2011). Diaspora members who settle in democratic contexts should therefore gain political opportunities to engage in both horizontal voice (among each other) and vertical voice (to authorities).

At the same time, as scholars have recently come to point out, transnational activism is not a consistent feature of diaspora life (Betts and Jones 2016; Chaudhary and Moss 2019; Duquette-Rury 2016; Guarnizo et al. 2003; Koinova 2011, 2018; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Waldinger 2008, 2015). Their movements can certainly be efficacious in shaping the homeland in their image (Hockenos 2003). But although "ethnic" lobbies have incurred a reputation as influencers in home-country and international affairs (e.g., Huntington 2004), diaspora members' public, collective claims-making activities are episodic, and even downright rare in some communities. Yet, relatively little is known about how their collective efforts for change in the homeland come about in the first place, or why their mobilization dynamics vary within and across national groups.

Because diaspora movements can potentially build nations and tear them down, understanding when, how, and the extent to which diaspora members' loyalties transform into voice against illiberal regimes remains an important topic of inquiry. Under what conditions, then, do diaspora members wield voice after exit against dictatorships? By treating anti-regime collective action as a phenomenon warranting explanation – that is, taking up voice as a dependent variable – this study shows why diaspora mobilization against authoritarian regimes is a highly contingent phenomenon.

1.3 DETERRENTS TO VOICE AFTER EXIT

Building inductively on the comparison of Arab Spring movements abroad, I argue that diaspora movements' shared origins, grievances, and political opportunities are insufficient for explaining voice after exit for several reasons. Chief among them is the fact that, as Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) argue, diaspora members who retain transnational ties to a country of origin are "simultaneously" embedded in political, social, and economic conditions in

that place of origin. As a result of their biographical, familial, and identity-based ties across borders, conditions "over there" in the home-country impact persons living "here" in the diaspora (Waldinger 2008, 2015). This simultaneity, I assert, means that diaspora members are not only transnational *actors* but also transnational *subjects*. Their capacities for mobilization are therefore impacted by their embeddedness in, and relational ties to, the home-country.

Accordingly, diasporas do not simply act on, or in response to, conditions in the home-country according to their advantages abroad. Rather, home-country conditions *act back on them* through their transnational ties in an interactive fashion. This means that exit is a relative, rather than absolute, phenomenon (Hoffmann 2010) precisely because diaspora members maintain "ways of being and ways of belonging" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1002) that keep them tied to authoritarian home-country contexts. Ties to the home-country may therefore just as likely *depress* the members' willingness and capacity to work together for regime change as *fuel* transnational activism (Duquette-Rury 2016, 2020).

Building on this, I argue that two deterrents stemming from the home-country – *transnational repression* and *conflict transmission* – suppress transnational activism for liberal change by subjecting diaspora members to authoritarian systems of social control and divisive home-country conflicts. By transnational repression, I mean the ways in which home-country regimes work to silence and punish dissenters abroad through tactics such as surveillance, threats, and harming their family members at home. By conflict transmission, I mean the ways in which divisive home-country politics are reproduced in diaspora communities through members' biographical and identity-based ties. Such ties can "produce conflicting views" among diaspora members that "mirror debates in the homeland rather than dictate them" (Shain 2007: 126). By making it difficult for exiles to garner community support or form robust civil society organizations, I find that each of these conditions, which can also work in tandem, was sufficient to constrain anti-regime diaspora mobilization before the Arab Spring (see also Chaudhary and Moss 2019).

1.3.1 Transnational Repression

The borders of the given nation-state delimit a regime's power and jurisdiction in important ways (Mann 1984; Weber 1978). As discussed above, the movement of populations from authoritarian contexts to relatively liberal ones presents political opportunities for voice. But despite the importance of the host-country in shaping these opportunities (Bob 2002; Tarrow 2005), authoritarian regimes often permeate state borders to pursue their enemies and control their diasporas in "blatantly progovernmental and policelike" ways (Bauböck 2003; Délano and Gamlen 2014; Miller 1981: 401; Shain 2005[1989]: ch. 8). A growing number of studies on *transnational repression* demonstrate that regimes do so by surveilling diaspora communities in person and online; by

threatening activists; and even by assassinating dissidents abroad and harming their family members at home.[5] As the 2018 murder of Saudi dissident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul[6] gruesomely illustrated, regimes undertake these acts precisely because diaspora members have the potential to discredit dictators from abroad. The threats posed by transnational repression do not preclude voice entirely, as many of those in exile will have already incurred the costs of activism and accept the risks of continuing to speak out. However, the operation of transnational repression can effectively isolate these exiles in their communities, instill widespread fear and mistrust, and render popular mobilization a practical impossibility. This, in turn, dampens horizontal voice within communities in spite of their shared identities and anti-regime grievances.

