Locating Politics in the Global: (Dis)Entangling Diaspora Governance Practices

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

December 2020

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Abstract

Critical IR scholarship has argued that diaspora are governed in line with global political dynamics that class them as post/neocolonial, or neoliberal economic subjects. Fewer scholarly works have gone into exploring exactly how such structural dynamics are entangled with political struggles at the micro level, or into how global and local political dynamics relate to each other in diaspora governance. This thesis adopts a practice-centric approach to diaspora governance to illuminate these global-local entanglements of power.

Through a multi-method exploration of various spaces where the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora organises and interacts with governance actors, this thesis argues that even under conditions of globalization diasporas are governed in localized ways, depending on where such governance is embedded. This is because in different contexts they are understood to present a different kind of governance challenge. While in spaces dominated by development governance actors, diasporas are primarily considered 'partners', in spaces where Transitional Justice is the primary governance concern diasporas are treated with much more ambiguity, sometimes as victims or perpetrators of human rights abuses, sometimes as legal experts, and sometimes as members of a global civil society. Meanwhile, in security governance spaces, diasporas are considered a 'threat', sometimes to the liberal state system, sometimes to 'social cohesion' or national security in the host state. Thus, the political struggles that drive diaspora governance are much more specific to the spaces in which they play out. This disrupts the understanding that diasporas are governed by a single overarching structural logic.

Grounded in relational thinking, and with an emphasis not just on the discursive but also the networked, bureaucratic and spatial politics that make up diaspora governance, this thesis draws on 2 years of multi-method fieldwork amongst the Tamil diaspora population in Toronto, Geneva and London, including participant observation at events and in spaces of diaspora political mobilization, like the 34th UNHRC session, as well as semi-structured interviews with diaspora members and state and non-state governance actors and review of policy documents and secondary sources. It demonstrates how the global politics of diaspora governance become both de- and reterritorialised.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis is the product of the many important relationships that I formed on my research journey over the past years. I would like to extend my gratitude to all of those people who supported and inspired me along the way, and apologise to those whom I accidently omitted from this list.

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Fiona B. Adamson, for her unwavering confidence in and enthusiasm for my work. Over the years, she instilled in me the conviction that it is essential to think critically and to push against and across the boundaries of disciplines, and, that the key to doing so meaningfully lies in practicing precision and care.

I would also like to thank each and every one of the people who so generously gave their time to me during my field research. Sharing space and experiences with people who had spent much of their lives displaced by conflict and war, but also by economic pressures and societal or familial expectations, taught me great humility. But it also made me aware of my own diaspora-ness. My thanks go out, in particular, to Anuraj, Amar, David, Tina, and Kumaran, as well as Kamaya, Ravi, Janani for allowing me insight into your work and lives, and for sharing with me your struggles.

Thank you to those who encouraged and inspired me during the long writing process: Thomas and Tanja, and my colleagues at the Free University of Berlin, for your incredible generosity; but especially to Sören and Anke for helping me develop as a social scientist, and for your support and friendship. Thanks also to my colleagues and hosts at George Washington University, who were so generous with their time, especially Harris Mylonas for your good humour and intellectual encouragement; Richard Haddock for making me feel welcome in DC; and to Jennifer Brinkerhoff for your always contagious optimism. Thanks to York University's Centre for Asian Research, for giving me an intellectual home in Toronto, and for fostering my interest in Human Geography and the political economies of migration.

you. Thanks to my dad for being there no matter what. And thanks to Lara, for being my rock since day one. Our relationship has been one of the most formative in my life, and for that I am so grateful. Finally, thanks to my mum for her endless empathy and unparalleled integrity, which I admire more than anything in this world. I hope to always remain as curious and open to learning as you are!

This thesis is dedicated to my Grandad, Oma, and Manfred, who all saw me embark on this journey but sadly never got to see me finish.

Acronyms

AETF - Association des Estudiantes Tamoul de France

AU – African Union

AGM – Annual General Meeting

APPGT – All Party Parliamentary Group for Tamils

BCCFT - Bharati Centre Culturel de Franco-Tamoul

CAD – Canadian Dollars

CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency

CNVJ – Commission Nationale de Verité et de Justice, Haiti

COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019

CSI – Centre for Social Innovation

CT – Counter Terrorism

CTC – Canadian Tamil Congress

CTF – Consultation Task Force

CVE – Countering Violent Extremism

DENG – Diaspora Engagement Networking Group

DFATD – Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

DGP – Diaspora Governance Practice

DNA – Diaspora Network Alliance

EA – Extraterritorial Authoritarianism

ECOSOC – Economic and Social Council of the UN

EU – European Union

EUROPOL – European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation

FAAE – Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs and International Development, Canada

GAC – Global Affairs Canada

GCF – Global Citizens Forum

GDF – Global Diaspora Forum

GOSL – Government of Sri Lanka

GRP – Genocide Recognition Politics

GTA – Greater Toronto Area

GWOT – Global War on Terror

IAR – International Assistance Review

ICC – International Criminal Court

ICHRDD – International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

ICTR – International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

ICTY - International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia

IdEA - International Diaspora Engagement Alliance

ILO – International Labour Organisation

IMADR – International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism

IMF – International Monetary Fund

INGO – International Non-Governmental Organisation

INTERPOL – The International Criminal Police Organization

IO – International Organisation

IOM – International Organisation for Migration

IR – International Relations

IRA – Irish Republican Army

KPI – Key Performance Indices

LLRC – Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission

LTTE – Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Tamil Tigers

MAP – Monitoring and Accountability Panel

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MN – Methodological Nationalism

MP – Member of Parliament

MPI – Migration Policy Institute

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

OCIC – Ontario Council of International Cooperation

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees

OISL – OHCHR Investigation into SL

PKK – Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, engl. Kurdistan Workers' Party

PLOTE - People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam

PPP – Public-Private Partnership

PWC – Post-Washington Consensus

SATRC – South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SL – Sri Lanka

SLWB – Sri Lankans Without Borders

R2P – Responsibility to Protect

TAG – Together Against Genocide

TAN – Transnational Advocacy Networks

TCC – Tamil Coordinating Committee

TCHR – Tamil Centre for Human Rights

TGTE – Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam

TJ – Transitional Justice

TNA – Tamil National Alliance

TSM – Transnational Social Movements

TPA – Transnational Political Activism

TTC – Toronto Transit Commission

TYO – Tamil Youth Organisation

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNHRC – United Nations Human Rights Council

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UPR – Universal Periodic Review

US/USA – United States of America

USTPAC – United States Tamil Political Action Council

WB – World Bank

WC – Washington Consensus

WTO – World Trade Organisation

WUSC – World University Service Canada

YMCA – Young Men's Christian Association

1. The Politics of Diaspora Governance

On May 14, 2013, 65 people sat in the office of the Ontario Investment and Trade Centre in downtown Toronto, watching a video transmission of the opening speech of the Global Diaspora Forum (GDF) by the Acting Special Representative of the United States' Secretary of State's Office of Global Partnerships based in Washington DC. This video transmission formed the opening act of a one-day conference entitled Diasporas@Toronto, organised by a local Toronto NGO that intended "to gather together a critical mass of Canadian organizations and individuals committed to engaging diaspora communities in the identification and achievement of Canada's global objectives and priorities." Further, the event was designed to create an "opportunity for organizations to meet and learn from one another - and to 'cross-pollinate' across thematic areas of global endeavour such as trade, development and peacebuilding". Invitations to the conference had been extended to individuals from organisations in the governmental, academic, business, community and not-for-profit sectors across Canada. Crucially, the exclusive guest list for the event included "(a) select number of outstanding Canadians from diaspora communities who (had) initiated their own globally-focused projects that demonstrate entrepreneurship, volunteerism, philanthropy, diplomacy, or social innovation". Amongst these hand-picked guests were a number of elite members of the Toronto-based Tamil diaspora community who had been involved in the founding of organisations that were mobilizing for intercommunity peacebuilding and development efforts in Sri Lanka. After the conference, a report came out that deemed the TED-talk style presentations given by these individuals on the various diaspora initiatives that they were spearheading, the "highlight" of the event. The report went on by saying that they demonstrated "global-mindedness, creativity and success", and therefore constituted "'best practices' for the engagement of diverse communities in global affairs".

Diasporas@Toronto had been organised to coincide with the Washington-based GDF, which, in turn, had been devised by the International diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA), an initiative launched by the US State Department in 2011 that seeks to "understand how diaspora communities change political dynamics in their host countries and have the potential to improve their host countries' foreign, economic, business and trade policies."[1] In the follow-up report the Canadian conference organisers emphasised that the event should be understood to "lay the groundwork for an ongoing, comprehensive, national strategy – inspired by but distinct from

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[1] Diasporas@Toronto report, 2013.

the IdEA initiative in the United States – to systematically engage Canadians from diaspora communities in the identification, pursuit and achievement of Canada's global interests and objectives" (Mosaic Institute 2013). They also found it important to convey in the report that

> U.S. State Department officials have stressed that this international expansion effort should be seen not as an effort to engage actors from states that are generally allied with the United States to collaborate in the promotion of American interests. Rather, U.S. officials responsible for IdEA and the GDF say that they are trying to foster an apolitical *global* movement whereby the talent, connections, and creativity of diasporic individuals receive greater recognition, and their key role in generating truly *global* linkages and opportunities is given its due attention." (emphasis added by the author)

The Diasporas@Toronto conference is a phenomenon that must be understood in the broader context of an emerging tendency to "engage" diasporas and emigrants in domestic and global political processes. Notably, states with large emigrant populations have begun to design institutions, policies and strategies to engage *their* diasporas. After decades of excluding individuals located beyond their territorial borders, in the last two decades it appears that states are increasingly reaching out to populations beyond their borders. It is these diaspora engagement programmes, which constitute the primary object of this study. Indeed, this thesis breaks new ground in the research on diaspora engagement strategies by theorising them as practices of diaspora governance. Practices of diaspora governance encompass the discourses, strategies and policies that various global political actors employ in order to 'manage' diaspora populations, and these practices may simultaneously include and exclude diasporas from (global) politics. This definition rests on an understanding of a practice as nexus of 'doings and sayings', and governance as 'patterns of rule'.[2] Governance practices are the formal and informal modes of power required to organize - or govern - social, political or economic life, from the local and national to the global level. Conversely, diaspora should then be understood as a 'category of practice' in governance. By theorising diaspora engagement and outreach strategies as *practices of diaspora governance* I open up space to study these strategies or mechanisms of governance empirically, rather than assume *a priori* the logic or politics that drive these strategies. Further, the centering of practices allows us to interrogate precisely how

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[2] See Bevir 2013.

the global and local come together to shape understandings of diaspora and diaspora governance.

1.1. The Rise and Diversification of Diaspora Engagement

This section will show that diaspora governance is worth studying because it is empirically, theoretically and politically significant.

Empirically, there has been both an increase in and a diversification of strategies designed to reach out to or 'engage' diaspora. This outreach takes various forms, ranging from symbolic to highly formalised and institutionalised 'engagement' practices. Symbolic outreach practices have included speeches held by state officials or events organised by governments that embrace diasporas as part of the deterritorialised nation-state. For example, India has a long history of holding annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, a large diaspora convention intended "to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots".[3] Meanwhile, Ireland has a designated "Global Irish Media Fund to encourage and support media coverage of the diaspora and emigration experience".[4] Even more institutionalised forms of engagement include the extensive provision of diplomatic services and welfare provision to expatriate communities (Délano 2014), as well the extension of voting rights (e.g. Israel, Turkey, Mexico) and special visa programmes (e.g. India) to emigrants. By 2019, many countries had even more institutionalised practices, e.g. formal diaspora ministries, departments and committees (Gamlen 2019). Examples of such highly formalized diaspora engagement mechanisms include the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, which was founded in 2004 with an explicit arm for 'Diaspora Services',[5] as well as the Irish Abroad Unit, founded in the same year as a dedicated unit inside the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Meanwhile, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission – formerly Nigeria's House Committee of Diaspora Affairs – sits under the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

But there has also been an increase in diaspora engagement strategies that are not directly implemented or driven by origin states only. As the vignette demonstrates, the emergent interest in engaging emigrant populations extends beyond migrant sending states. States with

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[3] See Indian government website, https://pbdindia.gov.in/en
[4] See Global Irish website, https://www.dfa.ie/global-irish/
[5] Albeit it was merged into the Ministry of External Affairs in 2016 in line with Modi's aim to 'minimize government and maximize governance' (more on page 38).

large immigrant populations like Canada and the US, are finding ways to engage the diaspora communities that reside within their borders, e.g. to achieve foreign policy goals in the areas of international development and peacebuilding. Here diaspora 'engagement' practices range from the inclusion of diaspora organisations in public consultations on international aid policy, to the formation of sub-state bodies to engage diverse populations, as demonstrated by the IdEA. Finally, international organisations like the EU, the AU, and non-state actors such as the World Bank, as well as INGOs and the private sector, have also begun to formulate diaspora engagement strategies. Again, these take various forms, ranging from informal consultation processes to formation of formal inter-governmental bodies. Today, countless INGOs conduct research on and mappings of diaspora transnationalism, or hold conferences like Diasporas@Toronto, with the aim to foster 'knowledge exchange' and 'skills transfers' on diaspora contributions to development or establish 'best practices' for engaging diaspora in post-conflict peacebuilding. Meanwhile, the World Bank, in cooperation with private sector actors has been devising diaspora investment and micro-banking schemes and strongly encourages states to manage their global remittance flows, e.g. through devising and implementing schemes to facilitate remittance payment.[6] The IOM has a designated strategy to 'enable, engage and empower diaspora' for development.[7] Finally, some intergovernmental organisations have created formal bodies that deal exclusively with the potentialities of diaspora transnationalism. In 2012, the African Union was one of the first supranational institutions to create a dedicated Diaspora Programme, which is now run as the Citizens and Diaspora Organization (CIDO) to "create strategic diaspora engagement initiatives". Most recently, in the spring of 2020 the EU announced it's 'EU Global Diaspora Facility', which is focused on 'return' and taking a "global approach to consolidate efforts on diaspora engagement for development".[8]

All of these strategies and institutions tend to encourage very specific kinds of diaspora transnationalism, especially in the fields of international development, international trade and entrepreneurship, or peacebuilding. They are often framed in such a way that emphasises the benefit they hold to diaspora populations themselves. They are considered 'benevolent' policies aimed to 'include' more actors in domestic or global governance processes.[9] Especially supranational initiatives of 'diaspora engagement' like those of the IOM or the EU are framed

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[6] Although 'remittance taxation' has recently been discouraged by the WB, see
https://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/why-taxing-remittances-bad-idea
[7] Diaspora and Development website, https://diaspora.iom.int/ioms-strategy-enable-engage-and-empower-diaspora
[8] European Union Global Diaspora Facility website, https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/

as making governance processes more effective and legitimate by consolidating knowledge or fostering cooperation. Interestingly, scholarship has somewhat mirrored the liberal bias that the framing of diaspora governance as 'engagement' suggests (Siegel and Kuschminder 2011; Gamlen 2006, 2014; Gamlen et al. 2013; Newland and Aguinas 2012; Weinar and Desiderio 2014; Minto-Coy 2016). Indeed, naming these strategies diaspora engagement presumes a liberal governance approach or perspective (a benign "reaching out", even if for economic gain). But these policies and mechanisms present only one side of the diaspora governance story. Other strategies exist that, rather than encourage transnational diaspora mobilization, are primarily concerned with constraining diaspora transnationalism and excluding diaspora populations, by minimizing their impact on domestic and global political processes. An example that made international newspaper headlines in October 2018 was the state-sanctioned killing of Jamal Khashoggi inside the Saudi Arabian embassy in Turkey.[10] Khashoggi, a journalist, who since 2017 was living in self-imposed exile in the United States, was considered a critic of the Saudi government. His assassination – now widely believed to have been ordered by the highest level of Saudi government - presents an extreme example of a practice constraining diaspora transnationalism. But this practice is not a complete outlier. Sending states also repress and constrain diaspora transnationalism and interfere in domestic affairs in less drastic ways, for example through proscription. Since the early 1990s this mechanism has been used by states across the world to ban and subsequently criminalise organisations who present a threat to their domestic and geopolitical interests, often targeting transnational organisations in particular. The UKs proscription regime currently derives its powers from the UK Terrorism Act 2000 but was first introduced during the conflict in Northern Ireland to ban support for the IRA, including from abroad. The UKs 'list of proscribed organisations' currently contains 90 organisations (76 designated after 2000, and 14 under previous legislation). Finally, less formal and perhaps more common practices to constrain diaspora are the voicing of threats and intimidation. On 4th February 2018, a Sri Lankan defence attaché and former diplomat, Brigadier Fernando, was caught on camera outside the Sri Lankan Embassy in London "running his forefinger across his throat whilst maintaining eye contact with the protestors" who had gathered outside the embassy to demonstrate, thus visibly intimidating and threatening protestors.[11]

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[10] Jamal Khashoggi: All you need to know about Saudi journalist's death, BBC website
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45812399
[11] UK arrest warrant for Sri Lanka attaché over throat-cut gestures revoked, The Guardian,
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/01/uk-arrest-warrant-for-sri-lanka-attache-over-throat-cut-gestures-revoked

Similar to the engagement strategies, the origin state is not always the sole source of repressive practices. Today, many efforts to constrain diaspora transnationalism implicate or emanate from diaspora host states. For example, host states have been known to cooperate with states of origin on the proscription of transnational organisations. For example, there have been numerous reports of arrests made of members of the Kurdish diaspora in Germany on account of their alleged affiliation with the proscribed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).[12] Thus, while many historical instances of diaspora repression by origin states have been in breach of receiving state sovereignty (acting unilaterally), this is not always the case. Practices leveraged by host states to curb diaspora mobilization also include monitoring suspicious activity domestically, e.g. through banking regulations or organizational surveillance. In the UK, the incorporation of diasporas into community policing programmes has become an essential part of the terrorism prevention toolkit. This particular governance practice is now primarily aimed at Muslim neighbourhoods perceived to be at risk of radicalization. However, its roots can be traced back to Irish diaspora communities in the UK, suspected of supporting the IRA's insurgency, and prior to that acted as a colonial governance strategy to control Kenya's Mau Maus.[13] Like with the more benevolent diaspora governance practices, there also exists global cooperation around the suppression/constraint of diaspora transnationalism. The EU has its own proscription regime,[14] and bodies such as EUROPOL and INTERPOL ensure that organisations, which have been deemed criminal cannot engage in global financial transactions or trade.[15]

In sum, this thesis suggests that all of the above practices of 'engagement' and 'constraint' by state and non-state actors, structure the mobilization capacity of diasporas and therefore should, in their entirety, be understood as practices of diaspora governance. Furthermore, the increase and diversification of actors who are concerned with governing diasporas, inevitably results in a diversification of governance practices. What kinds of governance practices structure diaspora mobilization? Precisely which populations are these practices addressing? And, who are the actors doing this governing? This thesis will shed light on the nature and scope of this empirical increase and diversification. In sum, 'practices of diaspora governance' – defined as discourses, strategies, and policies that various global

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[12] Germany Arrests Suspected Member of Kurdish Militant Group, https://apnews.com/article/c78c295fba14481fc15ae4da85a959fd

[13] Black Resistance to British Policing: Racism, Violence and the Legacies of Empire, Adam Elliot-Cooper, SOAS Politics Departmental Seminar, October 2020.

[14] EU terrorist list, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fight-against-terrorism/terrorist-list/

[15] European Financial and Economic Crime Centre, https://www.europol.europa.eu/about-europol/european-financial-and-economic-crime-centre-efecc

political actors employ in order to manage diaspora populations, and these practices may simultaneously include and exclude diasporas from (global) politics - constitute the primary empirical object of this study. But why do they matter more broadly? Why should anyone beyond scholars of migration and diaspora studies be interested in the problem of diaspora governance?

I suggest that the problem is intellectually interesting in that it throws up and sheds light on broader issues in IR, and in the study of *global* politics. On the one hand, the proliferation of state-based institutions and practices that govern diasporas already presents a conceptual challenge to the sovereignty concept, which still structures much thinking and theorizing in IR, by assuming that states do not exert power beyond their national borders. But beyond this rigid (and by now fairly outdated and ahistorical) understanding of the international, even those theories that account for international cooperation, tend to do so in state-centric ways. It is not sufficient to simply assume *a priori* that the diaspora governance practices devised and implemented by an INGO or an IO are driven by the same logic as those devised by a state.[16] Based on what we know about the empirics, we need to allow for the possibility that, once (diaspora) governance is 'scaled up' from the national to the global level, new politics emerge. That the global is emergent, means that it is greater than the sum of its parts, at least in theory. Naturally, empirical investigation might prove otherwise. Secondly, I argue that by studying diaspora governance practices beyond the sending state, we can shed light on how (global) governance functions more broadly. For example, the existence of 'global' diaspora governance practices that function without origin state buy-in, challenges the methodological nationalism of state-centric explanations of diaspora governance. Finally, the sheer diversity, and often contradictory nature of diaspora governance practices that exist also challenges structural universalist explanations for such political processes.

Finally, why is it important that we make sense of diaspora governance both empirically and intellectually? Diaspora governance comes with strings attached. It benefits and harms global political actors unevenly and is embedded in both global and local political struggles. For example, it has an uneven impact on diaspora: Engagement or inclusion of certain diasporas necessitates the exclusion of others. When an international development NGO selects a diaspora organisation to fulfil part of its mandate or to add local legitimacy, the decisions around which organisation gets chosen or who gets to represent the diaspora are highly contentious. On the

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[16] This is demonstrated by the fact that while no Sri Lankan diaspora engagement policy exists, Tamils are still subject to diaspora governance practices elsewhere, even I these are not necessarily in line with origin country interests.

other hand, once diaspora organisations or individuals have been roped into such governance networks, this engagement can be highly exploitative. For example, in the international development sector diaspora are increasingly conceptualized as 'alternative funding sources'. This then, has an impact on global politics more broadly: Large parts of the world have come to rely on remittances as their main sources of development finance. Migrant remittances have long been touted as a secure funding stream, less prone to mirroring the booms and busts of the economic cycle, but the recent COVID-19 pandemic has shown that this is a flawed assumption. In late 2020, the World Bank reported of drastic reductions (of 14% by 2021) in global remittances as the world ground to a halt,[17][18] leaving billions of people with no livelihood (KNOMAD 2020). This shows us the global political consequences of an over-reliance on diaspora remittances in international development finance. Evidently the politics of diaspora 'engagement' need to be further investigated. What explains the empirical increase and diversification of diaspora 'engagement'? What are the political struggles at play in these processes? These are the questions that have guided my thesis research. In answering them, this thesis draws and builds upon a range of literatures from the broader field of diaspora studies and diaspora-state relations, to more recent critical research on diaspora governance in IR, and relational approaches to (global) governance more broadly. This scholarship will be explored in more detail in the following section.

In the upcoming section I will review the literature that has dealt with the phenomenon of diaspora engagement, thereby carving out my contribution to this scholarship. I will examine state-driven policies to engage diaspora, covering both literature on 'engagement' and 'extraterritorial authoritarianism'. I will then turn to other scholarship that has a more specific interest in diaspora engagement beyond the sending state, or 'diaspora governance'. I will establish, and subsequently explore, the primary empirical gaps and theoretical problems in this literature, which include a) entrenched methodological nationalism, b) a liberal bias which means they insufficiently problematize politics and power relations, and c) that they rest on fairly essentialist definitions of diaspora. Subsequently, I will introduce a range of literatures that this thesis builds upon. This will include studies that have shone a more critical light on diaspora governance, thus offering a more promising way to conceptualise diaspora and diaspora governance. Indeed, these approaches center the complex power relations that diaspora governance is embedded within (offering a relation definition of diaspora). I will discuss how

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[17] World Bank press release, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/04/22/world-bank-predicts-sharpest-decline-of-remittances-in-recent-history;
[18] Phase II: COVID-19 Crisis through a Migration lens, KNOMAD, https://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/Migration%20%26%20Development_Brief%2033.pdf

my thesis will build on this research and where its limitations lie, specifically with regard to understanding how structural power dynamics play out 'on the ground', when they interact with messy micro-politics and practices. Following this, I will introduce scholarship, which has looked explicitly at how global and local political dynamics become entangled. Finally, I suggest that practice theory, including existing practice-based approaches in diaspora studies, offer a promising way forward for disentangling the global-local power relations that constitute diaspora and diaspora governance.[19] Following the literature review, I will outline my main hypotheses and offer an overview of the coming chapters.

1.2.   Explaining Diaspora Engagement Policies

A rich and substantive literature has emerged in recent years that explains the formation and spread of diaspora engagement and governance strategies (Gamlen 2014, 2019; Gamlen et al. 2013; Délano 2014; Délano and Gamlen 2014; Ragazzi 2014, 2017). This literature takes as its conceptual starting point the 'deterritorialization of the nation state' (Basch et al. 2005), empirically manifesting as an increase in mechanisms, policies, and institutions that channel the (potential for) economic and social remittances of diaspora populations. In the following paragraphs, I will review literature first on the diaspora 'engagement' practices by formally democratic states, and the extraterritorial 'engagement' practices by states defined as authoritarian, although it will emerge that this distinction is perhaps more path dependent than ontological.

1.2.1. Diaspora engagement by the sending state and extraterritorial authoritarianism

The bulk of scholarship on diaspora engagement has tended to focus on formal policies, for example the extension of voting rights, special visa programmes or the creation of diaspora engagement institutions by home states. Indeed, most of this literature suggests that diaspora engagement politics are firmly embedded in relations between the diaspora and its home state (Mylonas 2010; Kuschminder and Siegel 2011; Gamlen et al. 2013; Koinova and Tsourapas 2018; Tsourapas 2018, 2020), and that states 'govern' or manage their diasporas according to

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[19] How I do this will be elaborated in the second chapter.

national interests. Differing reasons have been given to explain why states might have an interest in 'engaging' their diaspora populations. One the one hand, scholars have argued that diaspora engagement is driven by national identity concerns, whereby state efforts to embrace – either symbolically or democratically include - their emigrant populations are understood as a form of nation-building (Schiller et al. 1995). Others suggest that 'engagement' is driven by purely economic reasons, especially if it takes the form of remittance taxation or the solicitation of financial investments (Ketkar and Ratha 2010; Agarwala 2015). Gamlen et al. have created a typology of reasons for the proliferation of diaspora engagement institutions. They suggest that while, indeed, some states seek to 'tap' their diasporas for economic gain, or 'embrace' them for symbolic gain, others create diaspora engagement policies in line with a logic of 'norm diffusion' (2013).

One criticism that has been levelled at this literature is that it has tended to focus on the extraterritorial practices of democratic states. The practices described above are, on the whole, designed to encourage transnationalism, rather than suppress it. In a study that precedes most literature on diaspora 'engagement', Laurie Brand argues in her 2006 book *Citizen's Abroad* that attention should be paid to the policies and practices of sending states towards their emigrants. Importantly, in contrast to the studies mentioned above, she suggests that the Middle Eastern states that she studies, reach out to their emigrants or diaspora populations not because of economic or identity-based interest, but for security reasons. Building on this ground-breaking work by Brand, a growing group of scholars has begun to study what can be summarized as extraterritorial authoritarianism (EA) (Moss 2016; Dalmasso et al. 2017; Glasius 2018; Tsourapas 2018, 2020). Authoritarian states, these scholars argue, show us that there exists a darker side to diaspora engagement, one that is perhaps less enshrined in formal policies and institutions and that is driven by state's security concerns. As such they may constrain transnational political action (Chaudhary and Moss 2019), by repressing and intimidating expatriate dissidents (Moss 2016; Öztürk and Tas 2019). A 2017 intervention in *Political Geography* by Dalmasso et al. (2017) responds to the perceived neglect of the politics of authoritarian sending states. The article identifies an 'extraterritorial gap' whereby scholars have overlooked – until recently – the practices of states who 'need to maintain control over populations abroad' (2017: 1) for security reasons. The authors show "how authoritarian rule from the home state continues to be exercised over populations abroad, through the practices authoritarian regimes have developed to manage and offset the risks mobility poses on them." (2017: 2). Importantly, such extraterritorial authoritarianism may take various forms, e.g. 'extraterritorial repression' (Moss and Michaelsen in Dalmasso et al. 2017), through online and

offline threats, or extortion. But EA can also be about excluding subjects as 'outlaws' or asserting 'discursive control'. Finally, it can mean approaching people as 'patriots' but in a different way from democratic regimes as it is "dependent both on the population's 'good behaviour' as well as the regime's changing interests." (Del Sordi in Dalmasso et al. 2017).

