The Diaspora Phenomenon in the 21st Century: Ideational, Organizational and Behavioral Challenges

By
Gabriel Sheffer

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Preliminary clarifications

As it is quite widely known and recognized, at the beginning of the 21st century the general diasporic phenomenon and specific diasporas are far from disappearing or loosing their considerable significance. Quite the contrary, and again as it is pretty well known, the numbers of diasporas and diasporans are growing. Though especially the governments of richer and more developed states attempt to restrict immigration into their countries so that the eventual increases in the numbers of diasporas and diasporans may be restricted or diminished, actually the diasporas' growth can not be stopped. By the same token, as a result of current somewhat more favorable cultural, social, political and economic processes occurring in various states, it seems that diasporas' and diasporans' influences and impacts on their homelands, hostlands and the international system, concerning all those spheres roles and impacts are rather expanding. Hence despite some negative reactions, mainly generated by hostlands governments and various social groups in these countries, diasporas' and diasporans' various capabilities and influences will only continue to increase.

It does not mean, however, that diasporic individuals and entities are totally free to develop and behave strictly according to their own or their homelands' inclinations and interests. Like other none-diasporic minorities, they are under a range of kinds of pressures originating in various relevant backgrounds that will be discussed further below. As a result of such processes that eventually affect diasporas, diasporans, homelands, hostlands and other actors, there is a continuous need to reevaluate the present and future situation of the entire phenomenon.

In view of the tremendous changes occurring now all over the globe there is a special need to evaluate the challenges facing the various types of diasporas. That is the main goal of this chapter.

Some politicians and academic have realized that this phenomenon is highly intricate, that it is becoming even more complicated and that consequently the challenges facing the various existing and emerging diasporas are mounting too. (Cohen 1997; Braziel 2003; Sheffer 2006) Yet, the general tendency revealed in the more theoretical and general studies of the phenomenon is to treat all migrants and diasporas as one uniform phenomenon and lump all of them together, thus making it pretty difficult to asses the challenges facing these entities. This is particularly evident in the academic literature that has been written according to the transnational approach. (On the concept of transnationalism in general and on its applications to transnational diasporas in particular see, for example, Smith 1986; Glick, Bash and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, 1995; Clifford 1996; Lie 1997; Anthias 1998; Vertovec and cohen 1999; Tambiah 2000; Morawska 2001; Waldinger and fitzgerald, 2004; Vertovec 2004; Brubaker 2005)

More specifically, because of the interconnections between the following two phenomena, most of these academic observers have not paid sufficient attention to the fact that not all "others" in hostlands actually constitute diasporas and that there are differences in various aspects of migrants' and diasporans' existence, needs, interests and behavior. It is definitely the case that such clear distinctions are essential for a better understanding of the various challenges confronting diasporas at the beginning of the 21st century.

In fact, all such "others" in hostlands fall into six categories: tourists; refugees and asylum-seekers; legal and illegal non-organized newly arrived migrants; irredentist groups; and members of two types of diasporas that would be more fully categorized and analyzed below. Unlike most members of those other groups, who are temporary residents in hostlands, the latter two types of entities are composed of persons who permanently dwell in host countries. Following is a useful differentiation among the various types of these others.

As noted, the first group is that of *tourists*. After accomplishing the preplanned purposes of their trips to other countries, most tourists return to their countries of origin, or move to other receiving countries. Only some of the persons belonging to this category stay for longer periods or try to settle permanently in host countries with the hope to become citizens there. Though tourists who stay for longer periods may establish contacts with local diasporans and diasporic entities, if these exist there, however, like other migrants they actually join such entities only after becoming acquainted with the situation in the receiving states, overcoming migration traumas, making autonomous decisions about their future and becoming permanent citizens in these countries. Tourists who illegally stay in host countries for longer periods may maintain continuous contacts with their brethrens' diasporic entities. Nevertheless, since they may be either deported by the hostlands' authorities, or autonomously change their mind and return to their countries of origin, it is difficult to regard them as fully-fledged diasporans.

The second group is that of *refugees and asylum seekers*. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), more than twenty million people fall into these categories. Whereas about twelve million qualify as refugees, the remaining eight to nine million are asylum seekers and returnees to their homelands that have not been fully reintegrated into their original societies. Eventually, some of the asylum seekers may acquire citizenship in their hostlands and either join or form diasporas, but only few refugees succeed in obtaining citizenship in their hostlands and thus they must return to their homelands. Also, a majority of these persons are internally displaced in their homelands, a factor which makes it inappropriate to regard them as diasporans. According to the UNCHR, the main countries hosting refugees fleeing from hardships and difficulties in their homelands are Burundi, Sudan, Somalia, Angola, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Congo, Liberia, Rwanda, Lebanon, and Jordan: all these are countries that have experienced internal turmoil, insurgency, or terrorism. The actual political, social, economic and cultural situation in most of these countries is very far from being favorable for the establishment of active diasporic entities. (UNCHR 2001)

The third category of others is that of *legal and illegal non-organized newly arrived migrants*. The persons in this category are mostly guest workers or students. Though most, but not all, host countries can and do record the numbers and identities of newly arrived legal migrants, which globally number tens of millions, nevertheless no reliable figures exist about illegal migrants. Problematic cultural, social, political and economic conditions in homelands and such favorable conditions in hostlands

lead most of these migrants to try to head to mostly developed and democratic countries, including most of Western European states, the United States, Canada, Australia and Japan. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in the United States, a good number of host countries have attempted to limit and control the flow of such migrants to prevent both terrorism and worsened economic conditions. Nevertheless, most borders, especially in the European Union and the United States, are porous and such traffic hardly can be fully controlled. In this respect, democratic and democratizing states are of course disadvantaged, as they encounter immense ideological, legal, and practical inhibitions when handling immigration of various kinds. As a result, many terrorist, criminal and other illegal activities have been carried out by members of this category of people in more developed democratic states. As the case of Mexican and Latino legal and illegal migrants to the US and Canada, (Garcia 2003); and Africans to France (Koser 2003), have been showing quite clearly, among these persons the demand for staying for longer periods or permanently in their new hostlands is substantial. Indeed, many of these migrants succeed in doing so. Thus, more than the others in the previously mentioned migrants' categories, this category contributes many persons to various types of diasporas.