The exercise of "extra-territorial authoritarianism" and "counter-exile strategies" is not a new practice (Dalmasso et al. 2017; Shain 2005[1989]). France's Bonapartist dictatorship suppressed subversive acts among exiles in England in the 1850s (Shain 2005[1989]); Mussolini's regime hunted anti-fascist Italians abroad during its reign of terror (Cannistraro 1985); and countless opposition figures have been murdered, from Leon Trotsky, who was assassinated in Mexico on Stalin's orders in 1940, to Orlando Letelier, a former diplomat who was killed via car bomb in Washington, DC, in 1976 by Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet.[7] Today, the technologies that make transnational activism ever easier also facilitate transnational repression, as when regimes use spyware to hack dissidents' cell phones and social media accounts (Al-Jizawi et al. 2020; Michaelsen 2017; Moss 2018). What this means is that the diaspora members who are most likely to be aggrieved by abuses taking place in the home-country are also those most strongly subjected to disincentives to speak out. The operation of transnational repression can therefore mute horizontal voice between diaspora members and hinder efforts to project vertical voice toward authorities.

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[5] For academic studies, see Adamson and Tsourapas (2020); Cooley and Heathershaw (2017); Glasius (2018); Lemon (2019); Lewis (2015); Michaelsen (2017, 2018); Moss (2016b, 2018); Shain (2005[1989]); Tsourapas (2020a, 2020b). See these studies for additional references of reports by NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch on transnational repression.

[6] Jamal Khashoggi (1958–2018) was a journalist, author, and dissident from Saudi Arabia who was lured to the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, under the pretense that he would be allowed to obtain a marriage license. Instead, he was strangled to death by agents of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, dismembered with a bone saw, and disappeared. The following year, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a report holding the Saudi regime responsible for this premeditated, extrajudicial, and extraterritorial execution.

[7] I am grateful to my colleague Dr. Samuel Valenzuela, Kellogg Professor of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame, for alerting me to this important example of transnational repression.

1.3.2 Conflict Transmission

Social movements are fundamentally shaped by whether individuals come together on the basis of shared grievances and interests (Curtis and Zurcher 1973; Rucht 2004), and diaspora members' propensities to express voice are likewise shaped by their shared origins and identities. Collective identities forged by common emigration circumstances and characteristics, whether real or imagined, can facilitate mobilization by producing common enemies, shared reasons for collective action, and sentiments of solidarity between participants (Polletta and Jasper 2001).[8] Nationalist identities based on diasporas' country of origin, for example, can unite otherwise heterogeneous populations during periods of crisis or celebration and promote "long-distance nationalism" (Anderson 1998). Diaspora members' willingness to work together is further influenced by the historical circumstances that create particular cohorts of emigrants (Eckstein 2009; Guarnizo et al. 2003; Masud-Piloto 1996; Pedraza-Bailey 1985), particularly when authoritarianism creates waves of politically and economically motivated migrations.

A diaspora is not a naturally bounded or preconfigured group, however, and the same characteristics that bind persons from the same home-country together can just as easily split them apart (Brubaker 2004, 2015; Wimmer 2013). As Rogers Brubaker (2005, 2015) argues, shared identities, cultures, and practices do not automatically create the "we-ness" necessary to forge solidarities or sustain social movements. Not all members' national origins may be equally salient or important to them at a given point in time, and divisions based on conflicts around race and ethnicity, religion, region, social class, and other factors can divide their members in significant ways (Anthias 1998: 570, 577–78; Guarnizo and Díaz 1999; Pupcenoks 2012, 2016). As a result, emigrants may express stronger loyalties to region, religion, ideology, political party, or ethnic group than they do to the nation. In fact, political opportunities provided by the host-country may facilitate the assertion of *alternative* loyalties that have been suppressed in the homeland, such as Kurdish Syrian (rather than Arab Syrian) and South Yemeni (as opposed to Yemeni) demands for territorial autonomy.