The literature on sending state engagement strategies and extraterritorial authoritarianism has a lot to offer to the study of diaspora governance. As I will explore later, my research builds on this literature to identify empirical examples of state-practices of diaspora governance. It is also useful for by broadening the concept of diaspora engagement beyond formal policies of liberal states. It helps to reconceptualize the nation and what it means to be a citizen. This is an important debate to have, especially in times of resurgence of nationalism. But it is important that we do not overemphasise the role of states in the study of diaspora governance. On the one hand, scholarship that focuses exclusively on origin state diaspora engagement does not reflect the empirical reality of how governance functions, illustrated through the case of the Tamil diaspora. Here we have a case where the origin state is not the primary 'engager'. What of those cases where the state is not the only governance actor seeking to discipline or engage? Especially for non-citizens and stateless people the resurgence of nationalism reinforces the need for looking at politics beyond the state. The focus on origin state regimes ultimately obscures the cooperation and complicity of other actors in governing diasporas, e.g. host-state actors, especially if sending-state and host state have a colonial link or overlapping security concerns,[4] as has repeatedly been the case in the relationship between Sri Lanka and the British state. But state centrism also has broader methodological consequences, in that it obscures how individual sending-state practices are embedded within a broader global environment, as well as how they manifest 'on the ground' in the host state.

One way of complicating the dyadic relationship between diaspora and nation state is by looking at the mechanisms by which domestic policies and institutions have been transferred from one state to another. In this vein, Alexandra Délano's work (2014) has analysed how ideas and norms about diaspora engagement diffuse between states, thus leading to the proliferation of diaspora engagement institutions across the globe. In order to explain this diffusion of ideas and policies between states, she argues that policies are not simply adopted by immigrant sending states based on domestic cost-benefit calculations or nation-building, but rather draws on theories of bilateral learning and emulation, which can occur through informal and formal mechanisms, for example inter-governmental networks. But is the creation of diaspora engagement policies and institutions the result of policy diffusion from other states? Or is there perhaps a broader rationale behind the global diffusion/spread of diaspora engagement

mechanisms and policies? After all, origin states are no longer the only actors that have diaspora strategies. We know that empirically, there has been an increase in interest by actors beyond the sending state. For example, the UN Global Compact on Migration[3] explicitly links diasporas to development through the migration-development nexus (Faist 2008) and there has been a proliferation of supra-state and non-state 'diaspora engagement' institutions seeking to manage individual and collective diaspora mobilization. Accordingly, the focus in diaspora research in IR has, most recently, shifted to explaining the rise and proliferation of these institutions.

1.2.2. Diaspora engagement as global governance

While the literature on diaspora engagement that centers the state-diaspora link or repression by states of origin is flourishing (e.g. Abrahamson 2019), some scholars have concerned themselves with decentering the state in the study of diaspora engagement strategies. For example, Gamlen sheds light on how diaspora policies relate to wider global governance processes and argues that diaspora engagement is part of an emerging migration management regime. In his 2014 article, on *Diaspora Institutions and Diaspora Governance* he laments the fact that existing literature on the emergence of diaspora institutions has not tried or been able to account for the global spread of said diaspora institutions and cannot explain what he regards as the creation of a coherent but decentralized system of global migration governance (Gamlen 2014: 180). He suggests that, rather than focusing on individual case studies, a more global comparison is needed. Accordingly, his argumentation is based on a quantitative study which compares the emigration and transnational citizenship policies of over 70 diaspora sending states (Gamlen 2006). Gamlen draws on the literatures on policy diffusion and epistemic communities, as well as governmentality theory, to make the argument that "the rise of diaspora institutions is driven by efforts to form a coherent but decentralized system of global migration governance" (Gamlen 2014: 192). He ultimately suggests that, while governmentality theory is convincing, it still fails to account for how ideas about diaspora engagement policies actually spread or diffuse. According to Gamlen, while "(g)overnmentality theory reveals the nature of dominant ideas shaping and governing diaspora identities", it nonetheless fails to identify both "the source of ruling ideas, or the way that these ideas and models spread among dispersed actors" (2014: 194). Instead, by embedding diaspora governance in a wider global trend towards increased migration governance, based on international expectations surrounding shared responsibilities of managing migration, he accounts for the emergence, existence and

proliferation of diaspora engagement policies, which gives the entire structure a lot more dynamism and substance. In his follow-up book, Gamlen then suggests that this increased effort to build a global migration governance regime is fostering "strategic competition over populations rather than territories", or what he calls *Human Geopolitics* (2019). Similarly, Betts has written about the rise of diaspora engagement policies as a functional response to the need for increased global migration governance (2011). Thus, both Gamlen and Betts are able to imagine a politics of diaspora governance 'beyond the sending state'. Empirically, my thesis will draw upon this literature to identify examples of diaspora engagement at the global level. However, in trying to explain the politics of diaspora engagement, the analytical purchase of these approaches is somewhat limited, as I will explore below.

1.2.3. States, diaspora, and the location of power in global politics

A few key problems emerge from the above outlined approaches to diaspora 'engagement'. On the one hand, the literature on sending-state or emigrant engagement and extraterritorial authoritarianism are deeply state centric. Meanwhile, 'global' governance approaches assume that governance at the global level is somehow apolitical. Both are then ultimately premised on the liberal assumption that power in global politics rests with the nation state, and that, subsequently, any governance 'beyond the state' is based on cooperation and problem solving. They also both rest on liberal essentialist definitions of diaspora. Let me explore each of these problems in turn.

State-centrism describes the condition whereby the state is considered the main locus of power in global politics. Most studies of diaspora engagement remain state centric, and yet, diaspora engagement often takes place in the spaces between states through networks of actors that include the state, but also non-state actors and processes. Only recently, has there been a loudening call to decenter the state and to bring the role of non-state actors (NSAs) to the fore of analysis because clearly "both state and non-state agents are implicated in these projects" (Ho 2011: 760). Similarly, others have noted that future studies on diaspora engagement strategies will "need to focus more on other actors and spaces" beyond the state (Délano and Gamlen 2014; Adamson 2016). That there is an emerging consensus regarding the need to include actors other than the state for analysis of diaspora engagement to be meaningful might seem commonsensical. However, we must look in more detail at the grounds upon which this need is articulated because it also has an impact on how we define governance.

If state-centrism describes the condition whereby the nation-state is understood as the primary unit of analysis in research, it follows that, in order to overcome this state-centrism, we need to include more actors in our analysis. This approach has been taken by various scholars in IR and governance research, especially liberal rationalists and constructivists who in the 1990s begin to acknowledge that domestic, as well and trans- or supranational actors have a role to play in shaping state interests and the international environment. While mainstream governance research assumes that global governance emerged as technical and therefore apolitical response to the rise of global problems (Rosenau 1995; Finkelstein 1995; Dingwerth and Pattberg 2006), the liberal constructivist turn in IR begins to problematize the ideational and normative aspects of functionalist global governance. According to the constructivist logic of appropriateness, scholars now assume that states cooperate around diaspora because it is 'the done thing' in an age of increased migration governance (Betts 2011). Importantly, in this liberal literature, non-state actors (including 'global' institutions) then still exist only in relation to the state. This does not change the fundamental understanding that the world is oriented around the concept of the nation-state, with some additional actors operating below or above the national level.

Some of the more substantial critiques of state-centrism in the social sciences come from scholars of transnational migration processes. Wimmer and Glick Schiller have coined the concept of methodological nationalism (MN) (2002, 2003) to describe the "naturalization of a global regime of nation-states by the social sciences." They identify three variants of MN, namely the lack of a problematisation of the importance of nationalism to the modern Western project, its naturalisation through institutional practice, and as territorial delimitation. The critique that underlies MN is that concepts of nation and state structure our perception of social reality but often disappear as objects of critical inquiry. Thus, MN limits the ability of social scientists and historians to perceive processes that are above or below the level of the nation-state, for example, transnational processes such as migration, but also processes of global governance public policy making such as diaspora engagement. This critique of MN goes much deeper that the call to diversify the group of actors that operate in IR, as it is bound up with problematizations of state power. On the one hand, efforts to de-center the state empowers actors who are vilified and criminalized for engage in processes that cross state borders. On the other hand, assuming that power does not only emanate from the state in global politics, suggests that governance (both global and local) is always political.

In the literature on diaspora engagement, authors have sought to decenter the state by looking at how power operates inside it. For example, Délano Alonso and Mylonas' 2019 JEMS

special issue explores the micro-foundations of diaspora politics. They suggest that the focus on state level explanations for diaspora engagement obscures 'the microfoundations of diaspora politics' (Délano Alonso and Mylonas 2019), for example, why diaspora mobilization and engagement might play out differently in different places with similar economic regimes. I intend to build on this work but apply the micro-lens not to single state bureaucracies, but rather to diaspora governance practices beyond the sending-state. In sum, while the literature on sending state engagement remains state centric, a pitfall which the global governance approaches seeks to avoid, the latter lacks critical engagement with global power structures in which diaspora governance is embedded. A second shortcoming in both the state-centric and 'global' liberal governance approaches is that they rest on essentialist definitions of diaspora. This means that they operate from the assumption that diaspora are a bounded or substantive category. To understand the pitfalls of such substantialist definitions of diaspora, I will now (dis)entangle the shifting and expanding meaning of the diaspora concept, specifically in the IR literature.

The diaspora concept emerged first in the social sciences in the study of forced displacement and dispersal of ethnic groups, such as Jewish and Armenian communities in Israel or the United States. The shared experience of trauma was seen to create specific collective identities that made diasporas different from other migrants. However, the term soon started to encompass groups who may not have experienced trauma but nevertheless felt a collective sense of belonging to their original homeland from which they or their ancestors migrated. In 1983(2006), Benedict Anderson published his seminal work *Imagined Communities*, in which he argued that a nation was constructed by the people that imagined themselves to be part of it. In this broadened sense, the concept of diaspora encompassed all those individuals who imagine themselves as such, regardless of their place of birth, or intent to return. Similarly, for Safran (1991) it was the "myth of homeland", rather than actual return, that defined diaspora populations. In these earliest studies, scholars mostly defined diaspora in substantialist terms. But, while anthropologists and sociologists have largely moved on from attempts to grasp a diasporic essence (see Brubaker 2005),[20] as will be explored below, the search for an *Alleinstellungsmerkmal* have continued to plague much liberal diaspora

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[20] Rather, these disciplines now study diasporas both as products and productive of global transformations (e.g. Vertovec and Cohen 1999; Clifford 1994). Essentially, diasporas offer a research lens from which a variety of questions can be asked. For example: How do diasporas renegotiate ideas of citizenship and belonging to places, both territorial and imagined? Research highlights diasporas' bordering practices (Mato Bouzas 2012) and the production of new forms of citizenship beyond the state (Faist 2000). Other scholars have explored how diasporas function as agents of cultural diffusion in transnational or urban spaces. Here they are studied as drivers of urban diversity, integration and multiculturalism (Vertovec 2007) and offer a means of addressing broader methodological questions regarding scale and global-local relations (Glick-Schiller and Caglar 2010).

scholarship in IR. This is in part because, in IR the diaspora concept has only gradually gained attention (Adamson and Demetriou 2007). The spatial ambiguity of diasporas and their defiance of state boundaries initially slowed uptake of the concept in the discipline vis-à-vis anthropology and sociology. However, as globalization, the acceleration of migration and transnational flows have made it firmly on to the political science research agenda, scholars have become increasingly interested in the impact of diasporas on global political processes. Today there exists a thriving field of scholars who investigate the politics and power of diasporas and their role in global and international politics. Let me delve a little bit deeper into the changing conceptualisations of diaspora in IR.

For many years after the inception of the discipline in the first half of the 20th century, diasporas did not feature on the IR research agenda. Throughout the Cold War, when realist theorizing dominated the discipline of IR (Wohlforth 1994), political agency was considered firmly in the hands of nation states. Yet, global interdependence was becoming an undeniable reality, leading to power shifts that impacted upon the agency and security of individual sovereign states. Accordingly, diasporas were primarily conceptualized as products of such processes; mere intervening variables in the power-play of and within nation-states. The bulk of the early literature on diasporas in Political Science suggested that diasporas had limited causal impact on the social and political world and were thus rarely studied as "actors" in international relations. Where they were considered to have impact on international relations was as domestic lobby-groups towards host country governments' foreign policy (Huntington 1997).

But the end of the Cold War opened up new possibilities for the study of non-state or supranational phenomena in IR. As interest in the political and security consequences of globalization increased, diasporas started to feature more prominently in the IR literature. By the end of the Cold War, scholars of global security diagnosed a profound shift in the nature of modern violent conflict and ushered in an era of "New Wars" (Kaldor 2006). New Wars were no longer contained within nation states. It was theorized instead that they relied on transnational war-economies and had global spillover effects. Interestingly, conflict-generated diaspora were often found to epitomise these spillover effects. They emerged in the dominant literature as a force that sustained informal economic flows to and from the conflict or post-conflict zone (Collier and Hoeffler 1998) or that practice "long-distance nationalism" (Anderson 1992; Demmers 2002). Collier and Hoeffler's (1998) widely cited large-N study on drivers of civil war argued that large diaspora acted as spoilers and ultimately prolonged civil war. Some qualitative studies later echoed this finding. For example, in studying the Ethiopian

diaspora Lyons (2007) found that "(d)iaspora groups created by conflict and sustained by traumatic memories tend to compromise less and therefore reinforce and exacerbate the protracted nature of conflicts". In sum, the early literature on diaspora in IR was mostly empirical in its insights, paving the path for more in-depth theoretical analyses. In sum, in this literature diasporas are defined as 'conflict externalities', without any power or agency. Interestingly, most of the literature on diaspora 'engagement', still rest on these substantialist assumptions of what a diaspora is, and how diaspora relate to the nation-state. For example, arguments about diaspora engagement as 'nation building' assume that diaspora are indeed an extension of 'the nation'.

And yet, the power of diaspora in global politics, including the agency that they may have in shaping their relationship with their sending state, has long been complicated in the scholarship (Sheffer 2002, 2003). Since early research on diasporas revealed the conflict-sustaining potential of diaspora, a scholarly discourse has developed, which attempts to map the potential impact of diaspora on conflict zones and origin-states more generally. Here diasporas are increasingly conceptualized as complex agents with the capacity for decision-making in conflict or post-conflict situations. For example, Koinova (2011) has argued that, while diaspora are by default radical conflict actors, they may act moderately under specific circumstances, and when it is to their strategic advantage. Meanwhile, Brinkerhoff (2008; 2011) has explored different motivations for diasporas' engagement with their homelands (e.g. guilt, marginalization, confusion, pride) and concludes that they may foster peace if managed effectively. Similarly, Smith and Stares (2007) suggest that diasporas are not "peace-wreckers" per se. In fact, they may act as "peace makers" if sending states harness their ability to contribute to problem-solving in the areas of development and peacebuilding. Importantly, the literature on the link between diasporas and conflict presents a more nuanced picture and advances liberal constructivist understandings of diaspora power in global politics. In addition to conflict processes – diasporas are now studied in the context of development (Brinkerhoff 2008; 2011; 2016) and transnational advocacy (Wayland 2004; Sökefeld 2006; Adamson 2012, 2013; Moss 2016). Importantly, from this empirical widening also follows a conceptual shift. Diaspora are understood as autonomous political actors who wield power either individually or collectively, for strategic or non-strategic purposes. For example, in the literature on transnational social movements, the power of diasporas in IR has been conceptualized as an ability to wield individual or collective agency in support of transnational political causes. This literature, which builds partly on Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's seminal work on transnational advocacy networks, holds that power in international relations can be wielded

through networks (1998). More recently, diasporas have been conceptualized as brokers or norm entrepreneurs with an "in-between advantage" (Brinkerhoff 2016). This places an emphasis on the agency of diasporas in navigating social network relations. Power struggles involving diaspora are conceptualized as interactions between rational thinking agents, whether driven by a logic of profit maximization or normative appropriateness. In that sense, diaspora mobilization is the result of individual speech acts, of persuasion or negotiation. Crucially, in these liberal accounts of diaspora politics, power is transferred to the diaspora agent and emphasis is placed on the (normatively) positive contributions of diaspora to political processes. Such conceptualizations of diaspora, and diaspora power dominate in the literature on diaspora engagement as global governance.[21] While such definitions arguably empower diaspora populations, they assume that diaspora power is somehow intrinsic to them.

As the study of diaspora mobilization has matured, assessments of diaspora agency have become more nuanced. In 2012 Adamson writes that diaspora is an effect rather than a cause/agent. Her article suggests that diaspora is used as a strategic identity, produced through strategic framing processes/strategic social construction by political entrepreneurs. Further, an often-quoted definition of diasporas in the constructivist literature is the one by Adamson and Demetriou (2007: 467):

> A diaspora can be defined as a social collectivity that exists across state borders and that has succeeded over time to (1) sustain a collective national, cultural or religious identity through a sense of internal cohesion and sustained ties with a real or imagined homeland and (2) display an ability to address the collective interests of members of the social collectivity through a developed internal organizational framework and transnational links.

Why is this definition so compelling? Although it still tied to the idea of 'homeland', it goes beyond a constructivist framing of diaspora as 'imagined community' and thus takes a more relational perspective.

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[21] An understanding of diaspora as agents with entrepreneurial capacities, is also a defining feature of liberal policy discourses, as demonstrated by the IOM ED4D initiative in partnership with the government of the Netherland, which promotes "Entrepreneurship by Diaspora for Diaspora", https://www.connectingdiaspora.org/about-ed4d/

In Anthropology, the idea of 'diaspora positionality' (Anthias 2002) has taken hold, which allows for an even more fluid conceptualization of collective diaspora identities, that no longer relies on the actual existence or idea of a homeland. In that sense, diaspora is defined as being positioned between spaces; as a link between different locales – territorial or otherwise. Drawing on this relational work, another strand of literature argues that diasporas do not exist 'out there in the world', rather, their mobilization activities are contextually embedded. contextual embeddedness literature makes the 'context' an empirical question, rather than assume that diaspora power is embedded squarely within the origin state-diaspora-host-state triangle (Koinova 2018). This conceptual move is promising because it leads away from the notion that diaspora power is fixed or part of their essence. Rather, diasporas (and diasporic power) are made and unmade in relations with other agents, structures, or spaces. Koinova recently defined diaspora positionality as "the power diaspora political agents amass or are perceived to amass from their linkages to different global contexts" (2018). She advances the argument that diasporas are engaged based on their "socio-spatial positioning in transnational social fields". Whether diasporas are considered an asset in post-conflict state building is thus dependent upon their linkages to different global contexts. This allows us to think about diaspora power as dependent upon positioning in relation to transnational social fields. Her work both advances and complicates the conceptualization of diaspora agency and will inform my understanding of diaspora power in global politics.

What these paragraphs have revealed is that the struggle to define the diaspora concept in IR, has had a similar trajectory to other disciplines mentioned above. Conceptualizations have moved roughly from substantialist, to liberal and critical constructivist accounts. While early scholarship articulated essentialist conceptualizations of diasporas as 'conflict spoilers' and 'long-distance nationalists', today the bulk of the literature on diasporas in IR operates with the understanding that diasporas are a type of agent in global politics. Hand in hand with liberal conceptualizations of diaspora as a thing (an agent or a community of agents) 'out there in the world' goes the assumption that they can be governed as such. When diaspora become a problem to liberal (state)actors, this problem can be addressed through governance. In turn, liberal conceptualization of governance as functionalist 'steering' or good governance are intimately tied to normative evaluations of what is a problem, and how 'steering' can address it. Although I adopt the governance term for this thesis, my definition of governance deviates from this apolitical functionalist conceptualisation, as I will further outline below.

Ultimately, how diasporas are defined in IR and the power they have is a central empirical question of this thesis. Answering it in a way that does not reproduce the liberal bias

of state-centrism, means eschewing substantialist definitions of diaspora and liberal conceptualizations of governance. To do this, I draw on the work of a handful of scholars who explicitly center the power dynamics that underlie diaspora engagement. This scholarship assumes a more relational definition of diaspora, namely as objects of power. Diasporas are not things that exist out there in the world prior to our thinking about it. Rather, diasporas are made and unmade in discourse and practice.

1.3.   Diaspora Engagement and 'Global' Power Structures

Since the turn of the millennium, in the context of growing disillusionment in IR with the emancipatory potential of global liberal governance, critical scholars have begun to challenge existing explanations for the proliferation of diaspora engagement practices. In contrast to the more state-centric or policy-oriented mainstream literature, they centre the – often exploitative - structural power relations, in which diaspora engagement is embedded. Accordingly, scholars view the engagement of diasporas by the liberal international community as driven by a will to subjugate and discipline populations - in the Global South, or elsewhere - where they might present a threat to the liberal capitalist status quo. Others consider diasporas as pawns of powerful Western states.

For Latha Varadarajan, the driving force behind state behaviour and identity in the global system, including how they engage their diasporas, is the emergence of a global political economy, specifically the spread of global (neoliberal) capitalism and its relationship with imperialism. Varadarajan argues that it is "not possible to understand the role of diasporas in global politics without putting into focus the politics of imperialism" (2008: 269). In her 2010 book *The Domestic Abroad*, she argues that, contrary to popular scholarly opinion, the emergence of diasporas as political actors in international relations has not weakened the traditional nation-state in the way that is commonly assumed. By proposing a Gramscian reading of hegemony, whereby individuals become complicit in their own subjugation, she argues that the relationship between diasporas and the nation-state is in fact one of mutual constitution. She takes issue with liberal constructivists, who tend to imagine a socially constructed global system in which the diaspora presents yet another category of transnational non-state actor that "undermines traditional notions of state-based identity and unilateral state sovereignty" (Varadarajan 2010: 29). Liberal constructivists, she argues, "have generally tended to ignore the constitutive role of structures such as the global capitalist economy"

(Varadarajan 2010:27). Meanwhile, she suggests that post-colonialists have overestimated the emancipatory potential of the diaspora, or its capacity to challenge the traditional nation state. For example, she criticises the optimism of Hardt and Negri (2001), who see in the diaspora a "mobile multitude" capable of resistance to power and imperialism. She suggests that their approach is blind to the existence of diasporic elites, who actually form part of the imperial system, who are but "a cog in the machine of imperialism" (2008: 268), and not an emancipatory, anti-systemic counterforce. Varadarajan supports her criticism in the tradition of historical materialism, whereby contemporary state attitudes towards diasporas must be understood as part of the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism. She convincingly argues that the "move away from a Keynesian state, which [i]n terms of state policy, (…) has translated into the deregulation of finance, liberalization of trade, privatization of state-owned industries, undermining of labor rights, and withdrawal of the state from social welfare functions" (Varadarajan 2010: 46) provided the backdrop for the emergence of diaspora communities as opportunities for capitalist expansion. She concludes then that "the neoliberal restructuring of the state enables, and in fact, necessitates the diasporic reimagining of the nation, leading in turn to the production of the domestic abroad" (Varadarajan 2010:49). Varadarajan's lucid analysis of the role of diasporas in the global political economy, makes a sharp departure from those accounts that see the proliferation of diasporas as inherently rupturing or threatening global order or the status quo of global power relations. Crucially, rather than seeing the relationship between a diaspora and its so-called sending state or homeland as unfolding or emerging inside a vacuum, Varadarajan places this relationship within a wider global ordering structure; that of the expansion of global capitalism. Secondly, she argues that a state's relationship with its diaspora is neither static nor fixed, but rather a dynamic and complex process, which is both temporally and spatially contingent. Beside valuable empirical insights, she provides highly convincing arguments about the structural embeddedness of diaspora governance. Varadarajan's work provides incredible in- (and foresight) into how the Indian state's relationship with its diaspora has been (and continues to be) shaped by a changing global political environment. It can explain why at the beginning of 2016, India's diaspora-centered Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was reintegrated into the Ministry of External Affairs, in accordance with Narendra Modi's neoliberal "minimum government, maximum governance" approach.

That the continued and intensifying engagement of diasporas by their sending states is driven by the proliferation of the global neoliberal capitalist system, is a convincing argument which this thesis takes seriously. However, Varadarajan's argument would be strengthened if

we knew that her explanation of the state-diaspora relationship was generalizable beyond her single case study. Ideally, we would need further in-depth historical analyses to test whether her argument holds across different cases, to see whether it is indeed a *global* structural phenomenon.

Poststructuralists agree with the reasoning that diaspora engagement by the liberal international community is driven by a will to subjugate and discipline global populations but argue that this happens in different ways. For example, Ragazzi (2009) zooms in on a variety of state- and non-state-driven policies that relabel migrant populations as 'diasporas'. He makes a similar observation as I do when he asks: 'how do we make sense of all these contradictory policies?'. He then traces the history of governmentality regimes, thus explaining different relationships and practices between states and their emigrant/diaspora populations. In the mercantilist disciplinary state, Ragazzi suggest that diasporas are governed according to the following rationalities: 1) policies focused on return, "when the population is conceptualized as the main resource of the state", 2) banning or securitization when emigrants are considered the enemy, 3) promotion of national identity abroad to prevent assimilation, with return still remaining the main goal (2009: 385-87). He suggests that underlying this governmental rationality is "the fundamental assumption of the disciplinary form of government, namely the idea that the optional/optimal condition of the political existence of the nation-state". In contrast, diaspora governance of the welfarist-liberal state of post-war 20th century Europe is characterised by guestworker programmes. Finally, the contemporary neoliberal state, characterised by profound transformations of, not only the organization of the economy, but also the objectives and organization of state structures. Ragazzi suggests that under neoliberalism the diasporic condition is "legitimized and normalized" (2009: 391) and that this, in turn, legitimizes a "radical shift in the way governments organize the relationships between power and territory". In a later study, Ragazzi (2014) laments the lack of a systematic comparative analysis of the driving global force behind the proliferation of sending state diaspora engagement policies. He then constructs an explanatory framework, based on a large-N multiple-correspondence analysis, to explain "the entire range of state practices" (2014: 76) used to engage their populations abroad. From a comparison of 35 states, he derives a typology that classes these states into expatriate, closed, indifferent, global-nation, and managed labour. He tests his typology against the explanatory frameworks of a structural-instrumental hypothesis, which finds that states make decisions in line with their interests and position in an international capitalist system, an ethnic conceptions hypothesis, based on either cosmopolitan or transnational nationalism, and the political-economy hypothesis. The explanatory framework

that he finds most convincing in accounting for his findings is that of a political-economy-focussed "governmentality" (2014) hypothesis. According to Ragazzi, Foucauldian governmentality theory can explain why states are increasingly interested in engaging their respective diasporas, by "assuming a relationship between disciplinary, liberal, neo-liberal governmentalities and shifting conceptions of territorial sovereignty" (2014: 86).

Another critical account of how diasporas are engaged and conceptualized within the international community is offered by Laffey and Nadarajah (2012). In line with the arguments proposed above, these authors support the view that diaspora engagement forms part of a liberal governmental logic, albeit this time as part of a larger effort to securitize and "generate pacific liberal order" (Laffey and Nadarajah 2012: 404). Forceful diaspora engagement by Western states is understood as part of a larger effort to mark liberal spaces. Thus, in contrast to the preceding authors, who have offered accounts of diaspora engagement that prioritised the logic of the market in a global political economy, Laffey and Nadarajah's explain diaspora engagement through the logic of the liberal peace.

In sum, all of the above approaches to diaspora engagement offer critical insights into the structural forces that drive formalised and discursive state-diaspora relations. In contrast to the liberal governance approaches, they also make explicit the often-exploitative power relations which underlie diaspora engagement policies. Notably, many of the above authors that are not strictly political economists, opt for research approaches that are based on the theorizing of Michel Foucault (2002, 2008, 2012). Contrary to the agent-centred theories, which dominate the liberal diffusion literature, these authors place less value in individual speech acts or the motivation behind them. Instead, Foucauldian approaches are interested in the way in which language acts as a constitutive force by fixing particular versions of social reality in discourse (Holzscheiter 2014), or how narratives shape social structures. Thus, rather than deliberative, these authors define discursive power as productive. So, while political economists regard diaspora engagement as a function of neoliberal capitalist expansion, and poststructuralists view it as a form of biopolitics, postcolonial scholarship emphasises the racist and imperialist nature of these strategies. These accounts further our understanding of how power operates in diaspora governance. My definition of diaspora governance builds on this critical scholarship. Specifically, I understand diaspora governance to constitute those practices that render diasporas 'governable'. As identified in the above literature, such practices may include formal state mechanisms and policies, but also (legal, discursive, bureaucratic, or infrastructural) strategies and initiatives through which diasporas and their advocacy are managed and controlled.

Ultimately, my definition of diaspora governance posits that governance is an exercise of power, not just a functional response or a 'global' norm, as liberal scholarship suggests. This definition also does not *a priori* assume who is doing the governing. States are not the only actors that govern diasporas, although they may well be the most powerful in many circumstances. Importantly, as my empirical data will show, diaspora governance – the patterns of rule through which diaspora are disciplined and managed – can also be exercised by diaspora organisations or individuals themselves, i.e. in the neo-liberal sense of self-disciplining behaviour, but also by becoming or acting as part of the governing elite (cf. Varadarajan 2010).