The fourth category of others in their host states is that of *organized transstate ethno-national diasporas.* (Sheffer 2002, 2006a) These are dispersed persons in various host states. The members of these entities are of the same ethnic and national origins; they are permanently residing in their host countries; are not assimilated but to different degrees they are integrated into their host societies. These unassimilated persons form the cores and the peripheries of these entities. Usually, the core members are organizing or organized. Either directly or through the diasporic organizations they maintain contacts with their homelands. According to current estimates, there are more than 300 million such people worldwide. (Sheffer 2006a, chapter 4)

Some of these organized diasporas are veteran "historical" established dispersals - the Jewish, Armenian, Greek, Indian, and Chinese are obvious examples of the entities in this sub-category. Some should be regarded as "modern" diasporas, which means that they are relatively new and were established mainly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—for instance, the Italians, Irish, and Polish fit into this sub-category. And finally, some are incipient diasporas—that is, these are entities in the early stages of formation and organization—in this sub-category are, for example, the Moroccans, Ghanaians, the Chechens, and the twenty five million Russians in the former Soviet Union empire. (Kolstoe 1995; King and Melvin 1998; Martin 2000; Mandelbaum 2000; Munz and Munz 2003)

The final category could be labeled as *cultural and religious transnational dispersals.* (Saint-Blancat 2002) Similarly to the transstate diasporas category, these are dispersed persons permanently residing out of their homelands. They share the same cultures, often including the same languages, religions, beliefs and ideologies. Yet, as will be noted below, in fact each of these groups is composed of persons from different ethnic and national backgrounds. Examples of these dispersals are the "Muslim", "African" and "Latino" persons scattered around the world. As a result of terrorist activities launched by Al-Qaeda and other dispersed Sunni and Shiite Muslim transnational groups and organizations, observers have referred to these groups as homogeneous transnational diasporas. In reality, though, the latest waves of terrorism and other violent actions have been carried out not by highly organized and homogeneous "Muslim," "Arab" or "North African" diasporas, but rather separately and autonomously by migrants belonging to the various groups mentioned earlier and

members of different older organized and incipient transstate ethno-national diasporas, whose members' only common characteristic is that their religion is Islam. Indeed, much closer attention should be paid to the motivations and purposes of the actual members various Muslim, Latino, and African groups, whose origins are in different nation states. Various analysts doubt whether indeed there are such transnational diasporas (on the critics of the attribution such concept to these groups see, for example, Sivan 2005)

When focusing on the abovementioned diasporas it should be realized that the distinctions between the *historical, modern and incipient* diasporas, (Cohen 1997; Smith 2003; Sheffer 2006a) the distinction between *state-linked* and *stateless* diasporas, and the existence, or non-existence, of *transstate and transnational* diasporas, are overlapping characterizations. However, these characterizations should be applied differently in regard to each diaspora. Thus, for example, while the Jewish Diaspora should be typified as a "historical-state-linked-transstate Diaspora," the dispersed Palestinians should be typified as a "modern-stateless-transstate Diaspora," and as mentioned before, according to some politicians, journalists and academics, the worldwide dispersed Moslems should be viewed as forming a "historical-transnational diaspora".

Similarly, it should be strongly emphasized that none of the diasporas are homogeneous entities. In this respect and as far as the diasporans themselves are concerned, a critical distinction should be made between *core* and *peripheral* members of such entities. Core members are all those who emotionally and cognitively cling to the general inherent identity characterizing their entire ethno-national group, including of course the segments living in their actual or imagined ethno-national homeland, who regard themselves and are regarded as members of such entities, and who, whenever it is needed, publicly identify with the entire entity in their hostlands, homelands and various dispersals. Peripheral members are those who have been fully or partly integrated, but not assimilated, into their hostlands' societies but still maintain their "original" identity and some contacts with the organized part of their diaspora. This significant distinction should also be carefully considered when analyzing the entire diasporic phenomenon and then the challenges facing the phenomenon at large and specific entities in particular.

In short, when discussing the main issues and challenges facing diasporas at the beginning of the 21st century one should avoid generalizations and make very careful and clear distinctions between the various types of diasporas and diasporans.

The Challenges Facing Diasporas

Following these fundamental observations, this article focuses not on all, only on the most critical cultural-ideational, organizational and behavioral challenges now facing these multifaceted entities.

These critical challenges are: First, the need of diasporas' core and peripheral members to clarify their individual and collective identity and identification. Already at this stage of the discussion of the challenges it should be stated that probably these issues – the identity and identification – constitute the hardest challenge facing all incipient transnational, as well as state-linked and stateless transstate diasporas. However, in view of various current cultural, social, political and economic environmental temptations, which will be specified below, also members of historic and modern transstate state-linked and transstate stateless diasporas must work hard at maintaining the non-essentialist primordial elements of their identity.

The second major challenge, which is closely interlinked to the first one mentioned above, is connected to the need to define the actual and virtual boundaries of these entities, which now are very blurred and porous.

The third significant issue facing these entities concerns the need to define and recognize the actual or virtual location of each of the diasporas' centers. Closely interconnected is the need to clarify the relations between the diasporas' actual or perceived centers on the one hand, and their dispersed members and organizations, on the other hand.

The fourth major dilemma that generates significant challenge is that of loyalty to either their imagined center or actual homeland, on the one hand, or to their host countries, on the other hand.

The fifth challenge is that of the strategic and tactical policies and activities, including the use of violence and terrorism, and connections to criminal groups, which are intended to ensure the accomplishment of the maximal interests of the various categories and sub-categories of diasporas and diasporans.

The Different Types of Diasporas

Further to the rather brief but essential clarifications of the different types of diasporas that have been suggested earlier, the first significant distinction that should be elaborated here is that between "transnational" and "transstate" diasporas. (Milles and Sheffer 1998)

Let's begin by stating that there are of course certain similarities between these two categories of diasporas. Nevertheless, some basic characteristics, such as the identity, connections, organization, behavior, survival and demise of the members of each of these two types, are different. Hence, the challenges that each of the two diasporic types confront are also different.

The following are only relatively brief distinctive characterizations of these two categories: essentially, the first category – the transnational one - consists of large groups, some of which but certainly not all members of these entities, regard themselves as forming coherent diasporas. Yet, all persons who regard themselves or are regarded by other as forming such a diaspora, are not of the same ethno-national origin. Rather, they have in common some other characteristics that in their own perception and in the eyes of outsiders - such as the general publics in their hostlands and worldwide, politicians and analysts - determine their belonging to such entities that usually are ill defined. Thus, they may have in common religious beliefs and affiliation to a church or sect, or the same regional geographical background, or the same language, or even shared ideological beliefs. Hence, respectively, groups such as the "Moslem", "Buddhist" and "Catholics"; "African," "Latino" and "Arabs"; "Francophone" and "Chinese", probably also the "Green" and in the past the "Communist" Diasporas, should be included in this category. It should be noted here that these groups are included in this category mainly on the basis of the subjective views of their members and some outsider observers.