Accordingly, the willingness of diaspora members to work together for a given home-country's causes cannot be assumed even when they have shared origins, grievances, and opportunities. As scholars studying Colombian immigrants and refugees have shown, shared ties that embroil emigrants in histories of war and violent trauma undermine nationalistic solidarity and trust between conationals (Bermudez 2010; Guarnizo and Díaz 1999). Likewise, research on Somali communities demonstrates that racial, ethnic, and class antagonisms

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[8] Sociologist David A. Snow defines a collective identity as a shared attribution that distinguishes a collective from one or more sets of others (Snow 2013).

travel with refugees from the home-country to their places of refuge, reproducing caste-like stratifications and intra-community conflicts after settlement (Besteman 2016; Rawlence 2016). Varied migration circumstances can also fracture diaspora members over their transnational home-country bonds, as in the cases of generational divides between emigrant cohorts from Vietnam and Cuba (Huynh and Yiu 2015; Pedraza 2007). The transmission of conflicts to the diaspora through members' cross-border ties is also likely to create disagreements over the use of organizations for activism. Literature on mobilization suggests that activists can grow their movements by appropriating "indigenous" structures in minority communities, such as ethnic or religious organizations, and converting their participants, resources, and legitimacy to the movement (Andrews 2004; McAdam 1999[1982]). This form of resource conversion provides movements with legitimacy and a base of adherents and potential participants. However, what I call *conflict transmission* can render such resources a major site of contention over who has the right to command them (Besteman 2016). Members' common ties to a home-country can therefore *undermine* their willingness and capacity to work together when shared origins embed them in partisan homeland politics, stigmatized identities, and intra-opposition cleavages.

1.4 HOW QUOTIDIAN DISRUPTIONS FACILITATE VOICE

Given that transnational repression and conflict transmission deter voice, under what conditions do diaspora members come out and come together for change at home? The answer, detailed in Chapter 4, is once again rooted in their ties to the homeland. I argue that just as authoritarianism and conflict travel abroad, so too do *disruptions* to these normative conditions. During episodes of turmoil and contestation, changes to regime control and power relations in the home-country travel abroad through members' ties. Thus, diaspora voice against authoritarianism can result from what David Snow et al. (1998) call a "quotidian disruption." This theory suggests that groups suffering from previously low degrees of political empowerment and high degrees of alienation are likely to require a major disruption to the norms and routines of everyday life to mobilize them for change. For diaspora members, disruptive changes that travel abroad have the potential to *activate* horizontal voice between diaspora members and motivate action aimed at expressing collective, vertical voice (Wald 2008).

Building on this concept, I argue that heightened mobilization and repression in the home-country will not only disrupt the quotidian at home, but also promote voice abroad by *undermining the normative operation and effects of transnational repression and conflict transmission*. In the case of the Arab Spring, this occurred when escalating regime repression engulfed diaspora members' loved ones in the home-country (as when their relatives became pro-revolution in orientation or action, were forced to flee from violence, or

were detained or killed by the regime). These changes released diaspora members from the obligation to keep silent in order to protect their loved ones by undermining the relational mechanisms that made transnational repression an effective deterrent. The risks and sacrifices undertaken by vanguard activists for the Arab Spring also disrupted the normative effects of transnational repression by broadening diaspora members' objects of obligation and their sense of shared fate with the national community (Moss 2016b: 493; Mueller 1992). When peaceful protesters were slaughtered, participants came to "believe the costs of protest should be collectively shared" (Hirsch 1990: 245) and felt called to mobilize openly for moral and emotional reasons (White 1989).

Diaspora activists also embraced voice when they perceived that the regimes were unable to deliver on the threat of transnational repression. Libyans abroad felt empowered to come out when the defections of students and officials signified the collapse of regime control abroad. Syrians did so when escalations in violence at home posed imminent or arbitrary threats to their loved ones in Syria, leading respondents to perceive that coming out would not incur additional costs on their significant others. Both situations suggest that regimes facing insurgencies and zero-sum threats to their survival may be unable to repress-as-usual abroad. Perceived changes in the regimes' capacities for repression, therefore, rendered high-risk activism as low-risk (McAdam 1986) and signaled openings in activists' opportunities for dissent (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 2005).