My theoretical definition of governance is therefore an expansive and inclusive one. And this is where it departs from most of the above accounts that also center power relations in their analysis. Unlike realist IR approaches, I am not only interested in power relations/imbalances between state actors. Nor do I assume, in line with critical scholarship, that diaspora are always dominated by the state. My theoretical definition includes the possibility of it being otherwise. Further, my definition of governance encompasses both agents and structures, i.e. governance actors (at different levels/scales), but also discourses and speech acts. Governance may appear, therefore, as any of the following phenomena: the delivery of public goods and services by a governance actor like the Red Cross or the UNDP in 'areas of limited statehood' (e.g. Risse 2011, Börzel and Risse 2016), the creation of social policies by the British state (Bevir 2010), the diffusion of norms about governance (i.e. meta governance, see Sørensen and Torfing 2009), instances of self-governance and self-disciplining by a diaspora group, an infrastructure, like a road, that governs our ability to go to certain places, as well as the ordering principle of white supremacy (Jung et al. 2011), or the political economy of capitalism (with the latter two being intimately connected), which determine how resources are distributed at a global and interpersonal scale. Thus, governance is ubiquitous. Governance occurs even when there is no one actor clearly doing the governing. This then raises the question: is resistance to governance at all possible? I suggest that because of its ubiquity, resistance is not futile, but intrinsic to governance: The two constitute each other. I suggest, that while governance might be a constant, the subject of governance (unlike Foucault's governmentality) is not doomed to be eternally dominated. They may also enter into positions of relative power (over others). This expansive theory of governance, naturally, leaves much open to empirical investigation. Due to its relational and embedded nature, what governing or being governed looks like, only becomes clear once we undertake empirical research. The key here is that that every instance of governance contains power struggles, an entanglement of domination and resistance. How this struggle plays out (who/what is dominating or resisting whom) depends on context.

Such an open and near-grounded perspective on governance is necessary especially in a study of diaspora governance. This is because there is evidence to suggest that diaspora should be conceptualized not just as subjects that are engaged, but as governance actors in and of themselves, with the capacity to influence global policy processes from the agenda setting to the delivery stage (Craven 2018a). The lines between governors and governed thus become increasingly blurred. Diaspora are both objects of power in that they are disciplined and managed (see Varadarajan 2008; Ragazzi 2014; Laffey and Nadarajah 2012.), but they may also resist attempts of domination, and assert power in global politics themselves. Ultimately, finding out whether a diaspora actor is governing or being governed requires looking at context: an analysis of their position and actions in broader (local/global) hierarchies of governance/systems of domination.

As the thesis will explore further down the line, diaspora governance and the relative power of diaspora vis-à-vis other governance actors, changes from one (governance) context to another. While in the first chapter on development governance, we encounter Tamil diaspora actors who occupy relative positions of power in the global development field vis-à-vis other politically engaged Tamils, little resistance to dominant norms in the development field occurs. Rather, these diaspora actors end up 'governing' both the behaviour of their fellow Tamils in the Canadian diaspora, and providing public services to Tamils in the North and East of Sri Lanka. In the second chapter on Transitional Justice, the relative power position of the Tamil diaspora actors vis-à-vis dominant governance actors is more unsettled and changeable, as some seek to assert dominance through adopting legal processes and naming and shaming practices, whilst others more vocally resist a Sri Lankan state that is trying to intimidate and oppress them. In the third chapter on security governance, the conflict between resistance and domination is perhaps the most explicit. Here diaspora actors deal with domination that often seems relentless, leaving little space for resistance. However, when resistance does occur – it does so loudly and defiantly.

Such a broad conceptualisation of diaspora governance entails also a relational definition of diaspora. What a diaspora is or what the category means, is ultimately defined in relations with governance actors (rather than only through inter-ethnic relations, or local-community relations, which have been the object of concern for non-IR scholars). These relations – of domination and resistance - then shape how diaspora are governed. For example, in relation to state actors, diaspora might appear first as foremost as '*non-state actors*', while in relation to other diasporas, they may appear as particular *ethnic communities*. In relation to the structure of capitalism they are seen primarily as *transnational neoliberal subjects*, while a

local MP might view them as *constituents*. Finally, to diplomats, diaspora members they may appear as *colleagues*, as *human rights advocates*, or as *representatives of victims of mass atrocities*. In sum, the term diaspora cannot be defined in substantialist terms, but can only be understood in relation to other things, agents, contexts, and structures (both material and immaterial).[22]

In sum, critical studies of diaspora governance emphasise structural power dynamics in their explanations of why such governance has emerged. From their perspective, diaspora governance is intimately tied to diaspora's ability to contribute to the expansion of global capitalism (Varadarajan 2008, 2010; Ragazzi 2014) or the maintenance of liberal order in the global South (Laffey and Nadarajah 2012). These accounts are invaluable, but they are also somewhat overdetermined. My thesis argues that diaspora governance is often not just a singular response to the problems that diasporas pose to global politics and power structures. The global Tamil diaspora is a case in point, as they are governed simultaneously as threat and economic potential, something that Nadarajah subsumes under the liberal peace dynamic. If we try to make sense of the 'global' politics of diaspora engagement, we may not see the struggles between different diaspora organsations as they vie for international legitimacy. While the emphasis on structural dynamics and constraints is compelling, such macro-approaches tend to brush over local variation in the political struggles that inform diaspora engagement strategies. They obscure the intricate entanglements between global power structures and micro-politics. Also, often states remain the primary units of analysis and are assumed - a priori - to be the main locus of power in global politics, even if the studies problematize and historicise this condition (and they do so convincingly). Finally, while these macro-approaches allow us to conceptualize constraints to diaspora engagement beyond single state interests, they limit our thinking about possibilities for counter-hegemonic action and diaspora agency, and do not take into account variation or interpretations of policies in particular social or political contexts.

Theoretically, the tension between structure and agency has been conceptualized as the 'levels of analysis' problem. As outlined above, the critical scholarship tends to propose that diaspora engagement should be understood as driven by singular overarching structural logics, e.g. neoliberalism or liberal peace. This 'structure-centrism' means that they struggle to provide much detail as to how the systemic observations that they make might unfold at the micro-level. This essentially erases the agency of both the diaspora and the various actors that are

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[22] This definition also resonates with Brubaker's definition of diaspora as a category of practice (2005). Although he does not make this explicit, he takes the relational definition further by saying that the relation through which diaspora are defined is through common practice.

preoccupied with governance. Holzscheiter (2014) has argued that poststructuralist approaches can often fall into this trap of ignoring the existence of social and political agents, or at least downplaying the ability of individual agency to bring about meaningful change. In the context of my study, such an oversight would mean that I would dismiss as meaningless cases in which diaspora strategies or policies come to exist as a result of (highly contingent, spontaneous) individual action. It would also, conversely, assume that diaspora members had no agency in the politics of their governance.

This problem of deciding at which level of analysis to situate power dynamics in social interactions is of course as old as social science itself. Accordingly, scholars have long attempted to resolve what some refer to as the structuration problem (as identified by Giddens 1984; Wendt 1987) or the levels-of-analysis problem (Nau 2009). However, most of these studies still give primacy or precedence to a certain causal mechanism (agency or structure), level of analysis (micro or macro) or a certain type of power (deliberative vs. constructive) when locating political struggles. Existing conceptualisation of power in diaspora engagement seem similarly caught in the aporia of the levels-of-analysis-problem (Doty 1997). As mentioned, in discussions of diaspora mobilization the individual agency of diaspora members is highlighted, and they are cast as development entrepreneurs (Brinkerhoff 2016) or mediators in peace processes (Baser and Swain 2008). Crucially, in these accounts causal power is transferred to the diaspora agent. Subsequently, power struggles between the diaspora and (global) governance actors are conceptualized as interactions between rational thinking agents, whether driven by a logic of profit maximization or normative appropriateness. In that sense, the politics of diaspora engagement are the result of individual speech acts, of persuasion or negotiation. This logic of communicative power (Risse 2000), which is based on the writing of Habermas (1970) and focuses exclusively on the micro-level mechanisms employed by individual agents, must confront several criticisms. First of all, while interactionist approaches manage to theorize a power struggle that takes place in real-time communication, they ignore that agents who engage in this sort of discursive interaction also exist within a powerful structure. According to Anna Holzscheiter, assuming that norms and ideas are pre-given "discursive resources that can be intentionally put to use" (2014: 4) to further individual interests, is problematic. It assumes that discursive power flows simply from one actor to another in a "discrete social event" or speech act (Holzscheiter 2014: 13). Evidently, where critical literature on diaspora governance is too structure-centric, the liberal mainstream of diaspora studies overemphasises the power of the rational individual agent, often at the expense of social, political and historical context. Studying the 'microfoundations' of diaspora

engagement politics should not come at the expense of acknowledging the structures that diaspora are constrained by.

But diaspora politics bring not only the levels of analysis problem into sharp relief. Another binary that diaspora scholars grapple with is that is the relationship between Nationalism and Globalization. Overall, the literature on diaspora governance - framed either as sending-state engagement, global liberal governance, or governance as power relation – grapples with the phenomena of nationalism and globalization. How these two dynamics relate seems to be a central caveat in the diaspora literature. We know that liberal approaches in IR have tended to overemphasise the retreat of 'the nation state', as exemplified in the recent resurgence of nationalisms across the Western world (Bieber 2018). On the other hand, it is equally important not to equate the re-emergence of nationalism with a reversal of the dynamics of globalization, which is very much a reality. Financialization is too far gone to be perturbed by a few protectionist policies. As I will elaborate further along in this study, the two dynamics are in tension with each other. Globalization looks different in different contexts, as much as nationalism is part of a global movement. Why is this debate between globalization/nationalism particularly important to have/resolve when studying diaspora and diaspora engagement? It mirrors broader debates on where politics takes place. But of course, in the case of diaspora who, by definition, are transnational, the issue is particularly salient. In fact, by looking at diaspora we might gain broader insights into what constitutes so-called 'global' or 'transnational' politics. In the next section, I will discuss how my thesis builds on literature that has explicitly tried moved beyond MN and levels of analysis problem.

1.4.   Global (Diaspora) Politics as Entanglements

"everything we think of as global is also local" – Tsing[23]

Above I present my criticism of the tendency amongst structuralist scholarship to posit a global 'roll out' of neoliberal forms of diaspora governance. Certainly, 'global' is a term we encounter both in the context of diaspora governance practices, e.g. when engagement strategies are framed through the lens of 'global citizenship', or when diaspora are considered threats to

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[23] A conversation with Anna Tsing, 2018 https://tankmagazine.com/tank/2019/04/anna-tsing/

'global security', but also in the scholarship, when diaspora engagement is framed as a global governance tool. What is the 'global'? Something that is structural and understood to be universal, a globally shared experience? As much as state-centrism obscures, so does a vague conception of the 'global'. And yet, my definition of the 'global' in this thesis remains an expansive and an inclusive one. I define it as a concept which can signify a range of things and therefore needs to be problematised not in the abstract, but the concrete/empirical. It can be something material or something immaterial (an idea). According to this definition we might encounter the 'global' as: planet Earth itself (as used in discussions of the Anthropocene e.g. Biermann 2014), problematic invocations of universalisms (e.g. a human rights norm) in IR (see Anderl and Witt 2020), a practice, law or policy occurring at the planetary scale, above the nation state, a dynamic/structure that is not fixed to a particular locale, and also a discursive practice, i.e. someone saying 'this is global'. This broad definition does not make it an empty signifier, as the criticism sometimes goes. Rather, I do not want to exclude any of these things *a priori,* rather I want to be able to interrogate and problematise them and what they claim to signify. For example, when actors engage in 'global governance', it is imperative we ask whether they are claiming to engage in governance that is 'universal' or 'normatively desirable', or whether they are in fact referring to the scale at which they are targeting their work, as 'above the nation state' but not necessarily universal or 'good'.

We need to take the 'global' seriously in the study of diaspora engagement. In order to do so, we need to open up the global for empirical investigation, and to find out how it becomes entangled with local context and circumstance. Thus, my thesis asks: What happens when global ideas about diaspora governance and engagement hit the ground? In a context of globalization, what does diaspora governance actually look like in different places? What is global about it and what is not? While I am interested in which actors are doing the governing and at what scale they primarily operate, I will answer these questions empirically. This is no easy feat and has required that I look beyond disciplinary boundaries. How have scholars in Anthropology, Sociology and Geography thought about global-local entanglements?

In the 1990s, scholars became interested in the social and political effects of globalization, specifically how dynamics of globalization (such as a cultural convergence or the roll out of mass digital communication technologies, but also global governance) interacted with local contexts. James Rosenau wrote about the 'fragmegration' of global governance, while Arjun Appadurai investigated the 'disjunctures' in the global cultural economy (1990). The term "glocalization" (Swyngedouw 1997, 2004) emerged as a portmanteau of the terms globalization and localization to describe processes of simultaneous universalizing and

particularizing tendencies and challenge assumptions about globalization as a linear process. From the outset, globalization scholars have been empirically concerned with the phenomena of migration and diaspora, as these populations were often regarded as vehicles of globalization dynamics. At the same time, transnationalist theories of migration sought to address the tensions that existed between Globalization and Methodological Nationalism, as briefly discussed above (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002, 2003; Basch et al. 2005). Most of these theories about globalization and its relationship to the local are heavily constructivist. This means that they conceptualize the 'local' as a sociopolitical space, but not as a material one. That the lived experience of humans also takes place in a physical realm, is left unaddressed. This thesis takes issue with the modernist subject/object binary that such theories reproduce. Instead, this thesis draws inspiration from scholarship that has thought about the interrelationship between the global and the local, but in distinctly spatial and materialist terms. Groundbreaking work on 'new geographies' of globalization has been done outside of the discipline of IR, for example, by sociologist Saskia Sassen, who makes use of the concept of the assemblage to describe changing relationships between territory, authority and rights (2008). She also writes about how shifting global power relations have created contemporary global cities as sites where global civil society networks converge (1994). Her work is embedded in a whole host of scholarship on the reterritorialisation of global politics in the urban space (see also Brenner 1999). Further, Anna Tsing's work (2011) provides a refreshing take on how to study universals in a way that takes local embeddedness seriously. Tsing's work highlights the frictions that occur when global meets local. In Tsing's case the local describes a complex ecology of human, non-human relations, deeply embedded in the geographical realities.

In sum, from anthropology, sociology and geography we learn that globalization is not just uni-directional, rather, the local constitutes the global and vice versa. What they also show is that the 'global' is not fully deterritorialised. It is both de- and reterritorialised. As, will be further explored below, ideas about spatial embeddedness and de-/reterritorialisation have also recently reentered IR in what has been described as a 'spatial turn' and a range of 'New Materialist' scholarship. Space in IR has traditionally been understood to refer to the territorial boundaries of the nation state. Beyond that, space is rarely problematized or investigated. Instead, the 'spatial turn' rests on the assumption that the social and the spatial cannot be separated. Similarly, this thesis draws attention to the social space in which diaspora governance takes place. It seeks to offer empirical insights on how diaspora governance is spatially embedded, and the practices through which it is de- and reterritorialised. Further, within the spatial turn I offer a material/relational conceptualization of space, not just a social

constructivist one. Like Tsing and Sassen, I place significance both on the global and local distribution of material resources. This thesis seeks to complicate the notion of diaspora governance as linear governance 'roll-out'. After all, globalization is not automatically homogenization but "radically unequal" and "decentered" (Middell and Naumann 2010). Hence, rather than assume that something is global, I will show how it is 'made' to be global. I will empirically investigate how the 'global' is constituted in diaspora engagement and what happens when so-called 'global' ideas about diaspora hit the ground.

While much contemporary scholarship has tried to address the levels of analysis problem and think about spaces 'beyond the nation state', the study of diaspora governance makes this challenge particularly urgent. After all, the empirical realities of diaspora governance defy so many of the dominant concepts that IR scholars use to think with (i.e. the state, the nation, the border etc.). The flip side of this coin is that the phenomenon of diaspora governance also offers an exceptional opportunity to think International Relations differently. I have argued elsewhere (Craven 2018a, 2018b, 2021) that diaspora can be thought of as a research perspective, which allows political scientists to imagine spaces 'in between' or beyond the nation state; diaspora politics are politics of global-local entanglements. But how might we practically tease out all of these entangled components of diaspora politics? How do we study entanglements – conceptualized as assemblages or global connections - empirically? This is incredibly hard to do. Anna Tsing's "ethnographies of global connection" rest on decades of research, while Sassen's work is highly conceptual, making it difficult to adopt her approach for empirical research. I suggest that a practice-theoretical analysis might make this possible, because practices can reveal entanglements. A number of studies have already made use of practices in the study of diaspora and diaspora governance.

1.5. Towards a Practice-centric Reading of Diaspora Governance

The concept of a practice is not unfamiliar to scholars of diaspora politics. In 2005 Rogers Brubaker published a short but, arguably, field-defining paper titled *The 'diaspora' diaspora*, in which he suggested that diaspora should be understood as a 'category of practice'. Diaspora is a category of practice in so far as it is "used to make claims, to articulate projects, to formulate expectations, to mobilize energies, to appeal to loyalties" (2005: 12). His paper was motivated by a proliferation but also diversification of uses of the term, denoting often widely diverging phenomena, from ethnonationalist mobilization to imaginings of racial or

religious solidarity. In a follow-up article in 2017, Brubaker admits that some of his concepts in the initial article were not particularly well thought out, and thus goes on to flesh out his understanding of 'category of practice' slightly, this time explicitly citing Bourdieu:

> invocations of diaspora can contribute, as Bourdieu noted with respect to ethnoregionalist discourse, "to producing what they apparently describe or designate" (Bourdieu 1991, 220). The Bourdieusian point is especially relevant to the deployment of the language of diaspora by states as part of an effort to (re-)create and maintain ties with "their" transborder populations (Brubaker and Kim 2011; Dufoix 2012, chapter 9; Okyay 2015; Kim 2016), and also to its deployment by development agencies and international organizations in an effort to mobilize knowledge, experience, and economic resources for development efforts (Faist 2008).

Brubaker (2017) notes that, while use of the diaspora term within academic scholarship has become saturated, its importance as a 'category of practice' in the area that is traditionally the object of study of IR, namely transborder policymaking and governance beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, has actually expanded. I take this observation seriously. Indeed, one aim of this thesis is to bridge the gap between Brubaker's notion of a 'category of practice', and the politics of diaspora engagement or governance. In the following chapter, I will address in more detail how and why an understanding of diaspora as a 'category of practice' is particularly useful for studying the (sometimes disjointed) efforts by states, development agencies and international organizations, and other global political actors to govern diasporas. A 'desubstantialised' reading of diaspora governance – whereby diaspora is a category of practice – would allow for an investigation into these expectations, energies and loyalties that characterise this governance. In other words, rather than assuming the political struggles and aims behind diaspora governance, a practice-based analysis can bring these political struggles into focus.

Another groundbreaking intervention in the field of diaspora studies was recently made by Marlies Glasius (2018). Glasius explores "how authoritarian states rule populations abroad, and how their practices may contribute to authoritarian sustainability" (2018). Situated broadly in the literature on extraterritorial authoritarianism (explored on pages 22-23), she develops the theory "that authoritarian rule should not be considered a territorially bounded regime type, but

rather as a mode of governing people through a distinct set of practices" (2019: 179). In her 2019 article she organises these practices into categories. Going beyond transnational repression practices, she suggests that authoritarian states 'engage' their populations abroad either as subjects, patriots, clients, outlaws, or traitors. Glasius' centering of *practices* of authoritarianism is intriguing. For one, the approach begins to decentre the state, by challenging the territorial boundedness of authoritarian regimes. And secondly, by centering practices or mechanisms of governance, we can investigate the logic behind them, rather than assume a priori whether they are motivated by rational or ideational factors. Glasius makes room for the assumption that authoritarian practices can exist beyond the territory of authoritarian states. She devises a typology of these extraterritorial practices of authoritarian states, organized around the reasons these states have for repressing, co-opting or legitimating their overseas populations. I will build on her research but go beyond it by further decoupling the practice from the actor.

In sum, this thesis is inspired by approaches that use practice as a category to understand diaspora politics. As will be explored in chapter 2, I propose to take the practice-commitment even further by situating myself theoretically and methodologically in the practice-turn in IR. I suggest that in order to understand the politics of diaspora governance we need to untangle the practices through which it operates. By studying practices, not only can we reconcile the agency of global political actors with the structural constraints posed upon them by capitalism or neoliberal governmentality, we also begin to reterritorialise global politics. It is also useful to centre practices in governance research, because we live in a moment of shifting state-power, so assuming the state as the sole unit of analysis is neither useful, nor accurate. Any study of diaspora should be critical of a reification of state borders while not being lured into thinking that governance takes place 'beyond' traditional sites/locusts of power, i.e. the state. Rather, these should be left open as empirical questions.

1.6.   Summary and Chapter Overview

This introductory chapter has familiarized the reader with the phenomenon of 'diaspora engagement', its empirical contours, and theoretical and global political importance. Further, it has proposed an analysis of diaspora engagement through a practice lens, whereby governance is defined as 'patterns of rule' while diasporas are a category of practice in governance.

Diaspora engagement strategies and mechanisms have proliferated in the last decade. More and more states have institutions tasked with emigrant engagement or policies that solicit remittances from diaspora populations. On the flip side, authoritarian states have informal strategies through which they repress or curtail the freedoms of their populations abroad. International institutions like the EU are building organizational infrastructures to better engage diaspora populations in international development, while its proscription regime criminalizes the transnational financial activities of many diaspora organisations across the globe. To date, scholarship has focused either on the reasons why states engage or repress their own diaspora populations, or on explaining why diaspora engagement proliferates at the global level. We learnt that liberal approaches have tended to fall into the trap of state centrism and unsatisfactorily to account for how power functions in global politics 'beyond the state'. Meanwhile critical governance approaches center these global power structures. The preceding paragraphs have shown how I intend to build on this critical work, by drawing on its relational definitions of governance and diaspora. Further, I to intend cross-fertilize this literature with broader scholarship on global-local entanglements. In doing so, I suggest that global politics are always simultaneously local. Such an entanglements perspective also encourages us to open up the global power dynamics that structure diaspora engagement and subject them to empirical analysis. Finally, this introductory chapter has begun its turn towards a practice-centric analysis of diaspora governance. From this perspective, applied to the Tamil diaspora case, this thesis seeks to answer a range of questions, including:

- How do we study practices of diaspora governance; how to we access them empirically and how to we analyse them?
- What practices of diaspora governance exist?
- How are diasporas conceptualized by global and local governance actors? How does this impact upon whether and how they are 'engaged' or 'repressed'?
- What political struggles characterise diaspora governance practices? Who is included or excluded when diaspora are 'engaged'? How are decisions made about whom to engage or whom to repress? How do such decisions vary across time and space?
- What are the global and local political consequences of the inclusion or exclusion of specific diaspora organiations or individuals? What, if anything, do diasporas gain from being 'engaged'?
- What kind of global power relations, e.g. between differently situated actors in the global political economy, do diaspora governance practices reproduce?

- What actors and forms of power are involved in attempts to 'engage', 'constrain' or repress diaspora?

This thesis will answer these questions through original data generated during extended multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork (an 'Ethnography of Entanglements', see section 2.4.) *with* the Tamil diaspora in Toronto, Geneva and London, between 2016-2018. It will pursue the following arguments: Practices of diaspora governance reveal both global and local political entanglements. Diaspora politics exhibit 'global' characteristics or universalizing tendencies, namely that diaspora are, indeed, increasingly explicitly named as key stakeholders or players in global politics. Further, 'engagement' or repression is never simply functional or non-hierarchical but done in the interest of powerful actors and to maintain powerful structures. However, this global tendency already finds different forms of expression across governance issue areas, for example in the international development field governance practices are proliferating that that seek to engage diasporas as 'partners' in development (see chapter 3), while in the TJ field there is much ambiguity about the role that diaspora, refugee or displaced populations can play a role in Transitional Justice processes after violent conflict (see chapter 4). Finally, in the security field, diasporas are governed as potential threats, through transnational finance and remittances regulations (see chapter 5). But an 'ethnography of entanglements' also reveals that local variation in governance practices, amounts to more than variation across governance fields. This thesis argues that the politics of diaspora engagement, understood as governance practice, are neither fully global, nor local, but entangled. Through the lens of the Tamil case study, each of the upcoming chapters shows exactly how the global politics of diaspora governance become entangled with local political struggles. These local struggles encompass contestations of Tamil diaspora legitimacy and authority, navigation of bureaucratic constraints imposed on Tamil diaspora organisations, or problems of immobility and the cost of travel, shaped by urban planning as well as global geographies.

In sum, in this introductory chapter I have situated this thesis in the existing scholarship on diaspora engagement and global governance, as well as critical accounts of governance under conditions of globalization. I have also introduced work by scholars who have sought to illuminate global-local entanglements and those who have used practices in analyzing diaspora politics. In doing so, I have also defined major concepts and laid the conceptual groundwork of this thesis.

Chapter 2. concludes the first part of the thesis. As explored in this introduction, the thesis proposes a practice approach to studying diaspora governance. Accordingly, the second chapter outlines a methodology for (dis)entangling diaspora governance practices. The first part of the chapter will situate this study in the practice-turn in IR, thus theoretically deepening scholarship on practices in the diaspora literature. Building on the practice-turn, I will argue why it makes sense to adopt a conceptualization of practices as a nexus of entanglements, before discussing how these diaspora governance practices can be empirically identified and made know-able through an abductive research design. This section also explores the implications of doing ethnography in IR, and the need to understand the hermeneutic cycle. I then introduce my case study, first by exploring the history of dispersion and settlement of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora and then by laying out the entangled politics that characterize the Tamil diaspora case today. The chapter then details the data generation process of this thesis. I outline my approach of a multi-sited 'ethnography of entanglements', discuss expectations for data collection, as well as the basis on which sites were selected. I then offer a comprehensive discussion of my fieldwork process, detailing the challenges I encountered in each of my field sites, such as limited mobility or access to sites of governance. I then reflect on my positionality, how it influenced access and the ethical implications of my research. Finally, I discuss how the abductive research design has shaped the way I have organised and analyzed my data, as well as how I have chosen to present it.

The second part of the thesis consists of 3 empirical chapters, each of which (dis)entangles different diaspora governance practices through the lens of the Tamil diaspora. As mentioned above, the chapters are organised by governance field or issue area, while the process of (dis)entanglement is organised around different modes of governance/power. Chapter 3. explores the politics of diaspora governance by centering diaspora governance practices in the development field. It makes the argument that in this field diaspora are rendered governable as 'partners' in development. It then offers a historical exploration of the emergence of diaspora engagement practices in the development field, as well as how these emergent global practices have affected members of the Tamil diaspora community in Toronto who are engaging in homeland development. It then (dis)entangles in more detail how this dominant framing of diasporas as 'partners' rests on a definition of diaspora as bounded actors in global politics, and what kind of conduct is required or expected from a diaspora partner. But the chapter will also show that while this particular framing of diaspora as 'partners' dominates the development field - that within the field there are certain (globally framed) expectations around legitimate diaspora conduct - the story is more complex. When global expectations about

diaspora engagement in development hit the ground, they become entangled with Tamil diaspora politics in Canada, or more locally in Toronto. This creates a complex political landscape for Tamil diaspora development organisations to navigate. Conversely, only a select number of elite Tamil diaspora actors are included in engagement initiatives and manage to shape the global development field by networking, jumping scales or being in the right place at the right time.

Chapter 4. explores the politics of diaspora governance by centering diaspora governance practices in the TJ field. Through the lens of Tamil diaspora involvement at the UNHRC in Geneva, it will show that there is ambiguity regarding the governance of diasporas in TJ, as they enter the field in multiple ways. It offers a historical exploration of the involvement of diaspora in the TJ field, and untangles how members of the Tamil diaspora community have engaged in activism around the Sri Lankan TJ process at the UNHRC in Geneva. The chapter will then center some of the governance practices that structure Tamil diaspora activism at the UNHRC. This will reveal the deeply entangled politics of the Sri Lankan TJ process, as well as the multiplicity of roles that Tamil diaspora members occupy in the process. At the same time, the chapter shows that the UNHRC does not map cleanly onto the TJ field. Local political struggles in Geneva, both inside and outside the UN compound, reveal the multiple overlapping fields which Tamil diaspora actors have to navigate in their activism. These struggles including significant spatial segregation at multiple scales, as well as exclusionary international bureaucracies.