The second category, that of the transstate diasporas includes, for example, the Irish, Armenian, Greek and Jewish diasporas. (for a profile of these diasporas see Sheffer 2006a, chapter 2) The most significant feature that determines the similarity between these transstate entities is that their core members as well as some peripheral members of each of these diasporas are of the same ethno-national origin. These members are persons that very clearly belong, according to their ethno-national background, own awareness and self-definition as well as according to the perception of relevant external observers to a certain diasporic entity, and to the fact that their

identification with it is either not questionable or objectionable. It should be emphasized that this applies not only to first generation diaspora members, but also to later generations of historical, modern and incipient diasporas, whether these are state-linked or stateless.

To a great extent, as a result of the growing realization that perceptually and probably also actually such two types of diasporas exist and therefore distinctions should be made between them, there have emerged also two main theoretical/explanatory approaches to the entire diasporic phenomenon.

Actually, the adherents to the transnational approach, which has been the more popular approach, regard and portray all present day dispersed persons permanently residing out of their countries of origin as transnational entities. (see for example, Tololyan 1991, 1996; Safran 1991; Vertovec 1997; Butler 2001; Brubaker 2005; Schnapper, 2005) They strongly argue that like other existing nations and ethnic groups such diasporas are, to use Ben Anderson's famous term, "imagined communities." (Anderson 1991, 1994) They also argue that essentially diasporism is a modern phenomenon. This approach is very influenced by post-modern epistemological trends, as well as by various actual aspects of globalization, such as ease of migration, modern communication, individualization and spreading hybrid cultures.

The main specific arguments of the transnational approach are pretty well known and therefore the following is not an exhaustive list of their definitions and characterizations. Essentially, the adherents to this approach argue that membership in these entities is based on utterly subjective feelings and decisions of individuals, who, especially when they do not have noticeable physical markers, can relatively easily change their affiliations and loyalties up to the stage of full assimilation into their hostlands' societies; that the main glue tying together these persons, and hence also their entities, is cultural elements; that these entities are constantly changing; that their boundaries are very far from being clearly drowned, fixed and stable; that most of these entities and their members who permanently reside in certain hostlands experience continuous processes of cultural hybridization that cause substantive heterogeneity in the entity at large, and also in smaller sub-groups residing in the same country, region or city; that consequently they tend to either assimilate or fully integrate into their host societies; that their memories of their historical and more recent ancestors, or of their "original homelands," are not very significant for their existence; and that the possibility of their return to their homelands is almost inconceivable.

Adherents to this transnationalist approach also argue that the current processes of globalization constantly influence and cause major changes in the identity and identification of such persons, which are either "positive" or "negative" as perceived from the specific viewpoints of the diasporas' various leaders. Thus, on the one hand, globalization processes diminish the numbers of these diasporas' members and make their cultural and social boundaries even less defined and more porous, but on the other hand, due to current means of communication such processes increase the number of such diasporas' members and enhance their solidarity and connections to their "communities," or rather entities. As mentioned above, one of the main diasporic entities which is supposed to fit this characterization is the "Moslem Diaspora." But there are widespread doubts about the inclusion in this category of, for example, the "Arab" and "Latino" diasporas. (Sivan 2005)

Generally, it seems in fact that there is a certain decline in the acceptance and application of the transnational approach to the diasporic phenomenon (see for example, Braziel and Mannur, 2003).

The other approach – the transstate approach – argues that a distinction should be made between the two types of diasporas and that as far as their age, collective identity, organization and behavior are concerned, diasporas constitute a perennial phenomena. (Smith 1986) This means that although over the centuries certain historical diasporas, which still exist today, such as the Chinese, Indian, Jewish and Armenian, have indeed changed quiet considerably, these are ancient entities that have overcome many actual as well as more abstract acute threats to their identity and existence. In fact, they have survived planned and actual attempts to totally annihilate or assimilate them. It also means that their members are capable of existing as distinct groups in today's globalized post-modern world in which there have emerged some expectations that ethnic minorities and diasporas will totally disappear either through assimilation or return to their homelands. This portrayal applies to modern and incipient stateless and state-linked diasporas, such as Basque, Palestinian, Polish and even some Scandinavian reawakening diasporas in the US.

Furthermore, according to this second approach, the cores of such diasporas are more united and they demonstrate greater cohesion and solidarity than the "transnational diasporas". This is the case because of a number of factors: the identity of their members is more built in and inherent because it is a complex and changing integrative combination of primordial, psychological and instrumental factors (Kelass 1991; Sheffer 2006a); because there is no tremendous gap between their identity and identification, namely, these days such diasporans are not so shy or reluctant to publicly identify as belonging to these entities, and it is becoming even fashionable to do so and behave like it; because in comparison to the purported transnational diasporas, they are better organized; because their connections to their real or perceived original homelands are constant and intensive; because their involvement in their homelands' cultural, social, political and economic affairs, and in the affairs of various hostlands where their brethrens reside, is significant; because on various occasions they are involved in conflicts in or pertaining to their homelands and to other states that host their brethrens; and because some members of such diasporas consider a return, or actually return to their homelands. This is the case, for example, with the Irish, Jews, Turks, and even Japanese. (Sheffer 2006a)

Based on the abovementioned main arguments of the adherents to this second approach concerning the nature and characteristics of most contemporary diasporas, it seems that the current processes of globalization and liberalization would cause neither total assimilation, full integration and hybridization nor an eventual total disappearance of the cores of these entities. By the same token, though these diasporas' geographical and demographical boundaries are constantly changing and though these boundaries are porous, they are still pretty clearly drawn, and can be maintained and sustained. In fact, there are signs that the current trends of globalization, liberalization and multiculturalism, and consequently their impacts, rather strengthen many diasporas. These trends provide them with additional cultural, ideational, economic and social resources and means that ensure their sustained existence.

After the downfall of the Soviet Union and its empire, and because of the latest wave of the establishment or reemergence of sovereign states, the number of stateless diasporas has declined – thus for example, the Armenians, Poles and Croats have gained their independence and sovereignty, and consequently their diasporas'

status has changed. All these and others are modern diasporas that have reformulated their collective goals and strategies which are now geared to support their brethrens in their real or imagined homelands states. Hence, now most of the existing diasporas are state-linked rather than stateless. However, there are still ethno-national diasporic entities fighting for their independence in their real or imagined homelands. When considering this factor, the cases of the Palestinian, Tamil, Basque, and Kosovar diasporas and segments of the Turkish-Kurdish diaspora immediately come to mind. Individual members and various groups within the remaining stateless diasporas are deeply involved in the struggles of their brethrens in their homelands to gain independence, and extend to them various types of support.

Yet, all diasporic entities, whose number and size, as has been mentioned before, are increasing, and who on the whole are not facing tremendous pressures from host countries' governments to assimilate, or to fully integrate, or to refrain from organizing and acting either as autonomous or separatist collectives, nevertheless face major challenges. These will be conceptualized and presented below.