Diaspora members overcame the effects of conflict transmission when previously factionalized groups and individuals in the home-country joined popular anti-regime coalitions. When the formation of revolutionary coalitions at home brought together formerly atomized and divided groups for regime change, these solidarities also traveled abroad to soften divisions between anti-regime diaspora members. Accordingly, the formation of mass movements in the home-country made anti-regime diaspora members more willing to work together for both strategic and emotional reasons. However, once opposition groups at home became embroiled in internal power struggles and splintered once again, so too did diaspora activists re-fragment abroad. The extent to which diaspora members came out and came together for the Arab Spring, therefore, was contingent on the degree to which disruptions to conflict transmission endured.

1.5 WHEN DIASPORA MOVEMENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

After diaspora members come out and come together, they have the potential to undermine authoritarian regimes in different ways. They can do so indirectly by lodging claims to their host-country governments, third-party states, the media, and to international bodies in order to persuade these powerholders to grant their allies attention and support (Bob 2005; Brysk 2000; Kay 2011; Keck 1995;

Keck and Sikkink 1998; Lipsky 1968). Diaspora members violate regimes' monopolies on information and diffuse conflicts to the international arena by "drawing in the crowd" (Schattschneider 1960). They also work directly with their allies in the home-country to channel their allies' claims outward and channel resources inward, including cash, material aid, and themselves as volunteers (Hockenos 2003). In these ways, diaspora members become impactful interventionists by engaging in partnerships across different arenas of civil society and governance, as well as by moving tangible and intangible resources across borders. But under what conditions do they become empowered to undertake and sustain these actions and sustain these forms of voice?

Below, I argue that diaspora movements' abilities to intervene in meaningful ways for rebellion and relief are dependent on two additive, conjoined conditions: (1) their capacities to *convert resources* to a shared politicized cause, and (2) the extent to which they gain *geopolitical support* from outside power-holders.[9] When resource conversion and geopolitical support are sustained over time, diaspora activists gain the capacity to become auxiliary forces against authoritarianism by channeling voice and resources across different fields of action, for example, from the halls of the US Congress to the front lines in Benghazi, Libya. Without resource conversion and geopolitical support, diaspora activists will lack the relationships and structural conditions necessary to channel resources homeward. In cases such as these, their voice will be limited to demonstrating their solidarity from a distance.

1.5.1 Resource Conversion

Studies of social movements have long argued that resources fundamentally shape activists' capacities for action (Cress and Snow 2000; Jenkins and Eckert 1986; McAdam et al. 2001; McCarthy and Zald 1977). Within diasporas, loyalty to causes and conationals in the home-country can motivate members to allocate fungible and material resources to an insurgency. Activists may also convert their social capital to politicized causes, turning skills and knowledge into "social remittances" (Ayoub 2016; Levitt 1998), as when doctors volunteer in field hospitals and bilingual activists use their skills to broker between home-country dissidents and international donors (Adamson 2002, 2005; Guarnizo et al. 2003; Koinova 2012; Levitt 1998). Diaspora members' network ties to persons on the ground are also vital, as these ties form the basis of working partnerships that enable the transfer of information, remittances, and mutual support (Moss 2020).

While diaspora movements are often well-resourced compared to their home-country counterparts, not all are equally endowed to meet their allies' needs.

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[9] For additional work that draws attention to the importance of immigrant cohesion and host-country political institutions, see Ögelman et al. (2002).

Relatively poor migrants do indeed transfer billions of dollars to their families, and as data from the World Bank illustrate, these amounts appear to be growing every year (Ratha et al. 2019). However, remittances are not as free-flowing as they may appear from these data (Faist 2000). The allocation of resources to a political movement in the home-country depends on a number of factors, including diaspora members' migration histories and collective wealth. Immigrants from the professional, middle, and upper classes in the home-country are more likely to enter the professional sector, less likely to be tasked with supporting family members at home, and less likely to arrive to the host-country with significant debts. Those from refugee and working-class communities often face the opposite situation, finding themselves burdened with settling debts and sending remittances homeward, paying the way for family members to join them, and working long hours in jobs without benefits. Diaspora members with socioeconomic privilege are therefore more likely to allocate their time and resources to social movements and have the capacity to convert resources to political causes.