Chapter 5. explores the politics of diaspora governance by centering diaspora governance practices in the security field. It makes the argument that in this field diaspora are rendered governable primarily as 'threats' to both global and national security, and that this places significant pressures on the space that Tamils have to mobilize and resist such security governance. It will offer a historical exploration of the emergence of a range of security practices that govern diaspora populations, and how these governance practices have affected – but also been affected by - members of the Tamil diaspora community in London. It shows how diaspora governance has shifted in line with changes in the threat perceptions of global and domestic security actors, and how these shifts rely on the de-and reterritorialisation of ideas about (the Tamil) diaspora. But it also shows how these shifts in governance are produced or challenged by changing diaspora practices. The chapter then untangles a number of security governance practices that continue to affect the Tamil diaspora community in London and shows how these practices implicate multiple governance actors and spaces. Importantly, it will

show that some of these practices reveal continuities with colonial forms of governance by the British Empire, namely in how they continue to structure discourse and physical space.

Chapter 6. concludes this thesis. It revisits the research question, summarises and synthesizes the main findings from the three case studies, and specifies the contributions made by this thesis to various literatures on which it builds. Finally, it offers theoretical and empirical reflections, and directions for future research.

2. (Dis)Entangling Diaspora Governance: A Practice-based Approach

What does it mean to take Brubaker's suggestion that diaspora is a 'category of practice' seriously, whilst staying true to a 'global politics as entanglements' perspective? This chapter will take up this challenge by laying out a practice-approach to studying diaspora governance, which draws on advances made in practice-theory in the discipline of IR. As mentioned in the previous chapter, most studies on diaspora engagement have engaged in methodological nationalism and state centric analyses. Some studies on diaspora politics have begun to center practices in their analyses, but often these still assume that the nation state is the primary actor doing the 'practicing'. This is not surprising because, as I discussed in the introduction, it is difficult to gather data on phenomena that cross or transcend state-boundaries in the social sciences due to its historical and enduring methodological nationalism. Critical scholars have also tended to center the state because they are interested - first and foremost - in state power, although they acknowledge that structural forces and supra-national actors are implicated in governance. Studies on state governance practices are of course extremely timely and useful, as the state does remain a (if not the) key locus of power in international relations, especially in instances where formal state diaspora policies or ministries exist. It is important that we continue to ask how state power is constructed. But examining such state mechanisms alone is not the aim of this thesis. Rather than assuming that power is with the state, this thesis is interested in *locating* 'global' politics, or in other words, investigating how the global and local become entangled. How does one 'decenter the state' in the discipline of IR, for which the state is a foundational assumption? How does one decenter anything? Such an effort requires a more grounded approach to IR, the state and the 'global', one that can trace connections between micro and macro processes. This chapter proposes that a practice centric analysis, whereby a practice is a nexus of entanglements, makes this possible. Practices open up the possibility of studying how the global and local become entangled; how the global sometimes constitutes the local and vice versa. For example, centering governance practices allows us to examine how a 'global' idea about diaspora engagement in development that is conceived and honed inside the World Bank, travel to and becomes entangled with the local context of Toronto, almost bypassing national institutions. There the idea might take on a local flavour; now having to confront more micro-political struggles, such as debates over Canada's international aid budget, Toronto's ethnically diverse population, and diaspora communities that are embroiled in

entangled homeland politics. Conversely a practice-centric approach may reveal how social network relations allow discourses that emerge locally within a home state, for example about the threat posed by the LTTE to the Sri Lankan state, to travel upwards and shape the field of global security. Ultimately, a practice perspective will allow us to illuminate these global political entanglements and provide a fresh perspective on diaspora governance that does not a priori center the nation state.

As explored in this introduction, the thesis proposes a practice approach to studying diaspora governance. Accordingly, this chapter will outline a methodology for (dis)entangling diaspora governance practices. The first part of the chapter will situate this study in the practice-turn in IR, thus theoretically deepening scholarship on practices in the diaspora literature. Building on the practice-turn, I will discuss the theories and conceptual building blocks that underlie my research design. It will sketch a practice approach to diaspora governance, whereby a practice is defined as a nexus (of entanglements), based on the writings of German sociologist Andreas Reckwitz (2002, 2004, 2012, 2016). To conceptually untangle these practices, I then propose a toolbox that combines elements of both Bourdieusian, and pragmatist practice approaches. I then propose the move from practice-theory to practice methodology. I will discuss how diaspora governance practices (as entanglements) can be empirically identified and made know-able through an abductive research design. This section also explores the implications of doing ethnography in IR, and the need to understand the hermeneutic cycle. I then introduce my case study, first in the current global context, then through a brief history of dispersion and settlement, and finally by laying out the entangled politics that characterize the Tamil diaspora case today. The section will end by summarizing why the Tamil diaspora case is interesting from an IR research perspective. I will then proceed to discuss methodological considerations that follow from existing knowledge about diaspora governance and the Tamil diaspora case. I outline my approach of a multi-sited 'ethnography of entanglements', discuss expectations for data collection, as well as the basis on which field sites were selected. I then offer a comprehensive discussion of my fieldwork and data collection in Toronto, London and Geneva, detailing the challenges I encountered in each of my field sites, and reflecting on how my positionality influenced access and the ethical implications of my research. Finally, I introduce my data analysis tools and framework, and discuss how the abductive research design influenced the way I analyzed and presented my data.

2.1. Towards a Theory of Practice as a Nexus of Entanglements

Practice approaches in IR are loosely united by the premise that ontological priority is not given to either states, nor individual rational agents, or powerful structures, but instead to practices. Practices are 'routinized doings and sayings' (Schatzki 1996) or, more specifically, 'patterned actions that are embedded in particular organized contexts' (Adler and Pouliot 2011). What is essential, is that rather than looking at these patterns and routines occurring in the world and asking what (kind of logic) they represent,[24] we take the practice itself seriously. Practices themselves are powerful and meaningful, not only as representations of structural or cognitive realms of consciousness.

Practice-theory has its roots in the disciplines of philosophy, anthropology and sociology. Most notably, it was laid out by Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Foucault (1982), building on 20th c. philosophers such as Marx, Wittgenstein, and Durkheim, while sociologist Anthony Giddens further developed it in his work on structuration theory. From here it made its way into IR, where Wendt drew on 'practices' to suggest a way of overcoming the structuration problem in IR (1987). However, following Wendt's early intervention, for a while not much progress was made with regards to centering practices in IR. Most studies continued to give primacy to a certain causal mechanism (agency or structure), level of analysis (micro or macro) or a certain type of power (deliberative vs. constructive) when locating political struggles. That is until very recent interventions, which have been cumulatively described as the 'practice-turn' in IR. Within the last decade, practice theory has been used by scholars studying various aspects of the international. In organisational studies, practices are used to examine learning and organisational change (Schatzki 1996; Nicolini 2009; 2012). Meanwhile, security communities have been studied as ‚communities of practice' by e.g. Emanuel Adler (2008), building on Peter Haas (1992). Perhaps the most committed applications of practice theory in IR have shone a light on diplomatic practices and practices of global governance (Neumann 2002, 2014; Pouliot 2008; Adler-Nissen 2012; Pouliot and Thérien 2018).

While practice approaches in IR are far from unified, according to Bueger and Gadinger most "practice approaches focus on how groups perform their practical activities in world politics to renew and reproduce social order" (2015). Those employing practice theory tend to share an interest in overcoming various binaries that plague the discipline of IR: micro-macro, agency-structure, global-local, material-immaterial, state-non-state, essence vs. relation. This

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[24] I.e. a logic of appropriateness or a logic of rationality.

is a tall order for any theory and obscures how diverging empirical contexts lend themselves differently to practice-theoretical approaches. This may seem commonsensical (Reckwitz 2004) but is actually often left unproblematized. Rather, practice theory is sometimes hailed as chimera for all research problems and is then equally chastised for not fulfilling its impossible task. The above suggests that both the methodological nationalism and the levels of analysis problems, which I previously identified as plaguing the study of diaspora governance, could be overcome by centering practices. So far so good. But practice approaches also diverge widely. And not all of them are necessarily equally committed to a non-state centric 'entanglements' ontology. Which one of the above approaches might be suited to my problem, considering my empirical object of study: the practices of diaspora governance?

Bueger and Gadinger (2015) note that most scholars engage in negative theorizing around practice theory, and lament that only saying what practice theory does not do vis-á-vis other approaches - i.e. fall into various theoretical traps - is dangerous. Instead, they attempt to define practice theory's positive contribution. In their 2015 article, they formulate six commitments of practice theory. The first commitment they identify is that practice theories prioritise *process over substance* and *relations over separateness*. Citing Jackson and Nexon, they suggest that "(p)ractice theories interpret the international through relational ontologies (Jackson and Nexon 1999)." The second commitment is an acknowledgement that *knowledge is situated in practice,* and therefore neither fully internal nor external; rather it is spatiotemporally situated. Thirdly, they suggest that *learning should be understood as a collective/interactive practice*, although this learning can come from interactions with non-human actors, such as computers or machinery. The fourth commitment articulated by Bueger and Gadinger (2015) is that *practices have materiality*. Penultimately, they state that *global order is emergent and consists of multiplicities.* Finally, the authors suggest that the *world is performed in practice* through "maintenance of relations between actors, objects, and material artifacts." (Bueger and Gadinger 2015: 453). In sum, Bueger and Gadinger explicitly frame practice theory as relational, with a materialist ontology and suggest that German sociologist Andreas Reckwitz has proposed a suitably broad understanding of practices, that encompasses all of the above commitments. Reckwitz, proposes that we understand a practice as a nexus (Reckwitz 2002), a site of interconnection, of entanglements and relations. In light of the primary interest in this study to illuminate global local entanglements, Reckwitz' definition seems like a promising conceptual baseline. Thus, in this thesis, I define practices in line with Reckwitz. If the practice is a nexus of an entanglement, what is entangled at this nexus? As discussed above, entangled are not just global and local scales, but also different forms of

power, as well as actors, spaces, and structures. Centering a governance practice provides a starting point for disentangling it. So how do we approach this disentanglement?

I propose that a Bourdieusian practice theoretical approach provides a promising starting point. Bourdieu has received much attention recently by scholars in IR. Didier Bigo (2011) makes a strong case for using Bourdieu's practice approach for the study of international relations, especially emphasising his compatibility with relational ontologies. Meanwhile, Adler-Nissen has suggested that IR 'needs' Bourdieu because through him we can study the interplay between symbolic and material resources in international politics (2012). Bourdieu's concepts have also been widely applied in the study of transnationalism, diaspora mobilization (Koinova 2018) and even diaspora governance (Ragazzi 2017). In his 1972 *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu proposes a significant number of concepts, with which to make sense of practices. He introduces the concept of habitus, as a means of overcoming the agent-structure divide in social theorising. He suggests that habitus circumvents the structuration problem (later explored by Giddens 1984; see also Pouliot's work on 'sobjectivism', 2007) by making social practices not simply the outcome of "mechanical imposition of structures" or the "free intentional pursuits of individuals". Rather, in the words of Wacquant (2005: 316), habitus

> is a mediating notion that revokes the common sense duality between the individual and the social by capturing 'the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of internality' [in the famous expression of Bourdieu], that is, the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel, and act in determinate ways, which then guide them in their creative responses to the constraints and solicitations of their extant milieu.

Further, practices must be understood as the outcomes of the constellations of habitus and capital within a field. Practices are therefore relational. Let us explore each of these concepts in turn. In *Distinction* (1979) Bourdieu proposes his theory of 'fields' and 'capital'. First, Bourdieu suggests that all social action (production and reproduction) takes place within 'fields' (Navarro 2006: 18). To him, fields represent a certain "distributing structure of some types of capital", which means that within each field actors with certain types of resources may be more powerful than others. In other words, a field is a "structured space" that is organised

around specific types of capital or combinations of capital (Navarro 2006: 18). In his lucid reading of Bourdieu, Cornut (2015: 9) describes the field in the following way:

> In a field, all agree on the object of their struggle, as well as on the general contours of the game. To be part of a field is to share its doxa and mostly leave these contours unquestioned. Yet, this doxa falls short of being a joint enterprise. Members of a field have opposing interests and are in conflict with one another. In particular, fields are hierarchical, with practitioners at unequal positions in their struggle.

To understand how such a position is determined, we need to unpack the concept of capital. As mentioned above, capital determines the power and position of an actor within a field. Capital are the resources accumulated by an agent - embodied in their habitus - in the form of, for example, culturally specific knowledge, education, social contacts, and property. Crucially, this means that Bourdieu makes an important departure from political economists and Marxists in suggesting that capital is not just economic but also social, cultural or symbolic. The embodied nature of capital is important here. As mentioned above, capital is physically embodied in the habitus. This means that capital cannot be arbitrarily and spontaneously plucked from the sky, but rather often involves long term socialization, or education. In detail, this means, for example, that even if a diasporic individual begins to accumulate economic capital in their new country of residence, achieves educational success and technical expertise, their language, their accent, the colour of their skin still remain distinguishing factors that shape their power and agency, their positioning in the field and thus ultimately their chances in life. The embodied nature of capital is particularly salient in the politics of migration, race, and diaspora. This also becomes evident in each of the chapters. Essentially to this study, it profoundly impacts upon how they are governed – engaged, managed, disciplined, in- or excluded by other powerful agents in global politics.

Crucially, as I have hypothesized and the following chapters will demonstrate, the way in which diaspora are governed is not the same across the globe. The power relations that diasporas are embedded within and the capital they require to navigate them, are highly field-specific. While the term 'field' is sometimes used loosely to describe a particular global governance issue area (McGrew and Held 2002; Barnett and Duvall 2004), I want to think of it in Bourdieusian terms. Indeed, Bourdieu's concept of the field plays an important role in this

thesis, as it provides an initial way of fracturing the global into smaller, more particular, parts.[25] Rather than thinking about diaspora governance practices as reflecting universals, I will explore how they are embedded within fields. My chapter structure reflects the governance issue areas or fields that I found diaspora governance practices to be primarily embedded within. In each chapter, there is a broadly agreed "object of struggle", that is: international development, transitional justice, or security. Each chapter reveals opposing interests and unequal positions in relation to the object of struggle. Evidently then, the struggle for power (i.e. economic, social or cultural capital) remains the central dynamic of social life for Bourdieu. This centrality of struggle to Bourdieu's practice theory suggests that it lends itself well to the study of the politics of diaspora governance, characterised by entangled modes of power.

In sum, Bourdieu's practice approach promises to provide leverage over my research problem, in a way that other approaches do not. Like other critical approaches, his theory is sensitive to power relations. But - and this is where he distinguishes himself from most political economists and structuralists - power relations are not the same everywhere: they are specific to a 'field'. Finally, positionality in power relations is dependent not just on one form of power (e.g. material or discursive) but rather, he conceptualizes power as deriving from interrelated (read: entangled) forms of power: economic, social, and cultural capital. How different forms of power are interrelated, can be transformed into or exchanged for one another will be explored in each of the chapters.

What are the limits of a Bourdieusian practice approach? There is immense meaning-making value in his concepts, but they cannot explain all of the observations made in my data. First of all, Bourdieu applies his theory primarily to the study of 19th c. French society. The 'fields' that he writes about exist within the French nation-state. That is not to say that his theories cannot be elevated to a non-national level. In fact, many scholars have done a remarkable job of delineating transnational social fields, to explain the power of actors whose sphere of action extends beyond the boundaries of the nation state (e.g. Koinova 2017). The concept of the transnational social field has also been effectively used in migration studies more broadly (Levitt and Schiller 2004; Schiller 2005).

But how does the concept of the field - or even the transnational field - fare in the analysis of diaspora governance practices? During my study of diaspora governance practices, I first identified the primary field in which I found these practices embedded. In line with expectations derived from the diaspora literature, as well as scholarship that distinguishes

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[25] For literature on the need for 'fracturing' in IR, see Huysmans and Pontes Nogueira (2016, 2020)

between different global governance issue areas (McGrew and Held 2002; Barnett and Duvall 2004), I abductively identified three governance fields, into which diaspora governance was fractured: development, security and TJ. And yet, as my ethnographic analysis of diaspora governance practices deepened, as I got closer to my object of study, it became more difficult to identify any singular closed 'field'. Gaps, overlaps, and leakages between fields began to emerge. Evidently there was not always a clearly defined field of 'diaspora governance', rather it became clear that diaspora governance practices were embedded within multiple overlapping fields. Ultimately, in order to further disentangle practices of diaspora governance, I needed to broaden my conceptual toolkit. Confronted with these early insights from my data, I sought ways to complicate Bourdieu's practice theory and his concept of the field, so that it would better deal with the messiness and complex entanglements that my research laid bare.[26]

Beside the 'field', what other analytical tools might be useful to (dis)entangle practices of diaspora governance, defined as a nexus of entanglements? Bueger and Gadinger (2015) have noted that, by conflating practice theory with Bourdieu, we not only overlook other practice approaches, but also miss the very specific contribution that Bourdieu offers. In their 2015 article, Bueger and Gadinger formulate a clear distinction between critical (i.e. Bourdieusian and Foucauldian) and pragmatist approaches within practice theory, arguing that more attention should be paid to the latter. In the pragmatist practice theory-camp they include a range of relational theories that have recently emerged in the study of IR, namely ANT and assemblage theory. In particular, the concept of the assemblage holds some promise for accessing the messy, uncertain and sometimes instable components of practices that a field-approach does not capture. Coined by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the assemblage concept has been used to define emergent phenomena that are understood to be assembled from many heterogeneous component parts. As mentioned in section 1.4. of this thesis, assemblage thinking has been used by geographers and sociologists interested in making sense of the complex interconnections between global and local phenomena. For example, Saskia Sassen (2008) has brilliantly used the assemblage to shed light on the changing relationship between "authority, territory and rights" from medieval times to contemporary globalization processes. But assemblage thinking has recently become popular also in IR theory, as the discipline has opened itself up to spatial, new materialist and relational approaches when making sense of the international or rather global operation of power (Acuto

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[26] See, for example, Loïc Wacquant, "Bourdieu Comes to Town: Pertinence, Principles, Applications," International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 42, no.1 (2018): 90–105; Mike Savage, Laurie Hanquinet, Niall Cunningham, and Johs Hjellbrekke, "Emerging Cultural Capital in the City: Profiling London and Brussels," International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 42, no. 1 (2018): 138–49.

and Curtis 2014). In their study of global security governance Rita Abrahamsen and Michael Williams (2009) define assemblages as "disaggregated structures with both material and immaterial dimensions" that function as a sort of a system of relations between humans and non-humans. Further, Dittmer's work *Diplomatic Materials* (2017, see also 2014) has been ground-breaking for using assemblage theory to understand how material buildings, like the UK Foreign Office, or stacks of paper found inside office buildings can shape global political processes.

In this thesis, I want to think of an *assemblage as that which is revealed when governance practices are (dis)entangled*, namely the heterogenous compound of actors, scales, spaces, modes of power, buildings, networks, infrastructures, and objects that come together to make the practice possible. By thinking about governance as working through an assemblage (of different actors, spaces, objects etc.) we decenter the ontological primacy of the state. As mentioned, this is one of the primary gaps in the literature on diaspora engagement and governance. This does not mean that the state is no longer a powerful agent. What it does mean is that, whether and how the state has power to act, is now an empirical question. Finally, another way in which assemblage thinking holds promise for the untangling of practices of diaspora governance is in how it allows us to think about scale. In assemblage thinking, we assume a 'flat ontology', meaning that a priori 'there is no such thing as micro, macro, local or global'. Rather, these ideas are produced and investigated empirically. This is a key assumption for my study of diaspora governance practices, which is explicitly interested in 'scale-making'. It will show precisely how the global and local become entangled, for example, how local ideas about the agency of diaspora in Washington DC-based policy-making circles come to be considered as universal.

In sum, I propose to (dis)entangle practices with the help of 'thinking tools' from both the Bourdieusian and the pragmatist practice theoretical tradition. On the one hand, a Bourdieusian approach is interesting for the study of diaspora governance practices because it centers the operation of power, i.e. as embodied capital inside a field. On the other hand, the assemblage concept is useful for complicating the notion of discrete fields of power, by allowing us to think about how networks, objects, spaces, and buildings can provide opportunities for fields to overlap, and thus for actors and ideas to transcend or move between scales. Ultimately, both concepts are useful and needed to make sense of the global-local entanglement that characterise the politics of diaspora governance. The following section will now discuss how a theoretical conceptualization of a diaspora governance practice as a nexus of entanglement can be made actionable.

2.2.   How to Know a Practice

While there exists much theorizing around why practice-theory can enrich IR, fewer of these studies actually provide a methodological framework or toolbox that can be transported to the field. One of the key questions that shaped my research design was: how would I know a practice when I saw one? Ultimately, anything can be a practice. After all, a committed practice approach suggest that reality is practices-all-the-way-down. Importantly, this means that practices can be studied at multiple scales, from the individual person, where they might constitute a handshake or a wink (Geertz 2008), or, at a more collective level, in the form of diplomatic practices (Neumann 2002) or discourses and norms (Holzscheiter 2014). How, and importantly when should I make this decision? Perhaps one of the most intellectually challenging aspects of this study has been to think across and between levels of analysis. This tension between the scope of my study and the micro-lens offered by ethnographic methods followed me throughout my research. This dilemma echoes what has been called the 'hermeneutic circle' (Montsion 2018: 7):

> As Geertz explains, his use of the hermeneutic circle may start from an inductive strategy of describing real-life events and encounters. However, this does not mean that ethnography is purely an inductive method, as it involves an ongoing engagement with theoretical tools both to accurately describe social facts and to offer some explanations.

Ultimately this means that one uses already existing concepts whilst remaining 'in conversation with the empirical case'. This process can also be described as 'abductive theorising'. Bourdieu advocates for abductive theorizing (in Gary 2010). Abduction refers to theorizing that occurs *near the ground*, making it different from fully grounded theory, as well as induction and deduction. In my case, I would be entering the field not with a blank slate but with some knowledge of what I might encounter in it. For me, the importance lay with avoiding state-centrism and highly deductive theorising. I wanted to 'keep a fresh perspective' and see beyond reified categories, whilst remaining pragmatic and 'burdened' by some background knowledge. For example, both Ragazzi's (2017) and Glasius's (2019) work were extremely important sources of background information on what kind of practices to look out for in the field, how to operationalize practices and also how to practically conduct 'practice-based analysis of

global politics'. But, where Ragazzi and Glasius identified governance 'practices' as the outcome of their respective analyses, for me practices would be the starting point for further abductive analysis.

Upon entering the field, I thus expected to find indicators for the 'practices of diaspora governance' that are centered in this study. In my introductory chapter, I defined practices of diaspora governance as follows: "Practices of diaspora governance encompass the discourses, strategies and policies that various global political actors employ in order to 'manage' diaspora populations, and these practices may simultaneously 'include' and 'exclude' diasporas from (global) politics." Consequently, even before entering my field, I began to think about diaspora governance practices in dialogue with the literature on diasporas in IR (and migration studies more broadly). Based on empirical insights generated in the literature on state-diaspora relations and diaspora governance I expected to find the following range of diaspora governance practices during my fieldwork:

Literature source	Governance Practice
Diaspora engagement	Extraterritorial voting
	Diaspora citizenship & pension schemes
	Speeches and discourses embracing diaspora
	National diaspora events
	Diplomatic services and integration support
Development	Volunteering programmes
	Skills transfer schemes
	Knowledge exchange programmes
	Diaspora return programmes
Remittances	Taxes
	Apps facilitating remittance transfer
	Micro-banking schemes
	Solicitations of philanthropy
Extraterritorial authoritarianism	Surveillance
	Intimidation (also of relatives at home)

	Withdrawal of citizenship and rights
	expulsion
Transitional justice	Truth Commissions and Criminal Tribunals
	Practices governing memorialization and commemoration

Table 2.1. Practices of diaspora governance identified in the diaspora literature

In her 2010 study, Brand identified a range of practices such as extraterritorial voting, diaspora citizenship and pension schemes (Itzigsohn 2000; Gamlen et al. 2013). Diaspora governance practices may also encompass speeches and discourse (Boccagni 2014), national diaspora events (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2001, 2003), diplomatic services and help with integration (Gonzales Gutierrez 1997; Délano Alonso 2011, 2018). Practices for remittance regulation could also act as indicators for diaspora governance practices. Here we might find mechanisms (e.g. phone apps or national policies) that facilitate or tax remittance flows (de Haas 2006, 2010; Iskander 2011), or events soliciting philanthropic investments. In the development literature I had come across volunteering and diaspora return programmes (Darieva 2011, 2017), or skills transfer schemes (Newland and Patrick 2004; Kuznetsov 2006; Kuznetsov and Sabel 2006). From the literature on diaspora constraints and extraterritorial authoritarianism I was familiarised with another set of diaspora governance practices, including diaspora intimidation, surveillance (Glasius 2019; Moss 2016, 2018a, 2018b; Chaudhary and Moss 2019), expulsion or the withdrawal of citizenship and rights (Brand 2010). From recent literature on diasporas and TJ (Rimmer 2010; Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2013, 2016; Haider 2014; Baser 2017; Stokke and Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2019; Karabegovic 2018; Koinova and Karabegovic 2017, 2019; Orjuela 2018), I was aware that diaspora governance practices, i.e. practices through which diaspora are governed, may also include formal engagement of diasporas in Truth Commissions and Criminal Tribunals (Young and Park 2009; Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011), the governance and regulation of diaspora commemoration and memorialization (Orjuela 2018; Karabegovic 2018).

But beyond the immediate diaspora engagement literature I cast my net more widely, reading about governance practices that were not explicitly (in their stated intent) aimed at diaspora populations. Such practices included mechanisms that govern transnationalism in its various forms, for example, criminalization through proscription of certain organisations (Sentas 2010; Nadarajah 2018), or the anti-narcotics regime, policing of suspect communities (Sentas 2015, 2016), or border management practices (Huysmans 2000). It also includes

practices aimed at managing protests and event policing, for example at commemorations and other large events.

Literature source	Governance Practice
Security and migration	Proscription regime Anti-narcotics regime Policing CT and CVE (e.g. Prevent Policy) Designation as 'suspect community' Border management regime
Global Governance	Policy consultations Conferences and events Multi-stakeholder fora Networking groups Bureaucratic practices (accreditation regime, charitable status regulation) Capacity building

Table 2.2. Practices of diaspora governance identified in the broader IR literature

As I was interested in the practices of diaspora governance beyond the sending state, I also considered a broader category of practices in global governance that either implicitly or explicitly 'engage' or govern diaspora behaviour/mobilization. Pouliot and Thérien's study of Global Governance practices (2018) became a useful guide for what level of practices I was primarily interested in, e.g. the holding of conferences, and the accrediting of NGOs. Indeed, some of these practices were precisely what I found to be structuring the diaspora governance field. Thus, I included policy consultations, conferences and multi-stakeholder fora, (see Pouliot and Thérien 2018), but also bureaucratic practices such as the ECOSOC's accreditation regime, and guidelines for reaching charitable status, as central to governing and disciplining diaspora behaviour. What made this abductive theorizing and not theory testing, was that I did not create an exhaustive list of practices that I expected to find, but rather used the existing literature as guidance on what level of analysis to look for 'practices'. The above list was a list

of *potential practice* indicators to look for in the field, with no guarantee that these practices actually played a role in the governance of the Tamil diaspora. Primarily, this phase of the abductive research design preceded my ethnographic fieldwork, however, it continued to proceed iteratively as I gleaner further insights on my case, which I will turn to discuss now.

2.3.   Case Study: The Global Tamil Diaspora

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has received considerable attention from scholars in social science, ranging from Migration and Diaspora Studies (e.g. Sriskandarajah 2005; Schneider 2013), to Comparative Politics (e.g. Fuglerud 1999, 2001; Fair 2005) and International Relations (e.g. Wayland 2004; Nadarajah and Sriskandarajah 2005; Laffey and Nadarajah 2012), with a particular interest coming from scholars of peace and conflict and social movement studies (e.g. Orjuela 2003, 2008, 2011, 2017, 2018; Amarasingam 2015; Walton 2015; Guyot 2018). Reasons for the large amount of research that has been conducted on the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora are manifold; on the one hand it relates to its scale and patterns of dispersal, on the other hand, it's mobilization trajectory. I will elaborate on these in tun.

But first, what is the 'Tamil' diaspora? As discussed in earlier on in this chapter, we have to be careful not to take the diaspora category for granted. This perhaps holds especially true for a transnational community or group that one the one hand is held together 'like glue' by a collective memory of trauma (Orjuela 2019), but also does not map neatly on to a nation-state, which is the root of the collective trauma in the first place. The idea of a 'Tamil diaspora' must therefore be problematized, especially as it relates to the alternative (and only partly overlapping) category of the Sri Lankan diaspora and this problematization will be an ongoing theme throughout this thesis. The 'Tamil'-diaspora has been made (and unmade) historically and in specific relations with Tamils residing in the homeland, the homeland itself, the Sri Lankan state, the Singhalese diaspora, the British (or other host-) state, and importantly in relation/entanglement with the global/international domains of governance that this thesis investigates.