The First Challenge: Identity and Identification

As has also been mentioned at the beginning of this article, the following are not all but only the most critical challenges facing the two types of diasporas. And again, as can be seen below, the challenges facing the two types of diasporas – the transnational and transstate – are not totally diametrically opposite, but they are substantially different.

The first basic and most significant challenge facing *all* diasporas as collectivities, and *all* their members as individuals, concerns identity and identification.

It seems that in this article in this volume there is no major need to reemphasize that like the situation of all national majorities and minorities, identity and identification are the most critical factors determining and ensuring the sustainable existence of all diasporic entities. Although these two interconnected factors are essential in any discussion of the future of such entities, it seems that, with some exceptions (such as, Gleason 1983; Hall, 1990: *Identity, 2001;* Braziel and Mannur, 2003; Kokot Waltraud, Kachig Tololyan and Caroli Alfonso, 2003; Vijay, 2006) since the earlier development of diaspora studies, their academic discussion has been somewhat relegated to a secondary place in recent studies and publications in this field.

As far as their identity is concerned, diasporic entities can exist when two significant preconditions are met: the first precondition – when in addition and to an extent "on top" of the existence of individual and familial emotions and cognitions concerning their "belonging", individual diasporans and small familial groups have a very clear cognitive sense of belonging to a wider group that cultivates solidarity and fosters commitment to the entire ethno-national entity; and the second precondition – there is an inherent readiness of individual diasporans, their families and larger diasporic groups to publicly identify as members of these entities.

As noted above, contrary to some observations of insiders and external observers, such recognition, feelings and commitments are not confined to core members. Actually, some peripheral members of these entities – that is those persons who have greatly integrated into their hostlands' society, politics and economics, share and maintain their diasporic ethno-national identity. However, especially because of the still widespread opposition to diasporas and their rejection, which are engendered by hostile surrounding cultural, social, political and economic

environments in their hostlands, peripheral diasporans refrain from public identification with the entire entity. Despite their vacillations and hesitations (not so much concerning their identity but more often concerning their identification) very often these persons are generally written off from the attention, memory and formal and informal membership in these entities. For example, these days, this trend is notable in the study of the "classical" Jewish Diaspora, especially in the US. Though in different ways, when analyzing this entity and attributing to it figures and numbers, most writers make the distinction between core and periphery, or core and enlarged Jewish population. (Rebhun 2005)

However, the greatest difficulty in this respect that causes the most significant challenges facing diasporic entities is experienced especially by members of the imagined transnational diasporas. Again, according to the vast literature on transnationalism, the main reason for this difficulty, which is facing this type of diasporas, is that the identity of their members is not inherently entrenched and based on primordial factors. Rather, according to various writers, their identity is freely or autonomously imagined, subjectively constructed and individually espoused by actual or virtual members of these entities. Hence, this interpretation rightly implies that the original ethno-national or religious identities of such diasporans can easily be neglected, totally altered or hybridized. (on hybridization see, for example, Werbner 2005) Such a capability to fundamentally alter ones' basic ideological and religious beliefs can lead such persons to total assimilation or to full integration in host societies, and thus to considerable demographic losses, especially for transnational diasporas.

Usually, and this observation is not confined to diasporans belonging to transnational diasporas but it applies to other diasporans as well, both cognitive and emotional confusion and uncertainty about their fundamental identity also prompt severe emotional and cognitive doubts about the need and benefits that they can gain from identification as members of diasporic entities. In turn, such positions and decisions will lead to new difficulties facing such individuals and to major challenges to the leaders of such collectivities that are interested in maintaining "their" entities.

Therefore if leaders and core members of such transnational entities – as for example, the leaders and core members of what is now referred to as the Moslem and the Latino diasporas – indeed determinately intend to organize, prevail and then maintain some sort of cohesion, commitment to the diaspora and to its causes, and an ability to politically and economically act as an effective group, the most basic challenges facing them are whether and to what extent define more clearly their identity. It seems that recently such leaders rely on a combination of religious ideas plus economic and social promises to encourage and strengthen the commitment of vacillating and indecisive persons to remain members, or at the least maintain close connections with the diaspora.

In most cases the maintenance and encouragement of such truly united and organized transnational diasporas will require on the part of actual and potential members of such entities an ideational, emotional and practical substantial detachment from the ethno-national elements of their emotions and beliefs. Basically, this means that such individuals and groups must decide whether they give up their primordial ethno-national identities and instead join these less-defined transnational entities and later remain or become active members in these entities thus helping in shaping a larger persistent core that is coherent and capable of demonstrating solidarity and initiating and implementing actions. The diametrically opposite option is that they would try to assimilate or fully integrate into their hostlands' societies.

Given favorable conditions in their host countries the latter decisions may lead to a situation that would prevent the establishment of truly united and coherent transnational diasporas.

It can be very easily understood that such decisions concerning their identity will have a tremendous impact on individuals' public identification. In case that these persons decide that membership in and support of the emergence of more coherent transnational diasporas are preferable, members of existing transstate diasporas originating in separate Moslem or Latino homelands will have to publicly or secretly clearly identify themselves as such. Moreover, in many instances they would have to denounce the primacy of their actual belonging to a transstate ethno-national diaspora.

This does not mean to exclude the possibility that some diasporans would try to identify as members of both the transnational and transstate diasporas. As the cases that will be discussed below indeed show, actually in most cases such persons do not discard their original ethno-national identities. At most, these persons "add" such transnational identities to their original ethno-national identities and they either suffer or enjoy dual identity – that of their ethno-national and of their transnational entity.

The examples of individuals and groups that may face, or are already facing, this dilemma, are those of the Pakistanis in Britain and elsewhere, North Africans, such as the Moroccans and Algerians in France, and of course the Africans in Europe and the US. Because of the significance of this challenge the illustrations below would be relatively long in comparison to those in later sections of this article.