Furthermore, as Lauren Duquette-Rury (2020) finds in her study of exit and voice, US-based migrants' interventions for development in Mexico are constituted not only by members' willingness to help the people and places left behind, but also by the conditions in their home-countries. Mistrust between insiders and outsiders, the absence of partners to receive and distribute resources on the ground, and violence undermine their abilities to remit homeward. Even the wealthy will have their fungible resources drained when causes and crises become prolonged. In these ways, resource conversion depends on the continuous availability of resources and active, networked relations with insiders. Without these, diaspora members will lack resources to give or persons to receive them. Furthermore, during periods when remittances are needed most, diaspora members may face legal and territorial blockages that prevent them from moving resources to the front lines. This leads us to the importance of geopolitical support, explained below.

1.5.2 Geopolitical Support

Social movements are embedded in historically situated political environments that bestow some movements with advantages and others with disadvantages, and these environments shape whether movements are likely to achieve their goals (Amenta 2006; Eisinger 1973; Kitschelt 1986; McAdam 1999[1982]; Tilly 1978). Such factors include whether governments are receptive to movements' demands and whether movements have or gain allies over the course of their campaigns (McAdam et al. 1999; Meyer 2004). As case studies of pro-Israel Jewish American and anti-Castro Cubans suggest, diaspora lobbies become powerful when their interests and ideologies are shared with policy-makers (Haney and Vanderbush 1999; Quinsaat 2013, 2019; T. Smith 2000). Studies of transnational movements also widely support the notion that

external attention grants activists leverage and influence (Bob 2005; J. Smith 2004; Tsutsui 2018). When diaspora movements receive what Betts and Jones (2016: 9) call "external animation," they become activated and encouraged by these powerholders to express voice.

Extending these claims, I argue that diaspora interventions are shaped by the degree of *geopolitical support* they receive from their host-country governments, states bordering the home-country, international institutions, and the media. Whether these geopolitical powerholders support diaspora activists depends on a range of factors, including officials' security and economic interests, their ideologies and professed values, and institutional missions. Outside actors are also more likely to incorporate diaspora movements into their policy-making and practices when activists can fill in gaps in outsiders' knowledge about their homelands. Western journalists seeking to report from the front lines, for instance, may rely on diaspora brokers for access and language interpretation; state actors similarly rely on activists to provide intelligence and the legal and moral justifications for foreign intervention (Moss 2020).

The geopolitical support of states is especially important when diasporas seek to transfer resources across national borders. Diaspora members from conflict zones face hurdles in sending remittances when banks seek to "de-risk" their dealings and governments block remittances, citing reasons of counter-terrorism (Fadlalla 2019; Gordon and El Taraboulsi-McCarthy 2018). Just as Palestinian Americans have been accused of supporting terrorism abroad for their charitable efforts (Pennock 2017), the current war on terror poses significant obstacles to organizing even for basic humanitarian relief among South Asian, Middle Eastern, African, and Muslim communities (Chaudhary 2021; Horst and van Hear 2002). Because transnational ties embed diaspora members in geopolitical conflicts, persons accused of channeling remittances to the so-called wrong cause can face severe penalties. Accordingly, diaspora members' abilities to move resources homeward – particularly to isolated places in the world's periphery – will be severely compromised unless they gain the geopolitical support of gatekeepers.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In closing, the primary contribution of this book is a process-driven framework for explaining anti-authoritarian voice after exit. My argument, in summary, is that when home-country ties subject diaspora members to *transnational repression* and *conflict transmission*, anti-regime voice will be weak. When *quotidian disruptions* upend these transnational deterrents, diaspora members will become empowered to capitalize on host-country political opportunities and express voice against regimes in word and deed. The extent to which they intervene on behalf of rebellion and relief is then mitigated by two additional additive forces of *resource conversion* and *geopolitical support*.

The chapters to follow elaborate the empirical evidence for these claims based on a comparison of activism among Libyans, Syrians, and Yemenis in the United States and Britain before and during the Arab Spring. Chapter 2 begins by discussing their emigration histories and contexts of reception in the host-countries. I then explain the weakness of anti-regime voice in the period immediately preceding the Arab Spring, which provides a basis for comparing the effects of the 2011 revolutions on the diaspora mobilization to follow.