While I understand the Tamil diaspora as constructed and not as a primordially existing and definitively boundaried group, I use the notion of a Tamil diaspora community as a starting point to further investigate the boundaries around this constructed community and, most importantly, the politics of its boundary maintenance. After all, Soekelfeld (2006) writes that "(t)he reference to an imagination of identity does not presuppose that specific ideas of

identity are actually shared within the community. To the contrary, such ideas may well be bitterly disputed. Yet the dispute about the precise formulation of an identity affirms the idea that there is a common identity, however it is to be understood." Thus the fact that there is a debate around the use or existence of a Tamil vs. a Sri Lankan diaspora affirms that there is a 'common identity', although actors may take different positions within its construction. With this in mind, let me gather what is known about the imagined community of diaspora Tamils living across the globe.

Today, there are approximately 887,000 - 1 million Sri Lankan Tamils living in the global diaspora, the majority of which reside in countries of the Global North, such as Canada, the UK, Australia, Norway, Germany, France, the USA, and Switzerland (Wickramasinghe 2006). This is compared to fewer than 3 million Tamils living in Sri Lanka today.[27] But large numbers of Sri Lankan Tamils can also be found in neighbouring countries, primarily India, Malaysia and Singapore. Accordingly, the global Tamil Diaspora today is extremely diverse, in terms of class, religion, education, employment, integration, and, crucially, in the ways in which it has mobilized. By mobilization I refer to the ways in which groups organise and engage in collective action around political, social or economic issues for various ends. Diaspora organise where they live but may target both domestic host country institutions or mobilize transnationally towards the host country (or in the international realm) e.g. to implement political change in the homeland, to support development efforts, or lobby host country governments.

In order to better understand the case of the global Tamil diaspora - it's patterns of organisation and transnational mobilization and how this action has been encouraged or curtailed – I will outline the different phases of emigration from Sri Lanka that have produced this diaspora. Different push/pull factors lead to different emigrant and subsequently immigrant populations (ethnicity, religion, age, political ideology, class, caste etc.). We have to pay attention to all of these intersections and heterogeneities in our analysis.

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[27] The last formal census was conducted in 2012.

2.3.1. A history of dispersion and settlement

"We are here because you were there" – Ambalavaner Sivanandan

That the aphorism that most aptly captures the phenomenon of post-colonial migration in the 20th and 21st century, was originally uttered by a Ceylonese Tamil,[28] is symbolic to say the least. The dispersion and settlement of Sri Lankan Tamils across the globe has a history that long predates the recent civil war period. After the Portuguese arrived in Sri Lanka in the early 16th century, Sri Lanka remained under colonial rule for over 400 years. Portuguese (1505-1658), Dutch (1658-1796), and British (1796-1948) (Amarasingam 2015). Needless to say, that colonial rule significantly shaped the dispersal of Tamils across the world, as well as post-colonial political dynamics.

Tamils first emigrated from Sri Lanka and settled in the West during the British colonial period. However, unlike the majority of colonial subjects from the Indian subcontinent, who were sent in large numbers to other parts of the British empire as indentured labourers (Emmer 1986; Vertovec 1995), many Sri Lankan Tamils were trained as colonial administrators.[29] In these roles they were also sent to other parts of the British empire, e.g. Singapore, Malaysia, where there still exist large Tamil diaspora populations today. Evidently, the colonial period was - and still is - significant in shaping the dispersal and settlement patterns of Sri Lankan Tamils. Indeed, in 1833, it was the British colonists that unified the island politically, which lay the foundations for ethnic conflict (Gunasingam 2014: 24). At the same time, the British exacerbated divisions between Singhalese and Tamils by singling out Tamils for higher administrative posts throughout their Indian Ocean empire, an indicator of the divide and rule governance strategy that characterized the British empire and will be explored in chapter 5.

The crumbling of the British empire set in motion large scale human mobilities. Many South Asians began to migrate to Britain and other European nations in need of labour to support post WWI reconstruction efforts. Cowley-Santhiakumar has outlined how the first phase of large-scale Tamil dispersion consisted of economic migrants who start working and studying in Western countries, especially those that were part of the Commonwealth. However,

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[28] Sivanandan helped to found the British Institute of Race Relations (2008, 2019) and was a prolific writer on race relations in the UK until his recent death in 2018.
[29] They exploited economic and cultural/religious conditions of Tamils in Jaffna, i.e. few economic prospects other than fishing and an expectation of large dowries and rigid caste structure (Gunasingam 2014).

Tamils were comparatively high skilled (Cowley-Santhiakumar 2008), which had an impact on their ability to integrate and mobilize. On the flip side, events in Sri Lanka also had an impact on the dispersal and settlement patterns of Tamil emigrants. When the British granted independence to Ceylon in 1948, "they failed to hand over to the Tamils their homelands" (Gunasingam 2014: 58), which meant that the newly sovereign country was handed over to a historically disempowered Singhalese majority, a move enshrined in the Soulbury commission. One of the first efforts of the new Singhalese administration was to revoke the citizenship status of Indian Tamils, who lived in large numbers in the mountains in the South of the island and had been historically disenfranchised.[30]

Dispersal patterns then shifted significantly in the 1970s, as Tamils start fleeing Sri Lanka because of rising ethnic tensions and an increasingly oppressive home state. While, a few years earlier in 1952 the Official Language Act made Singhala the single official language in Sri Lanka, the new constitution passed in 1972, reaffirmed Singhala as the official language, declared Sri Lanka officially a 'unitary state' and gave Buddhism a 'foremost place' (Amarasingam 2015: 23). Perhaps the single most significant act of the government against the Tamils, were changes to university admission policy passed in 1974. What became known as "Standardization" – a quota system, which meant that Tamils had to score higher on admissions exams, and which consequently caused a huge drop in the number of Tamils admitted to Sri Lankan universities and closed off access to the civil service - was one of the key drivers of rising Tamil militancy and emigration (Amarasingham 2015). During this phase of dispersal, triggered by an increasingly hostile home country context, the main people to leave Sri Lanka were Tamil students who sought to escape the discriminatory University admission policies, as well as political elites and intelligentsia. In terms of settlement dynamics, Cowley-Santhiakumar has argued that these early emigrants were highly educated and so easily integrated into Western host counties, but there were now more rigid ethnic divisions and a staunchly Tamil identity present amongst this group (2008: 34). Interestingly, Amarasingam (2015: 26) writes:

> One of the most famous Tamil militant groups at the time was found not in Sri Lanka but in London. Founded in 1975 by student activist Elayathambi

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[30] Some of my contemporary Tamil interlocutors relayed to me that the following years of Singhalese oppression of the Tamil minority, which began at this time, had to be understood as payback for colonial favouritism (fieldnotes, Toronto Summer 2017).

Ratnasabapathy, the Eelam Revolutionary Organiuation of Students organized protests in London and held demonstrations during cricket matches in Manchester – perhaps the earliest instances of Tamil diaspora mobilization.

While a politically engaged diaspora began to form, interethnic relations in Sri Lanka continued to rapidly deteriorate. In 1979 the Sri Lankan government passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which criminalized most Tamil group activity and gave law enforcement sweeping rights to "arrest and question 'suspected terrorists' without judicial oversight." (ibid. 30). Tensions came to a head in the early 80s, with the burning of Jaffna library. According to Amarasingam, the 1981 library burning has become "etched in the mind of many Tamils in the diaspora as an example of a long-running 'cultural genocide' by the Singhalese majority against the Tamil community" (Amarasingam 2015: 31). An attack by Tamil militants on Singhalese soldiers in July 1983, sparked anti-Tamil riots, which ultimately resulted in the burning of thousands of businesses and killings of Tamils. Gunasingam writes that "more than 100 000 Tamils (were) rendered refugees overnight", and "more than 40 000 Tamils crossed the seas and took shelter in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the world" (2014: 33)

The violence generated by the civil conflict between 1983 to 2009, initiated a dramatic shift in Tamil migration and settlement patterns. It saw the largest increase in emigration to date. Importantly, as the situation in Sri Lanka became more dire, even less well-off people began to leave. Elite political and economic migrants were gradually outnumbered by refugees. Many of them had already witnessed crimes and atrocities committed against their relatives, which often made them more prone to political activism (Fuglerud 1999). But dispersal and settlement (and ultimately mobilization) patterns were not just shaped the changing home country context that migrants left behind. Immigration and integration regimes of the countries to which Tamils were fleeing also played a significant role. For example, in the 1980s, under Thatcher, the UK immigration regime became more restrictive (as will be elaborated in chapter 5) and so more and more Tamils preferred to settle in Canada, a country which had implemented it's multiculturalism policy in the early 1970s, followed by a liberal asylum policy (as will be elaborated in chapter 3).[31] Meanwhile, those with the least amount of choice in the matter – poor, and often lesser educated refugees – found themselves in non-English-speaking European countries such as Switzerland (more on this in chapter 4), Germany and France.

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[31] Cf. Australia, which went from 'white only policy' up until 1970s to a quote system selecting only highly educated Tamils), restrictions of refugee intake and deportations.

2.3.2. A history of entangled politics

Since the colonial period, Tamil diaspora politics, including Tamil diaspora relations to the homeland, have been embedded in broader global political dynamics. Meanwhile global politics have also been shaped at times by Tamil diaspora politics. In the following paragraphs, I will lay out the *entangled* history of global Tamil diaspora politics.

How has the Tamil diasporas' relationship to its homeland changed over time? The civil war (and its aftermath) has defined this mobilization-governance relationship for the last 30 years. But it did not begin then. Historically, most transnational Tamil diaspora mobilization occurred through so-called 'homeland' or 'home village associations'. These associations maintained, and continue to maintain, translocal (Koinova and Karabegovic 2017) linkages between diaspora Tamils and the homeland context. Many of these were founded by emigrants who left Sri Lanka in search of educational and economic opportunity after independence. Especially, in the UK such 'old student associations' were often run by elite groups of alumni, who targeted their financial and in-kind remittances to home village associations and their extended family (Guribye and Tharmalingam 2017). But there were also already more contentious forms of collective mobilization among the growing diaspora. As ethnic tensions in Sri Lanka exacerbated and political dissidents had to flee the country, these started to engage in political organizing and human rights advocacy from afar (as will be explored at length in chapter 4). In the countries in which they settled; Tamils began to form organisations through which they supported the resistance against Sri Lankan state oppression. This period was thus crucial in the 'making of the Tamil diaspora', in opposition to, rather than mirroring a Sri Lankan national identity.

But transnational mobilization of the Tamil diaspora really took off during the civil war. As has been highlighted in much of the literature (e.g. Wayland 2004; Chalk 2008) the Tamil diaspora played a prominent role in the civil conflict that was fought in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009 between the country's government and Tamil separatists. After decades of oppression, the goal was for the predominantly Tamil Northern and Eastern provinces to partition from the majority Sinhala Sri Lankan state, while the government was set on preserving the unity and integrity of the entire island. By the 1990s, the Tamil resistance was led by the LTTE who had subsumed or pushed out any other organisations (such as the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam or PLOTE). Although at first the LTTE "criticised and condemned Tamils who left the country", they gradually recognised that the emerging Tamil diaspora would be a crucial

resource in the war. Soon diaspora Tamil Coordinating Committees (TCC) were set up across the globe (Guribye and Tharmalingam 2017), which transferred funds from the diaspora to the homeland. Throughout the war it was widely assumed that the LTTE was almost entirely funded by Tamil diaspora remittances channelled through the TCCs in host countries such as Canada, the UK, Switzerland and Germany to Sri Lanka to buy weapons and to pay for the maintenance of the insurgent army. Much has been written – and more speculated – about the motivation of Tamils for supporting the LTTE. While some highlight the coercive and even violent money solicitation practices of the LTTE (Becker 2006), such as the active door knocking practices at homes and Tamil places of business. Others have highlighted the "moral obligation towards the LTTE" felt by diaspora members who were not directly fighting the war (Amarasingam 2015; Guribye and Tharmalingam 2017). Likely, it was a mixture of both.

Despite mixed motivations and internal heterogeneity, the Tamil diaspora was quickly classed as a war-mongering diaspora (Chalk 2008; Becker 2006). Of course, the international community was also generally sympathetic to the Sri Lankan government[6] and supported their mission of upholding a Westphalian order of consolidated and sovereign nation states. Sri Lankan state fragility, brought about by Tamil demands for secession, were seen as a threat to international stability and was therefore quickly constructed as a security issue of global concern. As I explain in chapter 5, this construction of the Tamil diaspora as a global security threat followed from a confluence of factors. For example, the Sri Lankan state increasingly began framing the Tamil insurgents as terrorists, which struck a chord with an international community increasingly concerned with global criminal and terrorist networks (see chapter 5), but also an emerging migration-security nexus (Faist 2008; Pirkkalainen and Abdile 2009). And so, by the late 1990s, the Tamil diaspora was seen as a problem not just for the home state. The LTTE was classed as a terrorist organization and blacklisted by several countries and IOs including the EU, France, Germany and the UK. At a global level, the years following the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, saw the unfolding and consolidation of a Global War on Terror[7] (GWOT). Interestingly, while between the years of 2002-2004 a ceasefire created a bit of room for diaspora to engage in Sri Lanka - quite a few actors return to the homeland to engage in the peace process – post 9/11 many Western countries shift their gaze inward in an attempt to combat "home-grown terrorism". This involved paying increased attention to migrants, who could potentially lash out against their host states or be plotting to destabilize their respective homelands. This shift in global security dynamics had consequences for how Tamils across the world could engage with homeland politics, but also constrained their ability for collective action in their new countries of residence. Even diaspora

organisations, which could not be directly linked to the LTTE, but supported the cause of Tamil national self-determination, were subject to scrutiny and international counterinsurgency policies and discourses that were extremely restrictive and oppressive in nature. When the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami destroyed the lives and livelihood of many Tamils living in the already war-ravaged North and East of Sri Lanka, proscription hindered many organisations from offering humanitarian relief.[32] By then the ceasefire had also broken down and the most violent stage of the war began. Now, even those factions of the Tamil diaspora who had seen an opening for peace and development initiatives fled the country. LTTE struggles to retain its support, also due to a split in the organisation (Ganguly 2004; Höglund 2005) and increases in violence. Moderate members of the diaspora disengaged as a result.[33]

In May 2009, the government of Sri Lanka won the war by defeating the LTTE, killing all of its leadership. This event presented a major turning point, both in terms of Sri Lankan domestic politics, but also for the relationship between the Tamil diaspora and its home- and host state (Brun and van Hear 2012). In the months leading up to the end of the civil war in May 2009 changes were already occurring in the engagement and representation of Tamils and the Tamil diaspora by some actors in the international community. Severe criticism of the government of Sri Lanka and its war tactics was emerging, and international opinion began shifting towards support for the Tamil fight for freedom, as accusations of a Sri Lankan state-sponsored genocide against the Tamil population began circulating. By 2011, the UN was seemingly engaging in the Tamil struggle for justice by sending a Panel of Experts on Accountability to Sri Lanka to investigate the possibility of war crimes committed by the GOSL in the final stages of the civil war. Western politicians were no longer so outspoken in their critique of Tamil diaspora mobilization, and were instead increasingly legitimizing Tamil diaspora actors, not least because they were voting constituents. By 2015, where this study commences, there exists a Tamil All Party Parliamentary Group (APPGT) in the UK,[34] which lobbies the British government for Tamil rights, and the UK-based INGO International Alert is cooperating with its office in Sri Lanka to implement programmes which foster the engagement of the Tamil diaspora in post-conflict peacebuilding. Even within Sri Lanka there were now some voices that saw the potential of the Tamil diaspora for fostering positive change in the country, in the form of development and reconciliation. Interestingly, however, while some Tamils in some host-country settings were increasingly welcomed into liberal governance

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[32] Tamil charities 'fail to monitor funds', 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/6669165.stm
[33] Interview with Tamil-Canadian organizer, Toronto, summer 2016.
[34] APPGT website, https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/201104/tamils.htm

circles, often in these same countries the proscription regime has remained unchanged. The Sri Lankan government is nowhere near designing a formal diaspora engagement strategy that incorporates all Tamils.[35]

In sum, the preceding section has illustrated that the Tamil diaspora is globally dispersed, and how and why this dispersion has come about. It has also shown that the global Tamil diaspora has long been highly (politically, socially and economically) organised, from the period before and during the civil war, until today. Finally, the section has begun to lay out the ways in which Tamil diaspora politics has been embedded in global power relations, which, in turn, have resulted in formal diaspora regulation, engagement and disciplining by various governance actors, including former colonial powers, the home and host-state. Beside such broadly unifying factors, the preceding section has also shown that the Tamil diaspora is internally extremely heterogeneous. For example, the assumption that the Tamil diaspora is entirely 'conflict generated' is only partly true. A closer historical examination of emigration patterns during the colonial period, can explain some of this heterogeneity. Similarly, different contexts of immigration and settlement also have historically impacted on patterns of organisation and transnational mobilization. For example, in countries like the UK and Canada, where English is spoken as a first language, Tamils tend to be better 'integrated' and as a consequence pursue different avenues for mobilization than in countries where language barriers exist. The Tamil diaspora has been framed as both a threat to Sri Lankan state unity and reconciliation, an economic opportunity, and a key stakeholder in the Sri Lanka peacebuilding process. What we know about the case so far suggests that there is complexity and variation in the political struggles that inform governance practices, which range from engagement in development consultations on the one hand, to proscription on the other.

Undoubtedly, the Tamil diaspora case throws up questions about diaspora governance that challenge existing scholarly accounts on 'diaspora engagement', which primarily center the governance and engagement practices of the emigration state. But neither does this case fully resemble those cases in the literature on extraterritorial authoritarianism. After all, Sri Lanka was not officially an authoritarian state at the time of my research, and there was evidence of liberal democratic 'engagement' practices taking place.[36] Nevertheless, strained

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[35] By autumn 2020, when this study was finalized, the relationship between the Sri Lankan state and the Tamil diaspora had even further deteriorated as the political and safety situation in Sri Lanka deteriorated for Tamils (and Muslims) after the 2019 Easter Bombings and the elections in 2019 that reinstated the Rajapaksa family into power.

[36] In December 2015, I attended an event in Colombo, Sri Lanka organized by International Alert on "Engaging with Overseas Sri Lankans", attended also by members of the GOSL.

relations with the home state - and de facto statelessness - has meant that Tamil activism has been directed at host-state and global governance spaces. The case therefore challenges the triadic model devised by Sheffer (1986), which situates diaspora politics in a triadic "diaspora – host-state – home state" relationship (see also Adamson 2019). Thus, at first glance, and in light of prominent state-centric or universalist explanations, Tamil diaspora engagement presents an unusual case, even in the engagement of conflict generated diasporas. However, I suggest that, in fact, the Tamil case and Tamil diaspora governance reflects the complexity of global politics in action. Indeed, I consider it a key case for my study about diaspora governance under conditions of globalization. Rather than see the Tamil diaspora case as a problem, any meaningful exploration of the politics of Tamil diaspora governance has to break with common assumptions both in diaspora and governance research. This suggests the need for a decentered approach to studying the governance of this mobilization. Ultimately, building on Walton and Goodhand's exploration of *Tangled Politics of Postwar Justice in Sri Lanka* (2017), I suggest that the Tamil diaspora case in general, presents a case of 'entangled politics'. The Tamil diaspora is therefore a key case for examining entanglements in global politics more broadly. This dissertation uses the practices through which the Tamil diaspora is governed as a lens for looking more closely at how specific governance configurations emerge across a multiplicity of sites in global politics.

In sum, the above paragraphs demonstrate that governance of the Tamil diaspora is complex and particularistic, creating tensions with existing explanations for the emergence and politics of diaspora governance practices. However, rather than think of it as an outlier and thus as not representative or generalizable, the case might, in fact, reveal some interesting interplay of global and local dynamics. This lack of immediate generalizability perhaps makes it representative of the messiness and complexity of diaspora governance in general. What methodological considerations does this tension between the particularly complex Tamil diaspora case and the assumed universality of diaspora governance bring with it? What kind of methodological choices did I make before I started to collect data on the practices through which the Tamil diaspora was governed? The next section will explore the methodological decisions I had to make in order to be able to empirically study the politics of Tamil diaspora governance, following an abductive research approach. The next section will outline my 'ethnography of entanglements' approach. I will then discuss the selection of my field sites, before outlining my data collection and fieldwork, as well as limitations and challenges encountered in the field research. Finally, I will discuss my process of data analysis which proceeded in an iterative manner.

2.4.   An Ethnography of Entanglements

While the above section has discussed the hard to pin down-nature of practices of diaspora governance - the 'doings and sayings' that this thesis seeks to untangle, and subsequently introduced the case study, this section will now illustrate how I went about generating data about the Tamil diaspora case, through an 'ethnography of entanglements' approach.[37] My data collection and analysis broadly followed a mixed-method research design, with ethnography as the main methodology, supplemented by geographical, interview, and online archival methods. This section will briefly discuss why I chose ethnography as my main methodology to 'access practices', and then show the ways in which a traditional ethnographic approach (or what is understood in IR as traditional ethnography) must be complicated in this study (both methodologically and conceptually), considering my object of research.

Ethnography as a methodology holds the promise of making the familiar seem strange and the strange seem familiar, problematizing what might seem common-sensical, thus requiring constant reflexivity on the part of the ethnographer. The benefit of conducting ethnography is that it creates spaces where thick description (Geertz 1973) can take place; where, through cultural immersion, the social scientist can build up cultural competence in order to increase her ability to understand the meaning of social and political actions. Ethnographic studies in IR are rapidly increasing. Aradau and Huysmans have argued that the discipline underwent an 'ethnographic turn' in the 1990s and that "ethnography is deployed in IR as a methodological counter-weight to mainstream quantitative methodological approaches in the field" (2014, 2019). "The appeal of ethnography", suggests Montsion, "is that it complements discursive analyses, moves beyond the mainstream perspectives of conventional actors such as states and international organisations, and sheds new light on under-explored knowledge, linkages and understandings of world politics" (Montsion 2018). Ethnographies can thus help us see things that we do not usually see when we study the 'international'. Through ethnography it is said that we may get to grips with 'micro-politics' and the 'everyday' of international order making. By eschewing positivist reductive theorising, it allows us to problematise state centrism and offers a way of understanding complexity and nuances of complex global political phenomena. But what is the exact benefit of an ethnographic study of diaspora engagement practices?

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[37] Not to be confused with "entangled ethnography", which describes a participatory research model (Ginsburg and Rapp 2013).

One of the primary goals of this thesis is to make the state, regarded in IR as 'the familiar', seem strange, and instead familiarizing IR with practices of diaspora governance. Like other scholarship which has embraced the practice turn in IR, the objective of my study is to find meaning not just in written policy statements about diaspora engagement but also in the non-linguistic, embodied, site-specific and culturally contingent practices of actors who play a part in the engagement of the global Tamil diaspora. Through incorporating the anthropological tradition of conducting (or writing, see Clifford 2010) ethnography into my methodological tool kit, I planned to eschew state centrism and methodological nationalism and instead generate data about the micro-politics of diaspora practices 'from below', in a way that was sensitive to embodied practices, and material and spatial embeddedness.

From old school anthropologists we know that to study practices we need to do ethnography and immerse ourselves for long periods of time in a field. This is the understanding of ethnography that is sometime espoused in IR. But anthropology and sociology have since moved on from this. Of course, if ethnographic methodology is conflated with the practice of long-term immersion and micro-level participant observation, this essentially makes 'pure ethnography' of international or global (non-local) phenomena impossible to do. Conversely, some have suggested that the practice turn has been used as a 'justification for doing ethnography' in IR. What is meant by this? Scholars like Wanda Vrasti have cautioned against the use of ethnography in IR, because the label is too liberally applied. In 2008 she lays out some of her concerns about the rapid and enthusiastic uptake of ethnography in the study of IR. Here she argues that ethnography should not be considered a chimera for applying IR theory in the field. She coins the phrase "ethno-empiricism" to criticize IR scholars that have reduced ethnography to "a series of methodological choices (…) designed to gather empirical data according to a linear spatio-temporal logic of home-field-home", so that it essentially remains entirely positivist. At the same time, she also problematizes what she calls "ethnografeel", a milestone of the mid-century ethnographic turn in anthropology, which has often sacrificed fieldwork experiences to literary stylization. I am drawn to her conceptualization of 'ethnographilia', which she sees as the missing methodological link in IR. In this camp she sees scholars such as Pouliot or Neumann that have attempted to balance the agency-structure divide and who seek a stable middle ground between rationalist and more critical approaches. Yet, she criticises that even these innovative scholars remain bounded by theoretical and disciplinary boundaries "fearful of corrupting the scientific project". For this take she has been criticised as 'gatekeeper' of ethnographic methodology, resembling somewhat the earlier purist in the discipline of Anthropology. The debate is fierce with neither side willing to relent. Ultimately,

I agree with Vrasti, that "ethnography is a political choice, not just a matter of style, technical skill, or aesthetic choice". But the key lies perhaps in understanding that there is a way of combining political choice and the advancement of the scientific project. Indeed, scholars of the critical realist tradition, many of whom employ ethnographic methods, have argued that in order to advance scholarship that leads to human flourishing, we should come at a problem from various angles, with mixed methods (Zachariadis et al. 2010). They suggest, not to be dogmatic about 'pure ethnography', but rather reflexive about the fact that every epistemological choice has political consequences. While we can go in circles discussing the value and pitfalls of ethnography, ultimately, we must bring this discussion to bear on empirical research.

How did my abductive approach inform how I designed and conducted this ethnography? The centering of practices of diaspora governance, whereby background knowledge on diaspora and governance act as 'thinking tools', focuses and so delimits my ethnographic field of vision. As I have outlined above, my particular object of study (of global/local entanglements) required a particular kind of ethnographic approach. As I planned to investigate multiple sites, I chose first to conduct a multi-sited ethnography. While the conduct of institutional ethnographies is gaining ground in International Relations (see Autesserre 2010), multi-sited ethnographies have so far been relegated to the disciple of social anthropology (Marcus 1995, 1998; Engle Merry 2006). And yet I contend that such an approach would be exceptionally well suited to the study of diasporas and diaspora engagement in IR, as it allows me to trace transnationally occurring phenomena over time and across space, and to overcome the problem of "placelessness" or deterritorialisation, which has been lamented in the study of diaspora (Basch et al. 2005). Multi-sited ethnographies have been often charged with a lack of depth. However, this is not an obstacle that is impossible to overcome. As Falzon has argued (2009: 9) the "thickness" of thick description must not be conflated with temporal longitude. Rather, thickness, as cultural insight and understanding, can be produced also through space; through following a phenomenon or a practice that spans across multiple locales. After all, geographic mobility is quintessential to the lives of almost all of my research interlocutors. Further, the 'everyday' looks a little different when you study governance practices than what we are used to from traditional anthropological studies. 'Hanging out' for long periods of time becomes less possible and practical. Long-term immersion in one ethnographic field site has always been more common in political science than in IR. After all, the 'international' or 'the global' are not clearly defined or delineated spaces. As a result, ethnography in IR has always been less bounded (more about following 'connective flows and

networks of ideas and people', Kuus in Montsion 2018, 4) and joined up with other methods. I define ethnography as always containing within it multiple methodologies. Furthermore, if 'entanglements' between global and local are what I am interested in, then getting up close and personal with these entanglements in whichever way is practical and possible, before tracing the entangled strands outward, seems justified. In sum, for this thesis I opted for an *Ethnography of Entanglements*. This means that I chose to bring an ethnographic perspective (and multiple data collection methods) to bear on global/local entanglements, i.e. the practices of diaspora governance. These entanglements were situated in multiple sites and also entangled with one another.

What did my field(work)sites look like? As discussed at length in the introduction, the container of my fieldwork was not a single 'state', neither was it an International Institution. It was not static or had a clearly defined boundary. Practices of diaspora governance happen everywhere, hence the field that I hoped to investigate was fragmented, dispersed, and mobile. In this I echo George Marcus, who has suggested that "the global is an emergent dimension of arguing about the connection between sites" (1995). From this follows that research into "the global" must be, by default, partial and non-holistic. The construction of a "field" site lay at the centre of my methodological framework. According to Bueger, "a site is in essence a certain locale, a place composed of practices and material arrangements", for example an organization a unit or a "distinct geographical place hosting a dense ensemble of practices", which essentially transcend levels and scales of the social (2014: 393). However, I would also like to expand my conceptualisation of the site, to include what Bueger calls "crises and controversies", or processes and critical junctures, which might not be physically confined to one geographical space (2014: 395), but which nevertheless have the capacity to reorder discourse and redistribute power (in the form of capital). As discussed, ethnographies lend themselves to inductive or grounded theorizing, assuming that the researcher has no or little prior existing knowledge about his chosen field. Meanwhile, multi-sited ethnography, according to George Marcus, can never be truly inductive because it requires one to "start with some prior view of a system and provide an ethnographic account of it, by showing forms of local life that the system encompasses" (in Montsion 2018: 15). In my case, this "prior view" was the knowledge about what units of analysis I was looking for (practices of diaspora governance) and where I might find them.