Let's begin with a brief discussion of the Pakistani Diaspora, especially in Britain, as an example of this significant issue of identity and identification. Many Pakistanis have left their country in pursuit of higher education or better employment opportunities. At present there are about four million Pakistanis abroad. This diaspora is steadily increasing in number. Many persons of the Pakistani diaspora have maintained close relations with their homeland and consequently have had a great social and economic impact on Pakistan in the past. According to most assessments, this will not decrease with time. The relatively economically secure large Pakistani diaspora, especially in Britain, has played an important role in continuous attempts at directing Pakistan towards democratization and greater economic prosperity. This could have only been achieved through a shared vision about their country's future. The organization of the Pakistani diaspora has been done both through the establishment of religious centers located in many mosques, but also through the formation of many civil society and politically oriented organizations (like in other diasporas, it is pretty difficult to asses the numbers of members and activists in these organizations). Yet older and younger as well as newcomers and veterans Pakistani diasporans, especially in Britain, face difficult questions concerning their identity. Since it would be pretty difficult for most Pakistanis to fully assimilate into the British society, then like most other diasporans they have to decide whether to fully or partially integrate into British society. At the same time, they have to make their mind up about their relations with other growing Moslem entities in Britain and Europe, and especially to what extend they should identify with the "Moslem Diaspora" and actively support its legal and illegal activities. As noted before, this creates a need to decide about preferences concerning their emotional and cognitive ties with their ethnic origin and the religious demands and calls for identification and support of the general Moslem cause. (Werbner 2002, www.ssrc.org; Haddad and Esposito 2000)

Very similar dilemmas are facing the North Africans in various European hostlands, (Allieve and Sorgen 2003) and especially probably the relatively large Moroccan entity in France. In this respect one should differentiate between the

Berbers and the rest of Moroccans. It seems that some of the latter are more inclined to identify themselves with the general Moslem cause. Because of Moroccans proximity to their homeland and the relatively easy communication with it, these persons have stronger links with Morocco and thus they are capable and willing to maintain their ethno-national identity and identify as such. In any case, one of the indicators for the critical decision of these diasporans in regard to this issue is their cooperation and support for organizations like al-Qaeda.

For many generations the identity issue and challenge have been facing the African-Americans that are not descendants of recent immigrants or that they are immigrants themselves. Most members of the latter groups remember and maintain their original identity, retain contacts with their homelands and support them. Their main dilemma is to what extend to integrate in the American society. On the other hand, the former have to decide whether at all they are a diaspora and from which country they draw their identity. There is no question that the majority of African Americans do not regard themselves as members of a diaspora and despite their troubled history their identity is basically American. (Gilroy 1991, 1993, 1997; Green, 1997; Segal 1998; Hanchard 1990, 1999)

In view of the more inherent base of identity and identification in the cases of core members of trans-state diasporas, questions related to the need for protecting and promoting identity and identification are not as severe in these cases as they are in the cases of transnational entities. However, in view of current cultural and social temptations for assimilation and full integration in the more liberal democratic hostlands, members of trans-state diasporas must also invest emotional and concrete resources for maintaining the given primordial elements of their identity. In other words, in case that they are inclined to maintain their membership in their ethno-national diasporas and willing to augment its activities, they must try to prevent processes of sweeping hybridization of their individual and collective identity that may lead to its blurring, and later when circumstances in their hostlands would permit also to full assimilation. In turn, this may result in the total eradication of their identity, and thus to the end of their membership in organized entities.

Examples of transstate diasporas facing such a practical challenge include the American and British Jewish Diaspora and Swedish Americans. Let's begin with a brief discussion of the Jewish Diaspora. Subjectively, and probably also objectively, the future of this "classical diaspora" - World Jewry - is uncertain. On the one hand, there are leaders, activists and researchers who demonstrate a certain degree of optimism, but on the other hand, there are those who show great concern about it and especially about the future of European Jews (Wasserstein, 1997) In view of this mood and assessments, the recent general and specific discussions within American Jewry and the various surveys and studies of the situation there indeed focus on the question of "continuity" of the American-Jewish entity (the same applies to other Jewish diasporic entities, such as that in Britain that will be discussed below).

Actually, these discussions and studies deal with the ongoing processes of assimilation and full integration of Jews in their hostlands, and therefore with the decreasing numbers of identified and active members in that entity. Among other things, these ponderings refer not only to actual operational aspects of the issue but also to more general issues such as the fundamental question of "who is a Jew?" It is obvious that such issues and questions pertain to the basic question discussed in this part of the article – Jewish identity. Recent studies of this matter clearly show that Jews not only assimilate and totally desert Jewry and its various communities but also that a fundamental debate is going on among many Jews concerning the nature of

Judaism. In the US this discussions deal with the centrality and role of the religious element versus the ethnic and national components of the Jewish identity. The surveys indicate that fewer Jews define their identity as purely religious and more Jews define their identity in national or ethnic terms. (Mayer and Kosmin 2002; Boyarin and Boyarin 2003; Waxman 2003) This trend indicates that more Jews "liberate" themselves from the bonds of religion and its leaders and revive the ethnic elements of the existence. Similar processes occur in British Jewry. The numbers of identified Jews is decreasing also in that host country and the discussions about the future of this veteran entity, which are closely connected to issues of identity and identification, are going on, however, in less passionate manner. (Schmool 1999)

As is well known, since the nineteenth century, about eight million Swedes emigrated to the US. The more or less general public accepted perception about these persons has been that eventually they either assimilated into the American society or totally integrated into it. However, this has not been the actual situation of Swedish Americans – certain segments of this group have settled in certain urban concentrations that helped them in maintaining their ethno-national identity and they even organized and formed certain diasporic associations. More recently, there has been a clear reawakening of various segments of this Swedish diaspora, as well as, for example, of members of the American Polish, Norwegian and other diasporas. This reawakening is expressed not only in emotive and ideational aspects but also in the economic, trade and tourist spheres. (see for example, Schnell 2003; Allyson and Moynihan 2003)

The Second Challenge: Actual and Virtual Boundaries

The second major challenge facing existing diasporas is closely interlinked to the previous one concerning their identities and identification patterns. This challenge pertains to the definition, protection, maintenance and expansion of virtual and actual boundaries of these entities. This has been recognized by various writers as one of the most critical aspects of diasporism. (Barth 1969; Armstrong 1976; Sheffer 1986, 2006a; Safran 1991; Laitin 1995; Tololyan 1996; Cohen 1997)

Once again, while the identities of core members of transstate diasporas are more inherent and solid and consequently the boundaries of their collective entities are more clearly defined, the challenge facing transnational diasporic entities in this respect is first, differently from the challange facing transstate diasporas and, second, more difficult to cope with. Thus, if there really exists a wish to form, consolidate and later maintain a transnational organized collective, then such diasporans must define and draw more clearly the boundaries of their entity, which today are almost not existing - for example, there are none whatsoever defined boundaries of the global African and Moslem diasporas.

In case the leaders and activists of these potential or existing diasporas wish to have a chance to actually be formed and then to exist for longer periods, then for a number of "positive" and "negative" reasons from their own viewpoints, after or simultaneously with the definition of the their identities, their leaders and activists should do their utmost to delineate the boundaries of these "communities." Two of these "negative" reasons are: first, the total lack of well defined boundaries makes it very difficult for leaders and activists to recognize, to reach out and mobilize members, to organize, and to locate needed political, diplomatic and economic resources and recruit activists; second, the definition and drawing of more or less clear boundaries (of course not in physical terms) facilitate the diasporas' efforts to resist attempts by hostlands' governments, societies and competing ethnic and

religious groups to "penetrate" these diasporic entities and cause their weakening, shrinking and even demise, in order to punish them for patterns of belonging and actions that they perform, or that they avoid to pursue, which infuriates their hosts .

The difficulties that are involved in such attempts to create meaningful boundaries are demonstrated, for example, by the efforts of moderate Moslem leaders, who oppose radical Islam and the claims of its proponents and activists to rule the world, that global Islam is by far more important than the existence of various separate ethno-national diasporas and therefore they prefer to maintain their own entities and advance their ethno-national homelands' interests. In the context of this part of the article, these moderate leaders oppose attempts to expand the virtual boundaries of transnational Islam and the obligations to it because they wish to prevent the departure of certain transstate diasporans, such as Lebanese, Palestinians and Syrians in Latin America, from their diasporic entities. They also are eager to prevent the neglect of homelands and diasporic interests, and eventually their "defection" to the more radical elements of the transnational Moslem Diaspora. We are talking here about Moslem communities founded by immigrants from Syria, Lebanon and Palestine who arrived in Latin America at the end of the ninteenth and first half of twentieth centuries and permanently settled in various countries of Latin America. It should be noted that predominantly these entities are Sunni in origin. Because of their economic success they ran the risk of being assimilated or fully integrated into their host countries' societies. That is why the aim of the first organizations founded by these immigrants in the nineteen twenties was to bring the communities together and organize them around the ethno-national linguistic and religious traditions. Thus, their communities acquired an ethnic character. The communities were started as closed groups and were not open to diffusion outside of the original group. This ethnic character began to lose strength from the end of the nineteen nineties when Islam entered the international scene in a dramatic fashion, and individuals began to show interest in joining the new frameworks. Leaders of radical and extremist groups, such as al-Qaeda and Hezbollah, try to draw and determine much broader boundaries of the transnational Diaspora according to their beliefs and views, by including all separate transstate diasporic entities in the general radical Moslem framework. (Zamblis 2005; Pew Forum 2006) It means that in case that the new religious leaders wish to create and strengthen the new transnationalist Moslem diaspora the task facing them in this respect is to draw new boundaries and then to recruit believers to participate in this entity. (Kastroyano 1999)

On the other hand, in case that leaders and activists of core transstate diasporas wish that these entities will continue to exist, they must work hard not so much at drawing the lines of their entity's borders, but rather at protecting the existing boundaries of their entities and at preventing their further blurring and porosity. Thus they may avoid the possible consequent "defection" of core and peripheral members to either transnational diasporas, or, to hostlands' societies, a situation that may lead to a major decrease in their size and resources. As noted in the previous section, this is exactly what is happening in the established Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian Moslem entities in Latin America.

At the beginning of the twenty first century this is a major challenge since in any event the current boundaries of these entities have become less defined and more porous than they used to be let's say in the mid twentieth century. The main reasons for these developments are members' assimilation, and more often and regularly their greater integration into host societies, especially in democratic states. Yet, because of the inherent nature of their multifaceted identities, by investing extensive

organizational efforts and substantial financial and educational resources, the leaders and activists of transstate diasporas are capable of maintaining their boundaries and preventing assimilation and full integration of large numbers of their members.

in Examples for an involvement in such processes are the Basque and Turkish diasporas in the US that have succeeded in maintaining their boundaries. For centuries, Basques have emigrated from Spain for economic reasons, later Basques emigrated to escape crushing poverty, civil war and the political oppression by the Franco Regime. However, unlike other European immigrants to the US, even after five or six generations of residence abroad, a surprising number of Basques have maintained their ethnic identity. The Basques in the US have demonstrated remarkable endurance of their ethnic identity and culture. They have maintained the elements of their traditional culture and the institutions that have encouraged identity maintenance and the connections with their brethrens Spain. Partly as a result of the close organized connections between the Basque authorities and Basque communities in the US, it seems that now there is a further determination to maintain the Basque community there. (Totoricaguena, 2003, 2005)

It should be added here that some dormant diasporas whose members either fully integrated into their host societies or have been inactive for many decades, or even generations, are now awakening and reviving their organizations and their core members' joint activities. By doing so, they redraw the formerly indistinct virtual boundaries of their entities in their hostlands. As has been noted above, relevant examples of such processes affecting groups that were almost fully assimilated or totally integrated into their hostlands society are some of the Scandinavian communities in the US, and by the same token more Polish and Irish Americans rejoin or join their diasporic entities in the US.

The Third Challenge: Location and Relations with the Homeland/Center of the Diaspora

The third basic and very significant issue facing all diasporic entities concerns the definition and formal or informal recognition of the actual or virtual location of a diaspora's center. A very closely interrelated issue is the nature of the relations between diasporas' members, leaders and organizations, and their actual or perceived centers.

In this respect, mainly the transnational entities – probably with the exception of the various Christian churches – experience an intrinsic ambiguity concerning or lack of actual or even perceived homelands/centers. Thus, for example, while the Catholics worldwide regard the Vatican not as their homeland but as their cultural and to a certain extent also their political and economic center, and the dispersed Greek Orthodox regard Athens as their center, there is certainly no agreement among the Moslems or the Africans about the center of their global entity.

The existence of a recognized center, the need to act on its behalf or to oppose its regime, namely the wish and need to maintain continuous connections with it dictates the need to organize. Organization is a sine qua non for the persistent existence of diasporas. (Sheffer 2006a)

Thus in case that there is a recognized center individual diasporans of all kinds can and do maintain contacts with it, yet when there is no agreement about the location and legitimacy of a center, these groups experience severe organizational deficits that could have been prevented in case that such centers were recognized and contacts with them maintained. Because of this lack of established centers and diasporic organizational deficits it is pretty clear that actually these diasporas are

merely virtual entities with a limited possibility to act and impact the international and national systems. Thus, except for their occasional substantial impact on regional and internal affairs in certain hostlands, like the situation of the Sunni al-Qaeda that is far from being recognized by the entire Moslem diaspora worldwide. The same applies to the terrorist activities of the Shiite Hezbollah, which is purportedly representing Iran who is claiming to become the center of the Shiite Moslem global group. It is highly doubtful whether and to what extent these two groups can systematically and continuously impact current affairs, especially in their host countries.