I set out to generate detailed and in-depth knowledge about a number of globally interconnected sites, where I assumed that the production and contestation of ideas and policies about the Tamil diaspora was taking place. From background research, I knew that Toronto,

Geneva and London were sites where I would most likely be able to encounter practices that were governing Tamil diaspora members. I selected these three cities as places where the politics of Tamil diaspora governance were likely to reveal themselves to me. To a degree, I also anticipated that 'governance' in these three sites would unfold differently, thus offering the opportunity to compare diaspora governance practices across sites.

I chose Toronto as a key site for my fieldwork because it is home to the largest Tamil diaspora population in the world. Tamils is Toronto are in general highly educated and many diaspora members have proven highly socially mobile, with some making it into political office. The particular demographic make-up of this Tamil population also mean that it is particularly mobilized, evidenced by the fact that in 2009 in witnessed the largest Tamil demonstrations against the human rights violations happening in Sri Lanka. But the Tamil diaspora in Toronto is not just politically mobilized. Prior to embarking on fieldwork, I found evidence of a growing networking of Tamil organisations working together with Canadian institutions on homeland development and peacebuilding initiatives. Perhaps most importantly, Toronto itself is also one of the most diverse cities in the West. It is home to huge numbers of immigrants, with some of the highest educational attainment across the globe. This suggested to me that Toronto was a site where global and local politics met, and therefore that governance of the Tamil diaspora in Toronto was likely to reveal global and local entanglements.

London was chosen as a field site for similar reasons; it has the second largest urban Tamil diaspora population in the world, and also one which is highly mobilized. In comparison to Toronto, British colonial linkages meant that London has a longer history of Tamil diaspora settlement and mobilization. For example, (and as already elaborated above) from the early days of Sri Lankan independence, London was the basis of much radical diaspora activism. Meanwhile, as a former imperial power, the British state has a long history of governing difference, albeit most of it outside its territorial borders. Part of my research was then devoted to uncovering what this meant for contemporary Tamil diaspora governance.

Finally, I chose Geneva as a third field site. In contrast to Canada and the UK, most of the Swiss Tamil diaspora population is made up of fairly recently arrived refugees. Language barriers have lowered educational attainment but high living standards in CH mean that Swiss-Tamils are huge remittance senders. Transnational mobilization of Tamils in CH thus looks slightly differently from what it does in Canada and the UK. However, I chose Geneva as a field site primarily because the city has been a focal point of Tamil diaspora mobilization since the end of the civil war. Furthermore, since 2009 the UNHRC process has become so central to

the Tamil political struggle that - at least 3 times a year - Tamil activists flock to Geneva to mobilize around the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. In fact, by the time I started my fieldwork diasporic Tamils (especially lawyers, activists and law students from the UK and Canada) were resettling to Geneva permanently to be closer to the international political action. Finally, Geneva is a 'global' city as it is home to many of the world's global governance institutions. Beside several UN institutions, 'Geneva Internationale',[38] boasts offices of the WB, WTO, and ILO, all conceivable national embassies, and countless international NGOs. Thus, Geneva, like Toronto and London, would provide an opportunity to study diaspora governance practices in action, in a way that could illuminate global and local entanglements.[39]

Ultimately, I chose Toronto, Geneva and London as sites where I expected that the 'global politics' of Tamil diaspora governance would be revealed. By this I mean struggles that go beyond the diaspora-homeland relationship, for example, around global development norms, or, related to this, the geopolitical concerns of both diaspora host- and homeland. Importantly, while Toronto, London and Geneva are all 'global cities', what makes them global is not the same. The global is constituted differently in each of them and so they present particular local contexts. All are not global in the same way, as will be explored in more detail in the concluding chapter. While theorising a priori about ethnographic methodology and data collection is all well and good, what actually unfolded during my fieldwork process, will be explored in more detail in the following section.

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[38]Geneva Internationale website, https://www.geneve-int.ch/news
[39] Other fieldsites I could have chosen based on these selection criteria are Sydney and Singapore; however, these were less accessible to me, due to language and funding constraints.

2.5.   Fieldwork and Data Collection

My fieldwork took place between the autumn of 2015 and the summer of 2018. During this period, I spent time in Toronto, Geneva and London, with shorter stays in Colombo, Ottawa and Washington, DC. During this time, which I will explore in more detail below, I participated in and observed events during which I recorded ethnographic fieldnotes of Tamil diaspora transnational mobilization and governance in action. This included attending events like the 34th Session of the UNHRC, international conferences like the UK Counter Terrorism Conference, House of Commons debates and evidence collection events in the UK and Canada, the Global Citizens's Forum and AGM of the OCIC, large Tamil diaspora community events like Maveerar Naal, Tamil Fest and Kothu Fest, smaller diaspora community events like meeting of the Canadian-Tamil Chamber of Commerce and the annual summer picknick of the TGTE, as well as countless seminars and workshops organized by or with diaspora members and policy makers (e.g. SOAS, OCIC, Cuso International, International Alert, USAID). I also spent many hours travelling between and across the cities in which my fieldwork was taking place, to attend events, conferences, meetings and interviews. On these journeys, which were made sometimes on foot, or plane, more often by bus, bike and car, I observed my surroundings, mapped distances between sites, photographed landscapes, and sketched relations between buildings.
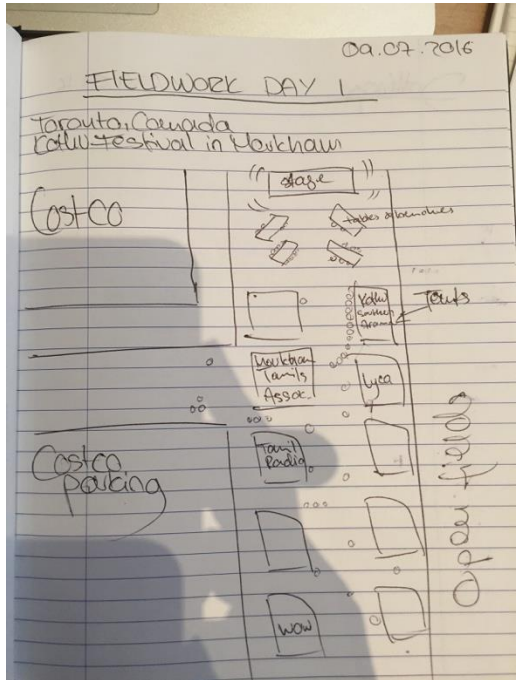
Image 2.1. Sketch made by author in the field at Kothu Fest Markham 2016
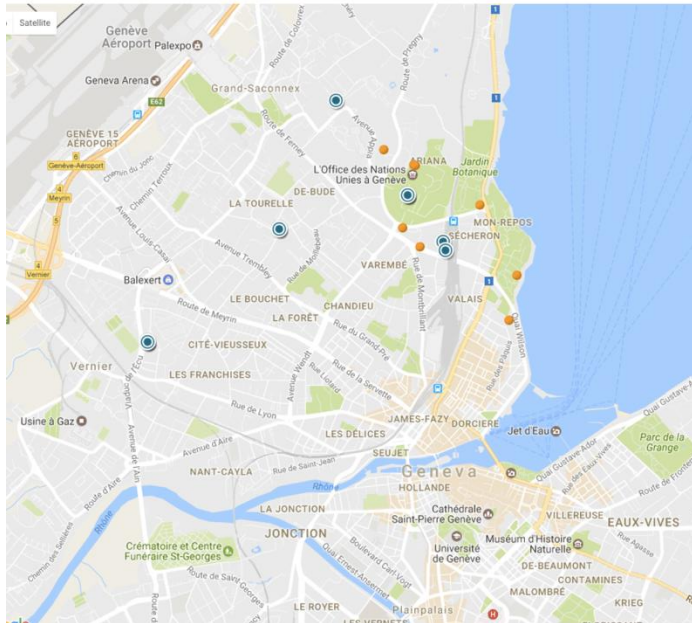
Image 2.2. Map showing the location of International Organisations in Geneva, source: Geneva Internationale website

The importance of these 'journeys' to and from events and in between sites inform my overall argument, as they captured the spatial embeddedness of diaspora engagement and will thus be explored in more detail in each of the chapters. I also conducted (in English) open ended/semi structured interviews with the diasporic and non-diasporic elites that I encountered in these spaces, thus supplementing my notes from participating in and observing governance practices.

I conducted interviews with members of the Tamil diaspora (some of them multiple times); development and peacebuilding NGO workers; employees of research institutions/think tanks; elected members of parliament; senior staff of policy advisory think tanks; former UN diplomat; an employee of the IOM; and an employee of the US state department. And yet, listing my interlocutors in this manner is already not a straightforward exercise. Most of the Tamil diaspora members I interviewed would also fit into one or several of the other categories listed, as they held professional positions as public servants, NGO workers, or even MP. In this thesis, I begin by centering their position as diaspora members, but this will be explored and complicated in more detail in each chapter. Similarly, most of my NGO worker interlocutors considered themselves a member of a diaspora, albeit not Tamil.

Interviewing Tamil diaspora members and attending Tamil diaspora events was often my first step to finding out which forms of governance were of concern to them or the ways in which they interacted with governance actors (at different levels). I decided that sequencing my

interviews in this way gave me a more bottom up perspective than if I had gone straight to the 'governance actors'.

The questions I asked during interviews varied greatly depending on the expertise, roles and position of the interviewees. For example, some interviews focused on particular 'diaspora governance' projects, events or policies that my interlocutor had personally attended or created. Others were about individual's long-termer experiences of working in the migration, development or peacebuilding sector. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews because they allowed me to ask about particular practices (e.g. of conferences, policies etc.), but also gain background information and take note of the ways in which people related to these things, the roles that they played in them. I recorded most of my interviews, each of which began with an introduction to my research project and a question for a verbal statement of consent. Only three of my interlocutors asked for their interviews to be anonymised, and a few asked me to stop recordings to relay confidential information. Where this was the case, I did not use this information as source material but did try to gather more information on the issue.

Beside these semi-structured one-on-one interviews, I gathered data during a group discussion with employees of the NGO International Alert in Colombo. I also had countless informal conversations and interactions with Tamils at the events that I participated in. I completed desk research, by collecting and analysing secondary academic sources and a collection of policy documents, news articles, government documents, and think tank reports. Most of these documents I gathered as soft copies, but not all, as sometimes the material manifestation of the document itself was significant (see chapter 4). Finally, I collected data that appeared online, i.e. websites and social media communications published on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

This fairly neat description of my fieldwork comes with a number of important caveats. First, the multi-sited nature of my fieldwork dictates that data collection was not perfectly replicable in each site, based on a variety of local conditions, including but not limited to access. That London, the city on which I pursued my doctoral studies, is one of my field sites, also meant that I conducted some fieldwork before and after the period mentioned, spilling into the present. The same can be said for the fact that much of my fieldwork could be done remotely (i.e. was online, in archives and on social media). That both diaspora and governance actors are by their very nature a highly mobile group of people means that field sites sometimes spilled into each other (as mentioned in literature on multi-sited fieldwork etc.). For example, some interviews that I conducted in Toronto were about mobilization or governance activities that

took place in Geneva. Other interviews with Tamil diaspora members or public officials involved in diaspora governance/research took place in Ottawa, Washington DC, and Colombo, because this is where these people happened to be living at the time. At the end of my first trip to Toronto, I had just enough funding left to take a Megabus to Washington DC, where I was then able to interview officials at the IOM and attended a number of US State Department events on diaspora and development. Importantly, there was significant variation in the way that my research was designed and implemented both within and between field sites. This included variation in terms of time spent in each site, data collection methods available to me, my levels of immersion and access, or the methodological and analytical challenges I encountered. Because of the significant variation between different sites (some of it anticipated in advance, some of it part of my findings), I will proceed to discuss each site in turn, before opening again up to a more general discussion on ethical challenges, positionality and access.

2.5.1. Suburban sprawl, social networks and serendipitous car-rides in Toronto

My fieldwork in Toronto took place from July-August 2016 and again from January-June 2017. During this time, I conducted interviews with members of the Tamil diaspora community, NGO workers, and public officials involved in diaspora 'engagement' initiatives. I visited the offices of diaspora Tamil organisations and businesses and attended community events and exhibitions organized by these same Tamil diaspora organisations. This included exhibitions on the history of immigration to and settlement in Canada, dance and theatre events exploring stories from Hindu mythology, and other public events around 'Tamil Heritage Month'. I attended municipal political events such as the launch event for Tamil Heritage Month by Toronto Mayor John Tory in Scarborough Town Hall, and events organized by Tamil-Canadian Councilor Neethan Shan. I also attended several food-themed community events, such as Kothu Fest in both the wealthy Toronto-suburb of Markham and in downtown Scarborough. After I met a fellow researcher who was French but fluent in Tamil (which I am not) and doing his postdoctoral fieldwork on the anthropology of food in the Tamil diaspora, I was invited to dinner by some of my interlocutors. I attended events by professional organisations such as the CTCC gala, and a networking event for Tamils in Public Service. Through this initial immersion in the Tamil diaspora community, I was then better able to identify those actors and spaces that were doing the 'governing'. I then spent a most of my time visiting the offices of non-governmental organisations working in the international

development sector and attended events organised to 'engage' diaspora. These events were either targeted at diaspora (e.g. events build capacity of diaspora organisations, e.g. workshop on organizational strategy) or involved discussion around diaspora and development, and development in general. Specifically, I attended the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Council for International Cooperation, and its follow-on conference Innovation Ignites. I also attended a 3-day conference titled the Global Citizen's Forum 2017, which contained 3 full days of panel discussions and breakout 'agora' sessions and workshops on international development, innovation and youth engagement. For the duration of my fieldwork in Toronto I was also a visiting fellow at York University's Centre for Asian Research (YCAR) where I attended academic workshops on migrant exclusion and "Asian Connections". Here I also had conversations with fellow researchers of global migration and diaspora politics, some of whom were experts on Tamil diaspora mobilization or diaspora governance. Whilst based in Toronto I also attended a number of academic conferences in Montreal, Quebec and Hamilton, Ontario.

My fieldwork took me all across the GTA and beyond, from Parkdale to Markham, and from Mississauga to Scarborough, an area spanning roughly 8000 square kilometers. Interviews with NGO staff, researchers and government officials usually took place in their offices in the downtown area. Meanwhile, and almost without exception, my interviews with members of a diaspora group took place in a large chain coffeeshop like Tim Hortons, Second Cup or Starbucks. One interview with a recently arrived Afghani refugee and DENG participant took place in a McDonalds outdoor play area, with the sound-recording picking up sounds of seagulls fighting over French Fries. I mention these details because they reflect spatial and material inequalities between recently arrived and settled migrants and the professional urban educated *white* elite (between what traditionally might be read as governors and governed). I had to meet these people near where they lived and worked, which was often far away from downtown, where I – a lot of other white middle class professionals – lived and worked. What this means for access/inclusion/power of diaspora in development governance will be explored further in chapter 3. Finally, at the end of my second trip to Toronto, I spent another 4 weeks in Ottawa, interviewing MPs, academics and CCIC rep, House of Commons debates.

Before my arrival in Toronto, I had gathered the names of people and organisation to contact for interviews, based on their involvement in past 'diaspora engagement' events or their affiliation with international development organisations and projects. I had also received a few names from Tamil contacts in London. I thus began my fieldwork by reaching out to individual members of the Tamil diaspora that I had been in touch with before my arrival, or whose names had been given to me by contacts in London. In early interviews I was quickly inundated with

names of Tamils that were especially active in the Toronto diaspora community. I heard a lot of the same names over and over.

Although, I knew that many members of the Tamil diaspora lived in the East of the city in Scarborough, I decided to base myself in the downtown area of Toronto because it was cost effective. I did not have access to a car and so I also assumed the downtown area would be better serviced by public transport and I would be in close proximity to the offices of NGOs and government staff who I was hoping to interview. However, I quickly realised that the Toronto public transport system would present a major barrier to immersing myself in the Tamil diaspora community. The majority of Tamil diaspora community events took place in either Scarborough or Markham. These were sometimes a 2 hours train and bus ride away from downtown Toronto. I will explore this in more detail in chapter 2. I had lived in a number of North American cities before where public transportation infrastructure was poor and hence a lot of conversation revolved around this, but the eagerness of Torontonians to discuss city planning struck me as significant. I quickly learned that the failings of the Toronto Transport Commission were a popular news item in local papers but also that the city was home to a rich history of urban planning innovation.

Despite access issues (which I will discuss at more length further along in this chapter and in chapter 3) I encountered my first fieldwork 'breakthrough', when I decided to attend an event in Scarborough organised by the Canadian Tamil Congress. The event was in remembrance of the arrival of 492 Tamil refugees on the MV Sunsea on the coast of British Columbia in 2010. I had seen it advertised on the organisation's website, shortly after I arrived in Toronto, and was looking for ways in which to immerse myself in Tamil diaspora activity, to gain some credibility and build trust. I also knew that the CTC would be a good contact to have. On the day of the event, I found myself one of the only non-Tamils at a very small event inside a fancy hotel. My attendance drew attention and I was quickly pointed in the direction of the official CTC representative. The man was friendly but seemed surprised that I had chosen to travel all the way to Scarborough for this particular event, which he regarded as lowkey (for the community). After the event ended, he offered to drive me home, which I gladly accepted. This - almost 1hr-long - car journey from Scarborough - along the Don Valley Parkway before it turned into the Gardiner – and back to my home in West Queen West, would be the first of many. It was during these journeys that I ultimately, managed to build rapport and trust with the CTC representative. We talked at length about the history of Tamils in Toronto and he taught me about the concept of the "windshield community", which he used to describe the way of life in Toronto's suburbs. In a 'windshield community', neighbours greet each other only

through their car windshield. He attributed this condition to Canadian weather conditions and the extreme reliance on cars, and lamented its consequences as the loss of connection, and public space for engagement. Perhaps most importantly then, these car journeys gave me a sense of what it meant to be Tamil-Canadian. Through conversations with the CTC representative, which he carefully curated, I gauged how established diaspora organisations were keen to present themselves to outsiders, which they deem part of liberal Western mainstream society (I discuss this at length in chapter 3).

Another important turning point early on in my fieldwork was an invitation to a nascent working group on 'diaspora engagement'. Within the first few days of arriving in the city in the summer of 2016, I was invited to participate in the first meeting of the Diaspora Engagement Networking Group (DENG). I subsequently attended 3 more of its in-person meetings between January and June 2017, became part of an email group where information on diaspora and development was shared, as well as participated in two larger multi-stakeholder fora where the DENG was either discussed or its members were present. The fieldnotes that I collected during these meetings and events, as well as the interviews that I conducted with individual members of this group, form a key part of my argument developed in chapter three.

A final serendipitous moment during my fieldwork that is worth recounting - because it had an impact on my access to the Tamil community in Toronto, and also sensitized me to the importance of social networks - was the following: I had been granted a scholarship to attend the Institute of Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research at Syracuse University's Maxwell School in the Summer of 2016. Because the scholarship covered flight costs to New York, from where I could easily travel on to Toronto, I was able to use the money saved to extend my time in the field. At IQMR I then made an acquaintance who lived just across the US-Canadian border in Kingston, Ontario, and who offered to drive me to Toronto a week later, saving me further travel costs. We were joined on the journey by one of her friends, who just so happened to be a Tamil PhD candidate. During the car ride we first bonded over being both partly raised in West Yorkshire – "Gods own Country". However, upon learning about my research, he offered to introduce me to his friend and colleague, a renowned Tamil activist and poet in Toronto. In many ways this lucky incident paved the way for me to build trust and rapport with the local Tamil diaspora community in Toronto. It also triggered my thinking about the relative importance of elite (global and local) social networks vs. chance encounters and serendipity.

2.5.2. *Geneva: international relations manifested*

I conducted fieldwork in Geneva, for the duration of the 34th UNHRC session from early to late March 2017. During this time, I conducted interviews with Tamil diaspora activists, NGO workers, human rights lawyers, and UN diplomatic staff. However, my fieldwork here unfolded quite differently from that in Toronto, in part because my time in Toronto had given me the opportunity to establish connections with Tamils who were immersed in the Sri Lankan transitional justice process. Several of the interviews I had conducted in Toronto were with people who would attend the upcoming UNHRC session or had done so in the past. Background knowledge and existing social connections meant that I was able to make the most of my comparatively shorter stay in the city. I spent each of my days inside the Palais de Nations, where the main debates and the side events of the UNHRC session were being held, from early mornings until late in the evening. I attended 10 'side events', 9 of these about the Human Rights situation in Sri Lanka and the Tamil struggle. Side events were usually 90 minutes long and held in a roundtable or panel discussion format, usually with time for audience questions at the end. I also attended several hours of General Debate of UNHCR Agenda Item 2, and the Interactive Dialogue on Sri Lanka on March 23nd, 2017, both held in Room XX Building E in the Palais de Nations. Inside the Palais, I had informal conversations with members of the Tamil delegations, and diplomats engaged in Tamil Human Rights advocacy. In Geneva, I interviewed one senior former UN diplomat who worked in Sri Lanka from 2002; one senior representative of multiple continental European Tamil diaspora organisations; and one senior staff member of an international peacebuilding NGO based just outside the UN compound. Outside of the UN grounds, I visited the offices of NGOs working on human rights issues.

Compared to Toronto, my field site here was a lot smaller. I spent a lot of time journeying across the city by bike, in order get a sense of how "Geneva Internationale"[40] was spatially constituted. I recorded fieldnotes on the internal layout of the Palais de Nations, and its surroundings, especially where I found this to be significant for symbolic or access purposes. I mapped (through photography and sketches) where the boundaries of the UN compound ended and where other global institutions like the WTO and UNICEF stood in (geographical-)relation to the UN, and what might be considered 'non-international Geneva', as well as the French

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[40] This is the name of a website aimed at "Geneva based global players", which acts as a directory for IOs, NGOs, permanent missions and gathers news and events deemed relevant for Geneva's 'international' scene, see https://www.geneve-int.ch/en.

border. Inside the Palais, I recorded fieldnotes on the layout of the buildings, distinctions between places for formal debate and informal discussion and lobbying.

Image 2.3. The lobby of the Serpent Bar inside the Palais de Nations

I gathered physical material, like invitations for side events, which cluttered the meeting spaces.

Image 2.4. A pile of printed documents on a table inside the Palais de Nations, including invitations to side events, evidence reports and advocacy flyers

This image (2.4.) symbolises in many ways the lobbying activities of non-state actors at the UN; smaller organisations struggling for attention from state and UN actors, resulting in overlapping and often contradictory messages.

During my stay in Geneva, I lived with an international cohort of UN interns, and junior architects working inside the UN compounds in the red-light district near the main train station. This meant that within days, I had insight into the lives of people who lived and worked in 'Geneva Internationale' on low salaries, and also got a sense of the both the fluidity (interns, activists and diplomats coming and going) and stasis (UN buildings, chancelleries in the same place for almost 100 years), which characterized this exceptional city. Every day me and my flat mates would cycle to work together. We'd be met on the way by other cyclist heading for the UN, other interns, or NGO and UN staff who permanently resided in Geneva, whilst at the formal Palais entrance, black limousines with diplomats and state representatives were being ushered in one by one.

My fieldwork in Geneva also bore significant challenges, in particular in relation to questions of physical access. The length of time I could spend in Geneva was primarily determined by financial constraints. UN interns and researchers, like myself, tend to live in crowded accommodations because rents are some of the highest in the world, especially if one is not in receipt of a Swiss salary. During UNHCR sessions this became even more acute. And this did not just affect my own access opportunities, as will be explored further in chapter 4, where my Tamil interlocutors relayed to me how, for their UN-advocacy work, they relied on sleeping in tents and vans, or finding accommodation on the other side of the Swiss-French border.

2.5.3. On being both insider and outsider in London

My fieldwork in London unfolded in multiple episodes from November 2015 to June 2016, from October-December 2016, and from October-December 2017. However, informally, it continued until this thesis was submitted in December 2020. During these periods I conducted 1 interview with a UK MP; 3 interviews with representatives from NGOs working with members of the Tamil diaspora on peacebuilding, and human rights issues. I also had countless informal conversations with Tamil colleagues at SOAS, Tamil students, academics and activists, representatives of various UK-based Tamil diaspora organisations (such as BTF, TIC, TGTE), editors of the online newspaper Tamil Guardian, Tamil councillors, supporters of the

APPGT, and members of the group Tamils for Labour. I attended several events organized by Tamil University Societies, both at SOAS and Queen Mary University, on topic ranging from Buddhist Nationalism, the History of the Tamil struggle. I attended conferences and events organized by Tamil activists and academics, e.g. the conference "Together Towards Tomorrow" in December 2016 and the "Tamils of Lanka" exhibition held in May 2019. I attended two events organized by Tamil diaspora organisations and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tamils (APPG-T) inside the House of Commons, one of them a report launch, the other in preparation for MPs attending the 34th session of the UNHRC. I also attended commemoration events, such as the annual celebration of Maveerar Naal, as well as smaller remembrance events on the anniversary of the Mullivaikal Massacre and Black July.

I attended conferences and workshops held by think tanks and organisations working in the security sector. This included events on radicalisation, CT and CVE by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), and the Henry Jackson Society. In 2016 I also spent 3 days at the UK Security Expo, held annually in West London. Here I observed a trade fair, as well as attended roundtable discussion and talks by security practitioners and policy makers such as former MI5 and NATO officers, and staff from the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. Talks were on topics ranging from CT, urban security, border management, cyber security, public surveillance, intelligence gathering, and crowd control. I will explore in more detail below, why I chose to attend this event, which at first glance did not involve any Tamil diaspora individuals or organisations. I supplemented my interviews and observations with online archival research in the UK House of Commons Hansard, and online newspapers. I also consulted secondary materials, such as academic and non-academic literature, and journalistic articles.

Doing fieldwork 'at home' in London meant that I was able to rely on my preexisting networks with researchers and Tamil activists to gain access to spaces of diaspora governance, and also to more gradually build trust with individuals over longer periods of time. My close affiliation with SOAS also provided me with access to a network of Tamil diaspora activists, who invited me to events that I may have otherwise not found out about. There were also a number of more practical benefits to doing fieldwork 'at home', such as the fact that I did not have to travel, was not reliant on additional fieldwork funding or travel expenses.

But doing fieldwork 'at home' also threw up a number of challenges. Being immersed in a network of SOAS-based Tamil activists meant that I had to navigate the ethical and political risks of going 'native'. University campuses have historically been spaces for left leaning but simultaneously nationalist Tamil diaspora organizing, which is not necessarily representative

of the broader Tamil diaspora community in the UK, or even in London. However, observing this spatial organizing of Tamil diaspora activism and the tensions that occurred at Tamil diaspora events inside different spaces, actually often gave me an even more nuanced account of the cleavages that existed within the diaspora. For example, outside of SOAS, the Tamil diaspora associations at many London universities with large Tamil student populations were often primarily involved in organizing social events, balls and club nights. Beside social proximity to my interlocutors, doing fieldwork at home meant that I was also geographically never fully either outside (or inside) my research field. This blurring of boundaries between the field and the non-field sometimes meant that my field of vision became too expansive, and it was intellectually challenging to keep my research 'centered' on the practices of diaspora governance. One way in which this challenge was mitigated – or, in fact, largely mitigated itself – was that even within London I still had to travel quite significant distances to field sites - sometime for 2 hours across the entire city of London. In some ways, the journey *leaving* the field site were more important than *entering*, as they provided time and space to process and organize the complex impressions that fieldwork provided. This was also an important practice for the maintenance of mental health during field research.

Another set of challenges that arose during my fieldwork in London revolved around the issue of accessing spaces of and generating data about 'security governance'. From background research and informal conversations, I knew that security governance practices played a significant role in shaping the ways in which Tamils could mobilize in London and the UK. I knew that the UK proscription regime and extensive counter-terrorism apparatus had in the past constrained Tamil political mobilization but also impacted on the lives of ordinary Tamils. However, actual observation of and participation in such security-focused diaspora governance practices proved difficult. I often learnt about arrests and convictions, i.e. of Tamils suspected to be affiliated with proscribed organisations, only after they had already happened. Perhaps unsurprisingly, because security spaces tend to have a clandestine air about them, they are hard for researchers (especially junior researchers) and non-security professionals to penetrate (see also Beerli 2018). Hence, throughout my early fieldwork in London I was struggling to gather evidence of 'diaspora governance' in action, like I had been able to do in Toronto or at the UNHRC. Beside access, this challenge also had a distinct ethical component: With some exceptions, the majority of Tamils I spoke to were not keen to speak about the issue of security, at least not in the present. Representatives of mainstream Tamil diaspora organisations were often happy to recount past anecdotes, but when asked about present incidents of police harassment or surveillance they often shut down the conversation. Similarly,

UK public officials working with Tamil diaspora groups also often did not want to comment on contemporary Tamil politics. One interlocutor commented that she had "no desire myself to become involved in any of those politics, that is not my business."