On the other hand, while due to the fact that in most transnational diasporas there is no agreement about the location of their center, the challenge concerning the recognition and relations with these diasporas' center is basically conceptual and abstract, for transstate diasporas this challenge is neither hypothetical nor theoretical. To determine where the ethno-national center is is an actual challenge facing members of these entities almost on a daily basis. This is because most core members of both state-linked and stateless transstate diasporas know exactly where is the territorial location of their imagined or real homelands. Therefore they must decide what is the nature of their relations with it and who determines all cultural and practical decisions concerning actual moves of both the diaspora and the ethno-national center.

There are only few cases of stateless ethno-national diasporans, like a minority among the African-Americans who regard a whole continent as their homeland, or some Romas who regard Northern India as their homeland. In other words, for these diasporans the existence and location of their actual countries of origin is not clear. Otherwise, most of all other stateless diasporans – such as the Palestinians, Seri Lankan Tamils, Basques, Turkish Kurds, (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003) Sikhs (Tatla 1999) and for the time being also the Albanian Kosovars – have a very clear idea where is their center/homeland. Pretty usually they may have some doubts or specific wishes concerning the boundaries of these territories, but as said before, the location of the homeland is clear. In fact, large segments of these and other stateless entities invest substantial emotions and actual political, diplomatic and economic resources in the usual protracted struggles for gaining independence and sovereignty in these countries of origins. Like in the cases of the Palestinians and Kurds, not all diasporans may agree about the tactical moves intended to achieve that independence and sovereignty in their homelands. On certain occasions, there might emerge even substantial disagreements between the diasporans and their brethrens in the homeland concerning these issues. Thus for example, there have been difficult debates between Albanian Kosovars in the US and their brethrens in Kosovo about various conceptual and actual issues in regard to the separation from Serbia – like in other cases the American Albanians have been more radicals in this respect. The same situation characterized certain groups of Jews before the establishment of the sovereign state of Israel. In the Jewish Diaspora there were members who supported the right to launch a war against the Arabs and Palestinians in order to occupy the entire Land of Israel.

After their brethrens obtain independence in their homelands, stateless diasporas become state-linked diasporas. Later on, up to a certain point in time and without asking too many critical questions about the policies and behavior of the new rulers in their homelands, members of such new state-linked diasporas tend to support the new systems in their homelands. During that initial period after independence they continue to politically, diplomatically and economically invest in enhancing their homelands' security and development. This was the case with the Armenian, Jewish and Polish, as well as of various other diasporas. Later on the former activists in such

diasporas tend to view more critically the situation in the homelands. In cases where the new rulers in the homelands pursue policies and behave in a fashion that does not fit the views of the diaspora, which in many cases are influenced by liberal and moderate norms of behavior prevailing in their hostlands, they might change the entire or part of their previous relations with the homelands.

In any event, locating and recognizing the center of the entire ethno-national entity are two-sided processes. On one side, recognized homelands have tried and now more intensively continue to try to influence the situation and activities of "their" diasporas. (Connor, 1986) In this respect now there is a relatively new pattern: for many reasons - including for getting remittances, donations, investments, political and diplomatic support, etc. - more homelands are showing a much enhanced interest in their diasporas. Accordingly, many countries of origin have established special ministries or agencies to deal with "their" diasporas. For example, this is the case in Greece, France, Italy and even Japan. Generally speaking, the overall purposes of these homeland governments is to enhance their relationships, and in fact their control, over their diasporas, or at the least to gain substantive influence concerning their positions and inclinations vis-à-vis their homelands, and possibly even more importantly, regarding the diasporas activities on the hostlands, regional and international levels.

Simultaneously, more homelands' governments are ready to invest more in developing and promoting their relations with "their" diasporas. Thus, more homelands' embassies and organizations are involved in the affairs of the diasporas, and more frequently such governments attempt to "guide" the diasporas in what they should do in the social, political and economic spheres in their hostlands. Moreover, now homelands' governments are ready to invest more in cultural, educational and socialization processes in their diasporas. Even the Israeli government that was always eager to get from the Jewish Diaspora maximum economic donations and investments, has changed its basic policy in this respect and recently began to invest in what is called "Zionist-Jewish Education." (Sheffer 2006b) More homelands encourage their diasporas to organize - this is the case, for example, with the Greek, Japanese, Turkish and even Italian governments positions and actual policies. (about the Italian case see, for example, Gabaccia 2000) Such homelands' governments wish that in the final analysis they, and to an extent also their diasporas, would stand a chance to gain from such close mutual relationships and involvement in diaspora affairs.

Pretty frequently, however, these connections with homelands and their interventions in the affairs of the diasporas are not welcomed by diasporas. Most organized transstate state-linked diasporas and their core members prefer to maintain their collective and individual autonomy in determining their strategies and actions in their hostlands, and in fact also vis-à-vis their homelands. Consequently, more diasporans realize that in view of the new possibilities open to them in many hostlands and their better chances to survive as autonomous collectives for longer periods, they should either reform existing organizations or form new and more efficient ones that can either resist the interventions of homelands, or pursue their autonomous policies. An example for such two-sided attempts at reforming diasporic organizations, on the one hand, and on the other hand attempts at pursuing autonomous policies, is the Indian government and the diaspora. (Falzon 2003)

The fourth basic dilemma: loyalty

The fourth interlinked basic dilemma facing *all* diasporas is that of loyalty. (Shain 1989; Sheffer 2006a) This dilemma is interconnected to all the abovementioned three dilemmas and challenges, and particularly to the third dilemma – the issue of the location of the centers of the entire ethno-national-religious entities. Members of all diasporas must decide whether and probably more importantly the extent to which they owe loyalty either to the ethno-national-religious center/homeland, on the one hand, or to their hostlands, on the other hand. This is far from being a new issue. It has accompanied and confronted diasporas from ancient times to now. However, this challenge and need to choose has become a major issue especially after 9/11 and in view of the very recent violent events in Madrid, London, Paris and other cities mainly in Europe.

Though as noted above the need to define to whom they owe their primary loyalty faces all diasporas, again, this is really a major issue especially for the transnational group of diasporas. The main reason is that in fact diasporans belonging to these diasporas have no clearly defined centers. Thus, for example, Moslems and Arabs who regard themselves as belonging to such worldwide diasporas face the issue pretty continuously and acutely. This is not only because of their own individual and collective priorities concerning which social and political formation they belong to and owe their loyalty, but because of a number of reasons. It is due to the image that they project to all external actors, due to the emotional and rational reactions that they provoke from these actors, and due the actions taken these days by hostlands' societies and governments to counter these real or imagined threats. Now hostlands' societies and governments are very determinately inclined to do all that they can to prevent the use of force and terrorism, tactics that are wrongly attributed especially to members of such emerging transnational diasporas. (Sheffer 2006c)

These intense reactions to these diasporas, which are accompanied by racist and violent responses of host societies and governments, cause ideational and practical splits within these diasporic entities. Thus, on the one side, the moderates insist on loyalty to local societies and states. They are advocating restrained actions in accordance to the prevailing legal norms and requirements in their hostlands. On the other side, the radicals, who insist on loyalty to the causes of their emerging diasporas, frequently tend to use tough tactics, including terrorism vis-à-vis their hostlands.

Though less critically, also transstate diasporas that usually accept the rules of the game in their hostlands and opt for either full loyalty to their hostland, or at the least opt for a vague posture in this respect, face this dilemma and must make some critical decisions concerning its various aspects. The issue is pretty grave in cases where and when there are conflicts or clashes between their hostlands and homelands. This is the case, for example, with the Cuban diaspora in the US. In this case, however, many Cuban-Americans oppose the Castro regime and government and cooperate with the US. Generally the decisions that these diasporas must make pertain to their remittances, to other unilateral transfers of money, economic investments, political involvement, to lobbying, and to criminal cooperation with various elements in their homelands.

Most of the stateless diasporas find themselves in a pretty delicate and problematic situation concerning the loyalty issue. They must decide to what extent they would support the struggle of their brethrens for independence and sovereignty in their homelands. If there is no inconsistency between their own inclination and strategy, on the one hand, and the position of their hostlands authorities, on the other hand, then their ability to make autonomous decisions concerning their assistance to

their kin in the homeland would be ensured. Things are getting by far more complicated in cases that a hostland adopts a policy that contradicts the inclination of core leaders and members of a certain stateless diaspora. This issue confronts, for example, Moslem Palestinians who are either citizens or permanently reside in the US and Great Britain. They must decide whether to refrain from helping the more radical Palestinian organizations, such as Hamas, or to be and show loyalty to those two hostlands, who basically oppose that movement and try to disarm it and turn it into a purely social-political organization. The same applies to Turkish Kurds living in Germany and to Tamils in the US.

The fifth Challenge: Strategic and Tactical Policies and Activities

A whole range of strategies are available to diasporas. This range runs from active political, social, economic and practical support of violence and terrorism in hostlands, homelands and third and fourth countries to legal attempts to publicly and openly promote their interests. Generally speaking, and as already noted, most state-linked diasporas pursue quite moderate and balanced communitarian policies. (Sheffer 2006a) More often than not, these entities prefer to act in accordance with the laws and the rules of the prevailing social and political games in their hostlands and in the international system.

On the other hand, the more radical activist members of transnational and stateless diasporas tend to adopt more radical policies, including violent and terrorist tactics as well as cooperation with criminal groups, which a rapidly expanding problem facing all involved actors. In fact, most, if not all diasporas are involved in almost all criminal spheres. (Sheffer 2006c; Center of Defense Information; US State Department Counterterrorism Office) In view of the pretty tough reactions of hostlands' governments, such as the US, Britain, Spain and Germany, diasporas have been forced to make difficult decisions in this respect. In fact, it seems that as time passes since the 9/11 events then in view of the tough reactions of these and other hostlands the extremist activist in these diasporas are moderating both their positions, strategies and actions. It is pretty clear that despite the recurrent terrorist attacks launched by members of such diasporas, on the whole, Western democracies are not seriously threatened by such radical postures and actions on the part of these diasporas. This fact must lead these diasporas to rethink their positions concerning the methods to achieve their goals. However, the abandonment of the more radical postures and actions may alienate and further radicalize certain segments and individuals in these diasporas.

Concluding Comments

It has been noted and emphasized in this article that the diasporic phenomenon is alive and growing at the beginning of the 21st century. Though there might be cases of assimilation and full integration of diasporans into their hostlands' societies, nevertheless, the cores of these diasporas and significant parts of the peripheries will continue to exist and be influential on many levels. There is a wide agreement that the phenomenon is complex. Therefore when discussing the main issues, dilemmas and challenges facing diasporas one should avoid generalizations and make very careful and clear distinctions between the various types of diasporas and diasporans. The main distinction suggested here is that between transnational and transstate diasporas. Generally speaking, it seems that transnational diasporas face more substantial

dilemmas and challenges in comparison to the various sub-categories of the transstate diasporas.

Following these fundamental observations, this article has focused not on all, only on the most critical cultural-ideational, organizational and behavioral challenges now facing these multifaceted entities.

These critical challenges are: First, the need of diasporas' core and peripheral members to clarify their individual and collective identity and identification. This need constitute the most basic and hardest challenge facing all incipient transnational, as well as state-linked and stateless transstate diasporas. However, in view of various current cultural, social, political and economic environmental temptations, also members of historic and modern established and organized transstate state-linked and transstate stateless diasporas must work hard at maintaining the non-essentialist primordial elements of their identity.

The second major challenge, which is closely interlinked to the first one is connected to the need to define the actual and virtual boundaries of these entities, which now are very blurred and porous.

The third significant issue facing these entities concerns the need to define and recognize the actual or virtual location of each of the diasporas' centers. Closely interconnected is the need to clarify the relations between the diasporas' actual or perceived centers on the one hand, and their dispersed members and organizations, on the other hand.

The fourth major dilemma that generates significant challenge is that of loyalty to either their imagined center or actual homeland, on the one hand, or to their host countries, on the other hand.

The fifth challenge is that of the strategic and tactical policies and activities, including the use of violence, terrorism and connections to criminal groups, which are intended to ensure the accomplishment of the maximal interests of the various categories and sub-categories of diasporas and diasporans.

Despite the differences between the two types of diasporas that were mentioned previously, and in addition to their specific problems and challenges analyzed above, diasporas in both categories and sub-categories share a number of additional concerns that have not been elaborated in this article but which should be mentioned here. Among other issues, these are: the need to establish and maintain cultural, religious, educational, and health systems; organizing social and legal support systems; defining their relations with other diasporas and minorities in their hostlands, etc. Each of these needed tasks involves very difficult decisions that affect the resources at the disposal of these entities.

In this context, however, one important thing should be very strongly stated: diasporas are not only perpetrators of difficulties, unrest, conflicts, disloyalty, terrorism and crimes. Rather diasporas immensely contribute to the culture – in the form of literature, poetry, movies, plays, TV programs - and to the economies of their host countries. Therefore, they deserve a lot of understanding and patience from host societies and governments.

Finally, while there are multitude of studies concerning specific diasporas, and the numbers of these studies is increasing and their quality is improving, there is still a noticeable lacunae in the study of certain aspects of the entire phenomenon, including the issue of the challenges that has been discussed in this article. Thus, the number of comparative and theoretical studies in this field is still pretty limited. Hence there is a need to further develop such studies and create some theoretical islands that

eventually will serve as bases for a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of diasporism, a phenomenon that is not going to disappear but rather to grow further.

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