2.6.   Ethical Challenges, Positionality and Access

In the above section I highlighted some of the methodological challenges that were particular to each fieldsite. But there were also some overarching challenges to my study. I discuss ethical challenges and the questions of positionality and access in turn.

What ethical challenges and risks did I encounter during my research and how did I deal with them? Here I distinguish between risk to me and my study, i.e. the scientific integrity of my research, and risk posed by my research project to my interlocutors. One challenge that presented itself to me during my research, pertained to the responses I received to my interview questions and to questions of honesty and trust. For example, if I interviewed people in their formal capacity as organizational representatives, they were often extremely careful with their word choices, and making sure to 'toe the company line'. Only after I had established some rapport in the interviews and shared some of their concerns and expressed sympathy for difficulties, would they give more personalized, reflexive or even critical answers.

Perhaps most importantly, this was also the case when I talked to members of Tamil diaspora organisations about their organisations activities and political or social engagement. While my Tamil interlocutors often seemed happy to talk openly about things that happened in the past, even contentious topics like the activities of the LTTE (and even their own personal opinions of and interactions with the LTTE), their responses to questions about ongoing diaspora activities were often a lot more guarded. I also noticed quickly that many Tamil diaspora organizational representatives had clearly been approached by other researchers before me. As a result, their answers to my questions often seemed slightly rehearsed. Further, a number of Tamil organisers only began speaking to me more openly, once they had 'sussed me out', evaluating my answers to their questions about my personal political and research background, which I discuss below in more depth. Of course, this process of building rapport and trust is at the very heart of the ethnographic research approach. Rather than seek for truth in responses, I was more interested in the practice of what was being said, wanting to find out why and incrementally and continuously honing my ethnographic sensibility. I was also keen to avoid the tendency by critical scholars, especially in the security studies field, to fetishize

critique and the deconstruction of truth claims. This has been lucidly problematized by Johnathan Austin in his work on post-critique, where he makes the case that rather than being suspicious of research interlocutors, scholars should instead practice companionship.

Ultimately, the question of trust was never fully resolved but rather acted as a reminder of the need for ongoing critical reflection about my own frame of reference and interpretation, which I will explore in more detail in the following section on positionality. More practically speaking, I addressed these challenges by corroborating findings through triangulation and designing my project in such a manner that I spent equal time immersed in 'governance spaces' and spaces of Tamil diaspora mobilization. I also had my research subjected to peer review and exchanges with my supervisor.

Beside negotiating more general ethical questions about truth and honesty in scientific research, I was also presented with some ethical challenges and risks that related specifically to the fact that my study involved 'migrants', former political refugees, and vulnerable populations more generally. Importantly, because across different field sites and spaces I encountered 'migrants' of very different vulnerability statuses in my research, safeguarding was an ongoing process. In each interview, or data collection situation I had to reassess the 'vulnerability' of my interlocutors and adjust both my questions and data analysis and presentation accordingly. So, for example, in some circumstances, the main challenge that I needed to confront was exhausting my interlocutors. The speed with which I was pointed to certain Tamil community representatives made me wary of the fact that these individuals, who were already doing the most labour, were additionally burdened with inquiries for interviews. This challenge was difficult to overcome, apart from by practicing radical empathy, or finding meaning in repetition of answers, e.g. scarce resources. One interlocutor told me that the interview was 'a bit like therapy'. Less frequently, but perhaps more importantly, I had to make sure that my research did not impact negatively on the safety of my interlocutors. I was conscious of the fact that if I interviewed members of the Tamil diaspora with their explicit consent to quote them in my research and they spoke out against their home-state or even were critical of any of the security measures of their new country of residence, this could present a security risk for them that I had to evaluate to the best of my ability. This was brought home to me at the UNHRC session where I was first made aware of the extent of reprisals faced by individuals who speak out against human rights abuses, and the threats espoused by some actors inside the Sri Lankan envoy against those who opposed them. So, even though most of my Tamil interlocutors were elite members of the diaspora community with many years of experience of lobbying for human rights and thus well aware of the risks that came with

transnational advocacy and lobbying, and having a public profile, I did the utmost to ensure that such data remained anonymous. To mitigate these risks, most data on Tamil diaspora organisations remains anonymized and pseudonymized in this thesis, even if they are speaking about what seems like politically uncontentious issues. Meanwhile, I decided that it would be safe to give more details about organizations and individuals where I was referring to historical dynamics.

Conducting this multi-sited ethnographic study proved challenging, not just from a conceptual and ethical perspective but also in relation to my positionality and access, which shifted continuously throughout my field research, both between but also across each of my sites. In this final section, I will thus offer some reflections of how my (relative power) position[41] affected the way in which I was able to a) access my field or certain sections of my field, collect data, reach out to interlocutors, as well as the questions I was able to ask and the answers I received. I will (dis)entangle each of these aspects in turn.

Importantly, my positionality, my power relative to the field, changed dramatically throughout the course of my research. Sometimes I felt empowered, e.g. when I managed to secure interviews with global elites or access sites of power, but often I was also experiencing feelings of vulnerability and stress. On the one hand, in many governance spaces I encountered the challenges that come with, what Kuus has called, "studying up" (2013). This refers to the researcher's relatively inferior position of power vis-à-vis her interlocutors, a condition that junior researchers in the discipline of IR often have to contend with. Here, pointing the analytical lens upward, at people in positions of power, such as international diplomats, state representatives, UN staff, human rights lawyers, security professionals, and even staff of international NGOs, brings with it a certain hierarchical power relationship. This is perhaps even more pronounced when one tries to do ethnography, where immersion and proximity are expected. Considering the challenges of accessing and 'hanging out' in spaces where international relations take place (MacKay and Levin 2015), it is then perhaps not surprising that doing ethnography in IR has often been the prerogative of senior academics or former diplomatic staff. Meanwhile, students of IR who study global governance and international institutions usually do this from a distance, i.e. through discourse or statistical analysis. Those who immerse themselves in their research environments tend to do so in social movements, NGOs, local settings. But there were also more practical implications of doing research in hard to access spaces and among mobile global elites. Indeed, perhaps one of the biggest barriers to

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[41] Constituted intersectionally, as a white, female, non-native English speaking, lower-middle-class, partially self-funded PhD student.

access that I had to surmount was funding. Multi-sited fieldwork is already expensive when it takes place in villages, or smaller towns in the global North (see Moss 2019). Conducting fieldwork in Geneva, one of the most expensive cities in the world, provided a very real challenge that I was only able to surmount at some personal cost. Being confronted with these barriers to access made me more sensitive to the practical challenges faces by Tamil diaspora activists and lobbyists. Even if sometimes the barrier faced by my Tamil diaspora interlocutors were the exact same as the one faced by myself, at other times, I felt acutely my privilege, as my positionality often gave me access to spaces that many of my interlocutors could not even dream of entering. For example, when I told Tamils in Toronto or in London that I was heading to Geneva they almost always expressed awe at this information. For many this was financially unattainable, for others 'Geneva' represented the pinnacle of their struggle, as I will explore in chapter 4.

As I moved between spaces during my fieldwork in Toronto I reflected on small changes in my positionality and how it affected my relative position of power. For example, while at the DENG meetings there were more racialized minorities than white people, which gave the impression that ethnic and racial diversity were facts of life, and that we were all equals in this space; the Canadian dream of multiculturalism felt accomplished (cf. Banting and Kymlicka 2010). But when I attended the OCIC's AGM I acutely felt how white the international development field really was, even in Toronto. Here I was clearly positioned as part of the majority. Similarly, when I entered Tamil diaspora spaces, my positionality shifted again. For example, I was commonly introduced to other members of Tamil diaspora as a "PhD students who is doing research on our thing/our cause" which seemed to always have a reassuring effect, especially to the more politically active members. Meanwhile, when that same introduction was used in front of younger/less politically active diaspora members the reactions were more wary and I encountered more initial distrust.

As mentioned in the section above, in London my affiliation with SOAS had an impact on access. While it opened doors to Tamil activist circles and political elites, my affiliation also in some ways obstructed access to the broader Tamil diaspora population. Finally, in London I was confronted with my position as 'outsider' to the extremely entrenched 'elite' security governance circles that I was trying to observe. As mentioned, on the one hand, getting information about ongoing Tamil diaspora security governance was very difficult, which meant that here I relied more on archival research and secondary data, than on participant observation. But there were also times when my 'outsider' status improved access. For example, I was able to attend events in the House of Commons and engage is discussions on contentious issues like

radicalisation and terrorism without drawing suspicion, something that I knew was not the case for many of my non-white colleagues.[42]

2.7. Data Analysis

I recorded my secondary, interview, and ethnographic data in NVivo. Data analysis then continued to follow an abductive approach, whereby I iteratively shifted from my data to the literature and back again to make sense of my data.

The first stage in the data analysis process consisted of thinking through my field data with the literature on diaspora engagement and governance practices in mind, seeing how it fit and made sense and where it ran up against preexisting assumption. Where existing literature met its limits, I brought in other literature that I found important. For example, as it emerged that space played a key role in shaping access to diaspora engagement practices and networks, I began engaging more deeply with geographical and spatially sensitive work, as well as network literature. With the help of the NVivo software, I then started to annotate my ethnographic fieldnotes, coding them for themes and practices. From these early annotations and memos, I then identified patterns of conduct of both diaspora and governance actors.

I also used NVivo to build and analyse connections between events, spaces, actors, and policy documents, which helped me form tentative arguments about historical sequences and causal relations. As mentioned in section 2.2., how I define and identify diaspora governance practices, is also a result of my abductive approach. Combining insights from the literature and my own data, I eventually settled on an operationalization of diaspora governance practices as the meso-level 'doings and sayings', that various actors in IR employ to manage the impact of diasporas on global politics. These 'doings and sayings' may encompass discursive strategies to symbolically 'engage' a diaspora population or divide it. It also includes formal institutional mechanisms at different levels of governance, such as voting rights, remittance taxation, proscription regimes or consultation events. By centering these practices and investigating them up close - by disentangling them – I could then think about how different levels of governance interacted, what role space played in the governance practice and how different actors relate to

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[42] I repeatedly had informal conversations with older white men, often employed by conservative think tanks or private security companies, who were very keen to bestow their patriarchal wisdom of security issues upon me: the 'non-threatening' white female junior. Interestingly, and to my (perhaps naïve) surprise, almost all had an anecdote about an encounter with the LTTE.

each other. While it was at times tempting to organize each chapter by the type of actors that were involved in the governance practice, I wanted to avoid falling back into the actor-centrism of much governance research. Instead, I iteratively built an analytical framework around the interrelationship between different forms of power (or capital) that constitute diaspora governance, such as social network power or connectivity, legitimacy, and spatiality as discussed above. These are the key dimensions that I use to untangle the practices of diaspora governance in each chapter.

2.8.   Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has laid out the methodological framework for this study. It has described an abductive research design, beginning with a theoretical discussion of the conceptual building blocks of this study. Drawing on scholarship of the practice-turn in IR, I laid out my conceptualization of a practice as a nexus (of entanglements) and subsequently discussed other analytical tools that would help to dis-entangle the practices, such as field, capital, and assemblage. I then discussed how I translated a practice-theory into a practice methodology, whilst staying committed to an abductive approach, namely by identifying practices of diaspora governance in existing research on diaspora, migration and governance. I then offered an introduction of the Tamil diaspora case study, from which emerged that Tamil diaspora politics were characterized by entanglements which, in turn, made it a key case for examining the entangled politics of diaspora engagement. I proceeded to outline my 'enthnography of entanglements' approach, which marries a multi-sited ethnographic approach with a practice-centric perspective. I then discussed the logic behind my site selection, namely that Toronto, Geneva and London are all global (cities), yet I expected the global to also be particular to each location. What then followed was an in-depth discussion of my fieldwork and data collection process, whereby I introduced the reader to some of the intricacies of my three fieldsites. I discussed that journeys to and from fieldsites significantly shaped my research perspective, as they gave me opportunities to interact with members of the Tamil diaspora or share in their mobility concern. I then reflected on challenges in the field linked to my positionality, both in terms of ethics and access, concluding that due to the nature of my research I had to constantly renegotiate and reflect on my own biases, and assumptions about where power was located. Finally, I discussed how my abductive approach shaped my data analysis, in that it took the form of an iterative dialogue between my data and the process of theorizing about the location

of politics in diaspora governance practices. In the following chapters, I will now present the findings that derive from this study.

3. Engaging Diasporas as 'Partners' in Development: Inclusion or Cooptation?

It is, by Canadian standards, a particularly hot day in June when I open the doors of the Center for Social Innovation on 192 Spadina Avenue in downtown Toronto. I am greeted by a blast of conditioned air and the familiar smile of one of the most prolific public engagement professionals in the city's development sector. She offers me a warm welcome and, after a brief exchange, hurries off to meet other people that are arriving. I walk down a short flight of stairs and find myself in a large open space, decked out with red metal chairs facing a microphone. People are gesturing for me to approach the registration desk, where I state my name and am handed a lanyard with a name tag. I am here for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC), the provincial arm of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), which is tasked by the Canadian government with strengthening the third sector's capacity to contribute to international development. As I learn from information printed on my name tag, this year's AGM is held in combination with a conference titled 'Innovation Ignites'. It is 08.55am, and I am one of the first people to arrive at the venue. The space we are in belongs to the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) whose main office sits across the road in the Robertson Building on 215 Spadina Avenue. The CSI is a 'social enterprise' that provides coworking spaces for small organisations, and seek to foster "social innovation emergence".[43] Beside the CSI, the Robertson Building also houses the OCIC headquarters. Like the Robertson Building, the one we are today in is an old warehouse that has been converted into a modern multi-purpose event space. There is one large open plan foyer which has been arranged as an auditorium, and a few smaller meeting rooms that have been sectioned off by glass panels. The former warehouse space has been renovated to maintain some of its industrial features, such as exposed brick work and gas pipes, as well as rough concrete flooring, but a curated mixture of antique and mid-century furnishings anchor the space firmly in the 21st century.

As people start filing in and the clock moves past 9am, I take a seat in the auditorium. The Executive Director of the OCIC briefly takes to the mic to reassure people that they will begin once quorum has been reached. I continue to patiently sit in my seat, coffee in hand, while people politely ask to sit down next to me. As the room begins to fill up, I take note of the

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[43] Centre for Social Innovation, website https://socialinnovation.org/about/our-story-and-impact/

crowd forming around me. There are approximately 30 other women and 15 men, and the majority of the crowd is around 35-45 years old. The women are my age or older, overwhelmingly young professionals. Their attire strikes me as less formal than in some of the corporate or public sector meetings I have attended, with many floral prints and summer dresses. While at first glance the crowd seems racially and ethnically diverse, the majority of attendees are, in fact, young white women. At 9:25am the proceedings formally begin. A board member takes to the stage and opens the AGM by acknowledging the First Nations land upon which we find ourselves, a practice, which by now I have observed many times. After an icebreaker exercise, and an introduction of the history and work of OCIC, one of the first items on the agenda is the ratification of new member organisations. Amongst them is a small Tamil diaspora run development organization, whose work I have been following closely for the past year. The founding director, who is a Tamil man in his mid-thirties and one of my main research interlocutors, is asked to pitch the organization to OCIC members. He proceeds to deliver a compelling speech, stating that his organisation is trying "to give the world more of Canada", which resonates with the new national government PR tag line "The World Needs More Canada" on the occasion of Canada 150. He states that it is his organisation's aim to "tap into the Sri Lankan diaspora" (I make a note that he does not say Tamil) by sending volunteers to work in the public and private sector as well as civil society. He also mentions, more in passing, that he works full-time as a public servant in the Ontario provincial government and barely managed to attend this morning's meeting by taking a few hours off from his job at Queens Park, a 2 km walk away. He ends his pitch by stating that "What we lack in expertise, we make up for in passion". A few moments later the AGM attendees all vote to ratify the organisation as a new member. In a way this marks the symbolic 'arrival' of the organization in the local development community. This success comes after a year of attending the Diaspora Engagement Networking Group meetings organized by the OCIC. The DENG is also discussed at the AGM as one of the most successful initiatives of the last year. Under another item of the AGM agenda, in the discussion of OCIC finances, I learn of the need to 'reduce GAC contributions'. After this, the business meeting concludes. The day then continues with a range of lectures and interactive workshops. From browsing the programme, I learn that (with some exceptions) speakers and facilitators are largely consultants for the private sector. Interestingly, everyone seems to have the words 'innovation, thinker, strategist, leader, entrepreneur' in their job title. We start with a lecture on 'strategic foresight' by a professor of the Rotman School of Management, from the University of Toronto, followed by a participatory workshop titled the 'strategic foresight co-lab'. The event finishes with a reception and film screening.

The above paragraphs provide a vignette from my fieldwork in Toronto in the summer of 2017. They describe an event, which has gathered a large group of people working on international development to discuss the administration of an organisation that most of them are members of. The event is also intended to offer a space for learning and discussion around challenges faced by development professionals in their work. The event offers a lens into development governance. In this chapter, I use the term development to denote a global 'field' structured around the problem of 'development', with actors struggling over what development is, and how it can be achieved, albeit from different positions of power. Development governance then describes one outcome of such a struggle whereby it has emerged that development needs to be managed, i.e. via rule setting, or the promotion of particular practices. Indeed, the workshops and lectures offered during this conference are socializing development practitioners in a particular way, whereby they are encouraged to employ complex systems thinking and 'innovation management' in their work.

But, crucially, the vignette also suggests that diaspora have a role to play in development (governance). The vignette captures a number of diaspora governance practices embedded within the field of international development. A Tamil diaspora organisation is initiated as an OCIC member, and the event takes stock of the progress of a working group for OCIC members working on and with diaspora. These micro-level insights are representative of a broader empirical phenomenon; of diaspora 'engagement' or governance. Diaspora 'engagement' in development has been empirically increasing. In December 2019 alone, Forbes published 2 articles advancing the notion that diaspora should be taken seriously by other development actors.[12] Indeed, over the last decade there has emerged a near consensus in the development field that diaspora contributions to development need to be managed; diasporas strategically 'engaged'. For example, actors such as the EU, the World Bank, NGOs and the private sector, have devised strategies to manage global remittance flows (Ratha 2003) and their impact on development, through implementing micro-banking schemes and taxation. Diaspora governance practices in international development may also include holding policy consultations with diasporas on international aid policy, creating knowledge exchange and volunteering programmes, building diaspora organisational capacity to deliver programmes in home countries, and providing opportunities for networking in the diaspora's new country of residence, as outlined in the vignette.

Far from epiphenomenal, the event described above is of broader importance because it brings together a range of actors with different levels of governance authority and expertise, negotiating what development is, who should be doing it, and how. It also touches upon the

global and local political struggles that shape how diaspora are governed in the development field. Diaspora 'engagement' in development governance is political, even though it is often framed in decidedly apolitical terms. For example, beside leveraging diaspora remittances for economic growth, the stated purpose of diaspora engagement in the development field is often to 'include diasporas in decision-making'. Yet, in doing so, it may establish different kinds of boundaries to participation in development governance. Diaspora engagement strategies do not simply provide space for localised and non-hierarchical cooperation and knowledge exchange. They may create new hierarchies amongst diaspora organisations, foster certain behaviours and practices over others, leading to a reshuffling of the international development field as a whole, or simply reify already existing global power dynamics.

By the point that this AGM took place, I had been following the activities of the Tamil diaspora in Canada, and the OCIC network, for over a year. During that year, I could observe how the young Tamil diaspora organisation mentioned here, had gradually but decisively solidified its presence in this local development space. Interestingly, over time I also observed that this was the only Tamil organisation represented at these events, even though the GTA at the time was teeming with Tamil diaspora organisations, many of them mobilizing transnationally for homeland development or reconstruction efforts. The event thus also gives some indication of how a Tamil diaspora organization is expected to interact with the broader international development field and how distinctions between diaspora groups are made. Finally, beside revealing the political nature of diaspora engagement in development, the event is also important because it shows how the global and local can become interconnected. Whilst the event is primarily the AGM of an organization that operates at the provincial level, it gathers actors who work both more locally and more globally; a microcosm of the international development world, playing out in a specific site.

Evidently, the engagement of diasporas in development governance is characterized by inequalities and struggles and needs to be further investigated. What do we know so far about diaspora engagement or inclusion in development governance? How have such practices been explained? There already exists a significant literature on the diaspora and development link. Empirically, studies have shown that diaspora mobilization for development ranges from indirect contributions like remittance sending (Helweg 1983; Ratha et al. 2007), innovation (Minto-Coy 2016) and knowledge transfer (Tejada in Walton-Roberts et al. 2016), to more direct contributions such as volunteering locally (Darieva 2017), contributing to infrastructure (re)development, especially in post-conflict settings (Kleist 2018), and even institutional redesign and restructuring of public services in the homeland (Craven 2018a).

One of the earliest ways in which the empirical link between diasporas and development has been explored is through remittances. Remittances have been well-researched and describe all money sent by a migrant worker to their family at home. The concept may also include diasporic contributions to villages or home village organisations (Guribye and Tharmalingam 2017). In 2007 the World Bank released a study stating that, compared to other global financial flows, remittances were "almost as large as foreign direct investment, and more than twice as large as the official aid received by developing countries" (Ratha et al. 2007). Since the mid-2000s research on the link between remittances and global poverty reduction and development has mushroomed (Ratha 2013). Since then, a huge amount of interest has been generated in the potential contributions of diasporas to the economic and social development of their homelands (Newland and Patrick 2004). Studies have found that diasporas increasingly contribute to complex governance in the area of development though offering technical advice and building state/local capacity. In the literature on transnational entrepreneurship, Saxenian explores how "Chinese and Indian engineers are contributing to highly localized processes of entrepreneurial experimentation in their home countries" (2006). In other research their role as sources of innovation and capital has been acknowledged (Minto-Coy 2016), and it has been observed that they are also increasingly engaged in formal programmes that aim to foster knowledge transfers (see Tejada in Walton-Roberts et al. 2016).

While the above paragraphs illustrate the significant indirect impact that diasporas may have on governance processes in their homelands, diasporas also contribute to homeland development more directly, e.g. through contributions to public health, clean environment, social security, and infrastructure and also ranges from simple and barely-institutionalized interventions to highly complex and institutionalized tasks. For example, a growing proportion of direct diaspora governance today is organized through volunteering programs. Here members of a diaspora may spend a few weeks or months in their country of origin to contribute to development projects in their homeland. What they do as volunteers and how their 'return' is framed, varies widely. They may engage in simple tasks such as contributing manual labour to the building wells, or larger infrastructural development projects. In her most recent project on diasporic Armenians, Darieva (2017) investigates this booming industry of diaspora-volunteering. She writes that "(s)ince 2001, each year hundreds of young people of Armenian descent from North America and Europe have been travelling to the former-Soviet Republic of Armenia in order to contribute their labour and skills to this country's social and economic development." What is particularly interesting here, is that "(t)he 'development' that they (the diasporic organisations) foster is framed as contributions to building a civil society, rather than

strengthening the nation-state." Aside from volunteer-based programmes, short-term programmes for professional diaspora aim to counter brain drain by placing health professionals from the diaspora in hospitals in sub-Saharan Africa (Stuart and Russel 2011).

While diasporas are engaged in the general provision of goods and services during violent conflict, Jennifer Brinkerhoff has been at the forefront of arguing that they are consequently also key to rebuilding governance in post-conflict countries (2008b). This is because they are often first movers in humanitarian relief and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Kleist (2008) concurs that "(t)hough often contested, diaspora groups have emerged as development and humanitarian actors in their own rights, not least from war torn and post-conflict countries where remittances often constitute a lifeline for local populations."

Meanwhile, theoretical explorations of the link between diasporas and development have focussed on conceptualizing diaspora capacity and agency to contribute to development. For example, Jennifer Brinkerhoff conceptualizes diasporas as brokers or norm entrepreneurs with an "in-between advantage" (Brinkerhoff 2016). The concept of the in-between advantage suggests that agency/power is in some way intrinsic to diasporic individuals, who are uniquely positioned and thus prone to entrepreneurialism. The idea of the entrepreneurial diaspora resonates with earlier studies in IR that have sought to make sense of the power of non-state actors in global governance. Crucially, Keck and Sikkink applied the concept of the norm entrepreneur to the actions of transnational advocacy networks (1998, 1999, 2014). For them, it is connectedness across national and international scales/actor-bridging networks that enables norm-driven global advocacy. They argue that network thinking bridges an "increasingly artificial divide between international and national realms" (1998: 4).

Evidently, much ink has been spilled on mapping diaspora contributions to development and explaining the diaspora and development link. But what do we know about how diaspora contributions to development are governed? As already discussed in the introduction, empirically we can observe a rapid rise of policies and strategies designed to 'engage' diasporas or govern diaspora mobilization, including diaspora contributions to development. Such practices range from the management of global remittance flows through micro-banking schemes and taxation, to inclusion of diaspora organisations in public consultations on international aid policy. As already mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, a growing awareness of remittance strength and impact have led to an increased institutionalization of remittance governance practices. Emigrant states with large and wealthy diasporas, are increasingly setting up institutions and ministries (Gamlen 2006; Ragazzi 2014; Mylonas and

Delano 2017) to manage incoming financial flows and channel them towards public goods and service provision[44]. Such funds then may be used for development purposes, if that is in the home state's interest.

In the discipline of Geography, some scholars have more explicitly centered initiatives and mechanisms that aim to engage diasporas for development. Boyle and Ho (2017) offer an engaging account of what they call "diaspora centered development", based on Agamben's *Homo Sacer.* Diaspora-centered development, they argue, is a consequence of Western rule after empire, which operates through "biopolitical projects, which conspire to discipline and normalize the conduct of others at a distance so as to create self-reliant and resilient market actors" (Boyle and Ho 2017). Sovereign power and biopower work together simultaneously; they are "antinomical but functionally related", not historically sequenced, as suggested by Foucault (cf. Ragazzi 2014). But perhaps more importantly, Boyle and Ho conclude that diaspora strategies or institutions like IdEA - the US State Department initiative that I introduced at the very beginning of this thesis - "convene assemblages which are disparate, comprising, inter alia: ministries, ministers, departments, firms, and NGOs within powerful Western host states; immigrant and emigrant families, clubs, associations, networks, chambers of commerce, media, charities, and foundations; sending state ministries, ministers, NGOs, community organisations, firms, and diaspora engagement vehicles; scorecards, KPI indices, platforms for sharing best practices, policy briefs, toolkits, competitive grants, and peer review; and a surging academic and private consultancy industry." (Boyle and Ho 2017: 591). The authors thus eschew a state-centric view of how diaspora contributions to development are governed. Rather, they suggest that diaspora-centered development - or what I call diaspora governance practices - 'convene assemblages' of state and non-state actors, objects and spaces that must come together to govern. Building on this work, this chapter will show exactly which assemblage of actors, mechanisms, policy instruments, power dimensions is revealed when diaspora governance practices are centered and subsequently disentangled.

At a more micro-level, Sinatti and Horst (2015) have subjected diaspora engagement policies in the development field to critical analysis. This chapter builds significantly on their insights. Their study centers the practices of a number of European states that seek to engage diasporas for development. They identify that, in the European context, "capacity building for diaspora organizations; organizational development for platform and umbrella associations;

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[44] This is also largely in response to the critique that remittances flows, if left unmanaged, have a deteriorating effect on governance in many developing countries because they create unsustainable remittance-economies (Ebeke 2012; Ahmed 2013).

and activities that stimulate the return-development nexus are common practices that European development actors engage in to mobilize and support diaspora actors" (2015: 138). They conclude that these practices rest on an essentialised understanding of diaspora, "as actual communities, rooted in a national 'home' and sharing a group identity" (ibid. 136), and have a number of problematic political consequences. As anthropologists, Sinatti and Horst bring a practice-centric analysis to bear on the diaspora engagement question. This is exceptionally useful for me. They use the focus on diaspora engagement practices and policies as a starting point from which they untangle some of the underlying assumptions of these practices, i.e. the nationalist and sedentary bias in development and essentialized understanding of diaspora.

Evidently, diaspora governance practices are proliferating in the development field. Empirically, the literature on diaspora engagement for development makes reference to a broad range of governance practices from remittance taxation, and removing barriers to diaspora investment and finance; inclusion of diaspora in policy consultations and running diaspora volunteering programmes; planning diaspora fundraising and philanthropy events; implementing capacity building for diaspora organizations and organizational development for umbrella organisations; and designing practical toolkits, handbooks and 'best practices' for diaspora engagement in development. This chapter will center these practices to (dis)entangle the politics of diaspora governance in development, and the global politics of diaspora governance more broadly.

Where does the Tamil diaspora fit within this broader picture? What do we know about the Tamil diaspora and development governance? While there exists a rich literature on Tamil diaspora mobilization both during and after the civil war, there are only a few studies examining the (more formal) mobilization of the Tamil diaspora for homeland development. Such studies have found that large sums of money are being remitted from the Tamil diaspora (Tharmalingam 2011), mostly through so-called home-village associations', and especially to the North and East of the Island. Particularly in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami did the Tamil diaspora send money explicitly for humanitarian relief and development purposes, although often with great difficulty (which will be explored in chapter 5). Most studies conclude that there is untapped potential for increased Tamil diaspora involvement in development (Cheran and Vimalarajah 2010). Little is known about the ways in which Tamil diaspora mobilization for development has been governed since the end of the civil war. Where many diaspora origin states welcome and solicit their diaspora's social and financial remittances for development purposes, the Sri Lankan government has not formally done this. At least there is no official Sri Lankan 'diaspora engagement' policy. Similarly, little is known

about the ways in which Tamil diaspora mobilization for homeland development is governed in the host state, i.e. how members of the Tamil diaspora are formally or informally included in host state development programmes and policymaking. This chapter will address this gap by posing and answering the following questions: *How* is the Tamil diaspora governed (in the development field) and with what consequence? The primary empirical contribution of this chapter lies with offering a 'deep dive' of specific diaspora governance practices and showing how governance practices in the development field constitute diasporas as 'new development actors' and 'partners' in development. These practices sometimes rest on an essentialized understanding of "diasporas as actual communities, rooted in a national 'home' and sharing a group identity" (see Sinatti and Horst 2015). But through the language and practices of 'partnership', diaspora members are also rendered *individually* governable, as they are cast as bounded (rational) entities, i.e. agents of change, entrepreneurs, or so-called changemakers. The chapter will also show how these diaspora governance practices reproduce a very particular understanding of development (as technical/apolitical), and of the international system.

In combination with the other empirical chapters, this chapter also provides evidence on *who* governs the diaspora. In doing so, this chapter will also contribute to ongoing conversations about the role of the state in diaspora engagement and development governance, without assuming a priori the centrality of the state to governance. The untangling of diaspora governance practices reveals that governance requires an assemblage of actors and spaces. In the development field, non-governmental actors like development NGOs and the private sector play a significant role. Importantly, in this chapter we learn how governance (as enabling and constraining power), is also exercised through non-human agency e.g. by material infrastructures such as the Robertson building. Other empirical insights from this chapter will inform arguments made throughout the thesis. Specifically, this chapter will demonstrate precisely how the 'global' is constituted in the governance of diasporas in the development field, i.e. either through processes of scale jumping, or discursive constitution and naming processes. This chapter will also contribute empirical evidence for my overarching argument that different forms of power work together to shape the politics of diaspora governance. It will untangle the different power dimensions (connectivity, legitimacy, bureaucracy and spatiality) that constitute governance. Overall, the chapter advances the broader theoretical contribution of this thesis that diaspora governance does not unfold in the same way across the globe, in a universal fashion. The chapter will show that the particularly local urban (Toronto) and national (Canadian) context shape how diaspora governance unfolds, whilst also being informed by a

'global' development field. Diaspora governance is thus both universal and particular; both global and local.

The chapter will proceed as follows: The next section will explore a number of historical entanglements: It will begin with a history of the formation of a migration-development nexus in the development field, before discussing the gradual emergence of a 'diasporas as partners' discourse and practice. The section will then reconstruct a history of the mobilization of Tamils for development as well as the governance of Tamils in the development field. The second section will then offer an analytical deep dive on diaspora governance practices, starting from and in-depth ethnographic exploration of the DENG. It will explore how the DENG was established, how it operates and how it relates to broader global and Canadian development objectives. The section will draw out four distinct but interconnected dimensions of power that shape the politics of diaspora governance in the development field, namely legitimacy, connectivity, bureaucracy and spatiality.

3.1.   A History of Tamil Diaspora Governance in International Development

This section will lay out some of the key historical conditions and junctures that have shaped Tamil contributions to homeland development and have made contemporary practices of diaspora governance in the development field, such as the DENG, possible.

3.1.1.   International development and the migration-development nexus

The story of the emergence of diaspora governance practices in the international development field must begin with an exploration of the formation of the development field. International development, as a concept, is rooted in modernization theory and suggests that states progress on a linear pathway towards 'development'. Development is initially considered a metric by which to measure the economic wealth of states and ascertain their position on a scale/different 'levels' of development. Importantly, this thinking is deeply historically embedded. After the second world war, nascent nation-states that had just freed themselves from colonial rule were considered to be occupying the lowest levels of the development ladder. International development thinking was institutionalised through the emergence of the Bretton Woods institutions, which were set up to regulate global trade (WTO), administer loans for

reconstruction after WWII (WB, then International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), and later 'developing' nations, and to oversee the international financial system (IMF). Here International Development matured into a 'field' with its own professional actors, norms, and institutions that concerned themselves with the alleviation of global poverty.

How did political economists and the emerging development field assess the role of migrants in achieving this goal? In this immediate post-war period, there was great optimism about what de Haas (2012) and others have called the migration-development nexus. Large-scale labour migrations took place and saw people from countries across the world (but especially Southern Europe and Turkey) migrate to Western European to help rebuild countries destroyed during the war. However, this initial optimism did not last long as the post-war economic miracle started to decline, bursting the 'brain-gain' bubble.

This coincided with institutional developments in Washington DC. While the Bretton Woods institutions were initially dominated by Keynesian (interventionist) political economic thought, this changed with the emerging influence of neoliberal economic theorists, such as Milton Friedman, who began to champion policies, which freed economic markets from state intervention. The Bretton Woods Institutions thus began to experience "institutional slippage" (Babb 2003), with far reaching global political consequences. By the 1990s, neoliberal economic theorising firmly structured the international development governance field. But it also had an impact on governance more broadly. During this time, governance responsibility gradually shifted away from the state and towards a multitude of supranational and non-state actors, the private sector and NGOs. Rather than an inevitable function of the diminishing of state power under conditions of advanced globalization, this 'hollowing out of the state' (Milward and Provan 2000) came about due to political reforms first implemented in countries like the US and UK, by the Reagan and Thatcher administrations respectively. They were then spread globally through structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and WB. These neoliberal political strategies resulted in the massive defunding of public services, which lead to an increased need for private or non-governmental sector involvement in governance, and the responsibilisation of individuals vis-á-vis the state. David Harvey (2007), one of the most prominent chroniclers and critics of neoliberalism, explains its emergence not as the linear roll-out and implementation of pure economic theory. Rather, he suggests that "the capitalist world stumbled towards neoliberalisation (…) through a series of gyrations and chaotic experiments that really only converged as a new orthodoxy with the articulation of what became known as the 'Washington Consensus' in the 1990s." (Harvey 2007: 13). According to Harvey, place mattered in determining why the Bretton Woods institutions experienced slippage. This fits

with Babb's argument that, rather than 'take over' the Bretton Woods institutions, liberal (and later neoliberal) thinking of the early 20th century never actually went away; the institutions in Washington DC had always been and remained extremely anti-Keynesian. This highlights the importance of Washington DC as a social space for the proliferation and maintenance of dominant political economic thinking, and as a central node in a global communicative network of development practitioners and policy makers. In turn, this suggests that the WC, while being global in its reach and consequences, was also an acutely local phenomenon.[45]

How did these paradigmatic changes in the approaches and mind-sets of international development actors in Washington DC under the Washington Consensus affect how they thought about migration? De Haas has argued that this period of market fundamentalism was characterized by a loss of interest in the potential effects of migration on development, and vice versa. At the same time, accelerated structural readjustment, leading to the consolidation of a global value chain, and labour migrations sparked "brain drain pessimism" (2012) in the development field. This period lasted until the late 1990s, when the International Development field experienced another shift, via the emergence of the Post-Washington Consensus (PWC). A decade of structural adjustment programmes had by now wreaked havoc in the global South, costing millions of lives and livelihoods, and forcing even the Washington set to rethink their strategies. Rather than freeing the market from state interference, the focus was now on creating stable institutions, albeit still through externally imposed structural adjust programmes. In the 1990s, Joseph Stieglitz emerged as the central critic of the WC, as well as directing the future policy direction taken by the WB. Under his lead, the explicit market fundamentalism of the WC gave way to a focus on building 'knowledge economies' (Pellerin and Mullings 2013). At around this time 'migration and remittances' became the new development mantra (Kapur 2003), in part because of a "spectacular surge in global remittances" (de Haas 2012: 9). From 1990-2008 there was a tenfold increase from 24 billion in 1990, to 243 billion USD in 2008. But this increase in remittance numbers alone was not enough to establish the new development mantra. Remittances were also were increasingly seen as a stable 'bottom-up' source of development finance, necessary to strengthen institutions. This, in turn, fit well with the PWC programme. Ultimately, what de Haas has termed the neo-optimistic ''brain gain'' trend (de Haas 2012), remained dominant in DC circles until very recently.

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[45] This explains, perhaps, why California School challenges to modernization theory in the 1960s and 70s (in the form of world system approaches and dependency theory, see e.g. Gunder Frank 1966, 1967) were largely unsuccessful, in that they were geographically too far removed from DC to make a lasting impact, or truly challenge professional development practice.

Today, the International Development field is still dominated heavily by the thinking of Washington DC-based (or trained) individuals. However, rather than singular meta narratives (like modernization, liberalization) it is organized around smaller sets of specific goals, e.g. the MDGs and now the SDGs. Problems identified in contemporary liberal development governance circles are persistent global poverty and underdevelopment; dependency of underdeveloped nations on external actors and local disempowerment; and unsustainable development programmes. The solution therefore are practices that: a) Help people to help themselves, through technical assistance and capacity building, b) contribute to local empowerment, c) are sustainable. In 2015, this became enshrined in the global Agenda for Sustainable Development. A central innovation of the SDGs from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was their insistence that development is not just the responsibility of the global South; rather it concerned everybody. Developed countries in the global North were now equally responsible for the SDGs' success, for example in the fight against climate change, and the eradication of world poverty. This argumentation rests on a global systems approach which sees the world as integrated, any efforts to affect change must thus be holistic and sensitive to this global interconnectedness (Zhang et al. 2016).

In sum, within the story of a changing global development field and changes in the political economy of development, was nested another story: that of an emergent migration-development nexus. Hein de Haas has suggested that the "debate on migration and development has swung back and forth like a pendulum" in line with "more general paradigm shifts in social and development theory" (de Haas 2010: 227). Importantly, it was organisations like the World Bank and the Migration Policy Institute, both materially and symbolically embedded in Washington DC, or the Geneva-based Global Migration and Development Forum and its various state and non-state actor participants, who were the main drivers of the nexus. In sum, dominant thinking about the link between migration and development largely mirrored dominant political economic thinking in the development field. However, the shifts and changes in what is considered doxa, are pushed forwards by specific events, processes and people. The next section shifts gears and goes into more micro detail, exploring the emergence of a more specific diaspora and development link.

3.1.2. *Linking diasporas and development: From the US to Canada*

While the connection drawn between migration and development was discussed throughout the 20th century, usually mirroring dominant political economic theories (de Haas 2010), the specific linkage of development to *diasporas* took off only in the early 2000s. Here, a driving force was the publication of a World Bank report on remittances by Dilip Ratha, which illuminated just how large a proportion of global financial transactions was made up by money sent by migrants to their countries of origin (Ratha 2003). Word amongst DC's policy-making community traveled fast and soon the diaspora and development nexus was expanded beyond remittance sending (Newland and Patrick 2004). In 2009 USAID launched its Diaspora Network Alliance (DNA) "as a roadmap through which USAID resources can engage with diaspora communities towards effective programming".[46] Enthralled by the idea of DNA, Hillary Clinton - then Secretary of State - launched the International Diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA) in the State Department in 2011,[47] to "(harness) the resources of diaspora communities to promote sustainable development and diplomacy in their countries of heritage."[48]

In Canada, federal interest in engaging diaspora communities was off to a slow start, despite the country's high immigrant density and significant remittance sending.[49] While, under Stephen Harper's conservative party leadership, funding of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was cut,[50] the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in 2012 began calling witnesses for a report on the role of the private sector in international development.[51] Invited were a number of experts from the US, who made a point to inform the parliamentary committee about the importance of diasporas as private sector actors in the development field. While some MPs in the committee became interested in exploring this "diaspora option" (Pellerin and Mullings 2013), largely because they themselves had large migrant constituencies, at the federal level interest largely fizzled out. Further, at this

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[46] Diaspora Networks Alliance,
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1880/DNA_Framework_(revAug2013).pdf
[47] Interview with MPI director, Kathleen Newland, spring 2018.
[48] https://www.state.gov/s/partnerships/diaspora/
[49] https://mowatcentre.ca/canada-is-now-a-diaspora-nation/
[50] CIDA is later subsumed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Development, which in 2015 is renamed Global Affairs Canada.
[51] http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-1/FAAE/report-6/

time diaspora groups themselves seemed reluctant to be seen merely as remittance senders or money givers by the Canadian state.[52]

At the municipal level, things looked slightly different. Driven by the talks on diaspora and development in Ottawa, in 2012 the Toronto-based peace-building NGO the Mosaic Institute hosted an event in cooperation with Washington DC-based IdEA, titled *Diasporas@Toronto*. This event was also one of the earliest occasions that saw Toronto-based Tamil diaspora organisations engaged in a wider inter-ethnic development network. But Tamil participation in this event was met with disapproval, in particular by the more established Tamil diaspora community long engaged in political activism (Amarasingam 2015). The following section will explore why this was the case.

3.1.3. Tamils in Canada and mobilization for homeland development

Of the approximately one million strong global Tamil diaspora, estimates suggest that up to 180.000 of those currently reside in Canada (Gunasingam 2014), most in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Converging push and pull factors in the 1980s make it possible to account for the size of the Tamil community in Canada today. Almost in conjunction with the outbreak of civil war in Sri Lanka in 1983, a number of political shifts occurred in Canada affecting also Canadian immigration policy. As Amarasingam has argued "Tamil migrants (…) benefited from the period of 'turbulence' that marked Canadian immigration and refugee determination in the 1980s" (2015: 78). Of course, Canada was also a preferred destination for Tamils based on their familiarity with the English language. Despite a large proportion of Tamils settling in Canada as political refugees in the late 1980s and early 90s, today the Tamil diaspora in Canada is very heterogenous, in terms of immigrant generation, religion, caste, and class (Gunasingam 2014). Perhaps the most central cleavage amongst diaspora Tamils in Toronto, but also globally, is found in their position towards homeland politics. Here I cannot do justice to the complexity that characterises the relations of the Tamil diaspora with their homeland, both during the conflict and after. However, I will attempt to highlight a number of relations, particularly those that have conditioned the engagement of the Toronto-based Tamil community in development governance today.

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[52] Interview with Tamil diaspora organizer, Toronto, summer 2016.

The engagement of the Tamil diaspora community in homeland politics (including development governance) has overwhelmingly been regarded as contentious. Primarily, this is because the Tamil diaspora, particularly those residing in the UK and Canada, were viewed as 'peace-wreckers' or spoilers during the civil war (Eichhorst 2007; Zunzer 2004; Baser and Swain 2008; Newman and Richmond 2006). There is evidence to suggest that they were the main financial supporters of the insurgent group fighting the Sri Lankan state government for national self-determination, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Some liberal advocacy organisations have highlighted that many of these financial contributions to the LTTE's war-effort were violently extorted from the Tamil diaspora community.[53] However, this does not negate the fact that diaspora Tamils were also voluntarily sending large amounts of money to their families and relatives, to ensure their survival and also to further the freedom-struggle back home. Whatever the 'true' reason behind the high number of remittances reaching the LTTE-controlled areas during the Sri Lankan civil war, it made the Sri Lankan state government, as well as the majority Singhalese population on the island extremely suspicious, nay fearful, of the Tamil diaspora overall. This suspicion continues to this day.[54] Thus, one reason for the dearth of Tamil diaspora inclusion in development governance is that "the government (has viewed) the diaspora primarily through the lens of security, and not development" (Amarasingam and Poologaindran 2016).

But suspicion swings two ways. Throughout my research amongst the Tamil diaspora community in Toronto, inquiries about engagement in development were met with bewilderment. Indeed, the concept of 'development' was firmly associated with repressive activities that the government had been pursuing in the North and East of the island since their defeat of the LTTE.[55] 'Development' was essentially understood by Tamils in the diaspora to signify Singhalese military occupation and land grabbing. And indeed, it was the "Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development, and Security in the Northern Province" which took over the governance of majority Tamil areas (Guriybe and Tharmalingam 2017: 182). Finally, a large proportion of the Tamil diaspora in Toronto today views engagement in development to present a distraction from more pressing areas of Tamil post-war diaspora mobilization such as lobbying for accountability and human rights at the UN or with the Canadian government.

The end of the war in 2009 presented an important window of opportunity for Tamil diaspora engagement in homeland development. Not only did the extremely violent fighting in

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[53] https://www.hrw.org/report/2006/03/14/funding-final-war/ltte-intimidation-and-extortion-tamil-diaspora
[54] So much so that many civil society groups who are trying to foster diaspora engagement in Sri Lanka today are refraining from using the diaspora term; see Mohamed-Saleem 2016.
[55] Singhalese settlement in Tamil areas in 1970s also called 'Mahavali Development Scheme'.

the North and East of Sri Lanka, killing countless Tamil civilians, lead to an increase in the perceived need for external humanitarian and development assistance. 2009 also presented an important turning point for international geopolitical engagement with the Sri Lankan state, and by extension the Tamil diaspora community (Brun and van Hear 2012; Guyot 2018). As evidence of war crimes committed by the GOSL against Tamil civilians began to mount, international perception of the Tamil diaspora also began to shift. While in Canada, and in Toronto in particular, Tamils had made headlines through their involvement in gang violence,[56] and subsequently as terrorist-sympathisers, in 2009 they were able to garner the support of the federal government (Godwin 2018). An important milestone for this was the Tamil occupation of the Gardiner Expressway in downtown Toronto (Jeyapal 2013). In early 2009, during the most violent fighting of the entire civil war, a huge protest was staged outside of the Ontario provincial government building, later spilling on to one of the major traffic arteries of the city.[57] While some criticized the event for portraying the Tamil diaspora as a nuisance and assign it no political importance, it is used by many Tamils to signal a shift in diasporic consciousness. For example, the 2009 events awakened many Tamil youth to the plight of their ethnic kin in the homeland, which many of them had never stepped foot on, thus leading to a renewed interest in seeking relations with their 'homeland'.[58] On the other hand, it certainly affected perceptions of the Tamil diaspora held by fellow Canadians, who first considered the disruptions a nuisance, but gradually became more receptive toward Tamil ethnic grievances (Bradimore and Bauder 2012; Jeyapal 2014).[59] After 2009, Tamil diaspora attention, also that of younger generations, broadly began to focus on the international level, specifically the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), where claims to transitional justice and accountability were being negotiated. In many ways, the post-war period saw the relationship between the Tamil diaspora and the Sri Lankan state strained even more.

During this time the opportunities for formal Tamil diaspora involvement in development governance were minimal, and there were no Sri Lankan state-led efforts to harness Tamil diaspora contributions to development governance. Similarly, in the early years after the end of the war the topic of 'development' was barely raised amongst Tamils in Toronto, at least not publicly or in a formalised manner.

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[56] *Bullets fly as Tamil gang war flares*, The Globe and Mail,
https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/bullets-fly-as-tamil-gang-war-flares/article25437485/
[57] *Tamil protest moves off Gardiner to Queens Park*,
https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2009/05/10/tamil_protest_moves_off_gardiner_to_queens_park.html
[58] Interview with Tamil activist, Toronto, summer 2016.
[59] Interview with diaspora scholar in Toronto, summer 2016.

3.1.4. In 2015 the stars align: Emerging Tamil diaspora inclusion in development

The year 2015 presented another important milestone for Toronto-based Tamil diaspora organisations working in the development field. A number of globally interconnected events occurred that set the scene for the inclusion of Tamil diaspora in relevant development governance networks and spaces.

On the one hand, in Sri Lanka the election of Maithripala Sirisena to the office of president, in a surprise defeat of incumbent Mahinda Rajapaksa, stirred hope amongst factions of the Tamil diaspora that progress towards justice was on the horizon. While Rajapaksa's reign was defined largely by his Singhalese chauvinism, corruption, and violent decimation of the Tamil population during the final stage of the civil war,[60] Sirisena ran on a platform of 'good governance' and promises to ensure accountability for Tamil victims. The election outcome also briefly made it safer for Tamil diaspora members to physically travel to Sri Lanka. Ultimately, a window of opportunity for diaspora Tamils to engage in development governance in their homeland opened up. Meanwhile, Canada also held elections in 2015. Replacing conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the election of Justin Trudeau, leader of the liberal party, signalled a move towards economically liberal, socially progressive and a more internationally oriented Canadian politics.

Further, both national elections coincided with the official the launch of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As mentioned, a central innovation of the SDGs was their insistence that development is no longer just the responsibility of the global South; rather it concerned everybody. Developed countries in the global North were now equally responsible for the SDGs' success, for example in the fight against climate change, and the eradication of world poverty. Articulated in this manner, the SDGs quickly found resonance among Canadian development professionals, and the newly minted ministry of "Global Affairs Canada" wholeheartedly embraced the new international development agenda. While remaining a national body, the renaming of the ministry indicates what Tsing has referred to as 'scale-making projects' (2011: 57): implying that the mere invocation of a global scale can indicate a profound shift in meaning. However, the 'global'-positioning of the ministry responsible for development governance did not translate to a larger budget to back up this position federally. This became evident in 2017, during the release of the new budget for the now-famously titled

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[60] WikiLeaks cables: 'Sri Lankan president responsible for massacre of Tamils'
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/01/wikileaks-sri-lanka-mahinda-rajapaksa

Feminist International Assistance Policy. Indeed, lack of additional funding provided for the implementation of the highly ambitious SDGs placed additional pressure on civil society organisations working in the development sector.[61]

Meanwhile, immediately before the federal elections in 2015, the then-Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), had tasked the OCIC with holding a consultation on the engagement of 'cultural communities in sustainable development'.[18] Even though the term 'diaspora' was avoided in the title, in my discussions with participants and organisers it became clear that the consultations were largely borne from the 2012 report on the role of non-state actors in international development by the Standing Committee of FAAE.[62] While the OCIC was put in charge of organising the event, they turned to the Mosaic Institute for support, explicitly for their expertise on all things diaspora, implicitly for their extensive network of organisations (specifically in the field of diasporas and peace-building, see above). The consultation gathered a number of academic experts on diasporas and civil society organisations, like WUSC and Cuso International, both with a long history of running diaspora volunteering programmes in the global South. This event would also turn out to be highly significant for the emergence of a Toronto-centered group of organisations and individuals focused on engaging diasporas in development. Indeed, it was here that the idea for the Toronto-based DENG was conceived, as will be explored further below in this chapter. Importantly, the executive director of the Mosaic Institute had extended invitations to a select number of recently formed Tamil diaspora-run development and peacebuilding organisations. This was a significant step towards the inclusion of Tamil diaspora in development governance. For the Tamil organisations that ended up making it onto the guest list, this 2015 consultation provided a significant opportunity to broaden their organisational networks and consolidate their relationship with the OCIC, and the broader Canadian (and global) development community.

The preceding paragraphs have outlined the emergence and maturing of the International Development field over the course of the 20th and 21st century, as well as the trajectory of the migration-development nexus within this field. The section then went on to situate diaspora within the migration-development nexus and to show how dominant ideas about diasporas and development diffused (or better: were transported through specific social connections) from their epicenter in Washington DC to the Canadian, and ultimately the Toronto context, where they could begin to shape Tamil diaspora mobilization and governance.

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[61] Interview with NGO representative, Toronto, spring 2017.
[62] FAAE, 2012, *Driving Inclusive Economic Growth: The Role of the Private Sector in International Development*, http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-1/FAAE/report-6/

The section also traced the emergence of and barriers to development initiatives by Tamils in their Sri Lankan homelands and illuminated the micro processes that have recently brought some Tamil diaspora organisations into the mainstream Canadian international development debate. Throughout this section I have highlighted the complex interplay of global and local processes and agency and structure in driving forward historical processes.

What becomes evident, is that the emergence of strategies to engage diaspora in development governance is not linear, and far from resembles a national roll-out or international downward diffusion of policy. Rather, it is characterised by contingency, and the formation of unlikely alliances, sometimes out of chance, often out of convenience. The story told here encompasses entanglements between organisations, spaces, ideas and agents that a state-centric account of diaspora engagement in development governance would entirely miss. But acknowledging the existence of complexity, contingency, and chance is only the first step towards a better understanding of the politics of diaspora governance in development. The next section will delve in much more detail into these processes as they unfolded during my fieldwork. I will now disentangle the conditions that underlie this seemingly chaotic engagement. Specifically, I will show how diaspora inclusion in development governance, has been conditioned by social connectivity, legitimacy claims, and spatial embeddedness. My starting point is the context described at the end of this section, namely the coming together of the (global) International Development field, more local Canadian and Toronto-based development professionals and networks, and the Tamil diaspora.

3.2.   (Dis)Entangling Development Governance

It is an afternoon in the early spring of 2017,[63] and I am on my way to attend a meeting of the Diaspora Engagement Networking Group, briefly alluded to in the opening of this chapter. I have just taken the TTC north subway to Yonge and Eglinton junction, in Toronto's midtown area. Above ground, I am greeted by towering office complexes, high-end chain restaurants, and indoor-entertainment complexes. While a large and busy intersection forms the core of this neighbourhood, it is surrounded by wealthier areas and dominated by car - rather than pedestrian - traffic. Yonge and Eglinton has experienced a 12% population increase from

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[63] Or at least so I thought. Little did I know that in March 2 more months of grey, snowy cold still lay ahead of me!

2011-2016,[64] with most of the new arrivals being highly educated young professionals, many of them second-generation immigrants that have moved here after accumulating initial economic capital (ibid). The area has much cheaper real estate than downtown Toronto, which is also why a range of non-profit organisations have their headquarters here.

I arrive at the head office of Toronto's YMCA - rebranded as *The Y*, presumably to shed its gender-exclusive connotation - where the DENG meeting is set to take place. I am greeted by E, a Colombian woman who I have met several times, who leads me to a small meeting room at the front of the office. She mentions that she is hopeful that the meeting today will be well attended and promptly starts a conference call with Z, the newly hired outreach officer of the OCIC. Z is calling from her office in downtown TO with a number of colleagues from her building. The first participant on the call to introduce themselves is a young man (I assume from his voice, as I can't see him) from South America who represents a cooperative of Spanish speaking people in Canada that he founded with his brother. They now have over 200 members, but, according to him, most are not particularly engaged with their respective homelands. This is something he thinks should be remedied and he states that they were missing the opportunity to draw on different people in Canada for development purposes. Next an Afghan woman in her 40s states that she is primarily interested in joining a global women's network. I find out in an interview with her that she is a well-known human rights activist and has only very recently arrived in Canada as a political refugee. On the call are also two women from Cuco International, one of them the 'outreach and partnerships' officer that I had interviewed several months before. She states that she has a background in the private sector and has been involved in professional diaspora networks as an individual member. I get the impression that she is trying to convey that she has come to this meeting both as a development professional representing Cuso International, as well as a member of a diaspora from the African continent. She then elaborates that at Cuso International they firmly subscribe to the SDGs and believe in "bringing people - and then she explicitly mentions MPs multilateral partners, and university students – together" for the SDGs. Other participants include a representative from a fairly established Ethiopian diaspora organisation, as well as two employees from OCIC. One OCIC representative is a young woman from El Salvador, who mentions that she sees a disconnect between the Salvadoran community in Canada and the homeland. K[65], the Tamil entrepreneur, organizer and public servant, who, in his own words 'wears many hats', and who I have known

[64] Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population,
https://www.toronto.ca/ext/sdfa/Neighbourhood%20Profiles/pdf/2016/pdf1/cpa100.pdf
[65] The names of interlocutors have been changed.

since last summer, introduces his organisation, mentioning that they have recently become incorporated and will soon launch officially. Finally, another female development professional on the call emphasizes that the term diaspora 'deeply resonates with her' and that she thinks her involvement with this group is 'quite selfish' in that she is exploring her own interests and is looking for ways of 'pushing the SDGs'.

After the introductions we move on to a discussion of the panel put together by the networking group for the Global Citizenship Forum, which I also attended in January. The facilitator, Z, invites feedback but the room remains silent. Finally, the Afghani woman breaks the silence by stating that the GCF left her feeling 'refueled and energized'. The OCIC facilitator, not entirely satisfied with the answer, pushes further to see whether there were 'any challenges in the process? Things that they could have done better'? I know from an earlier interview with her that she was unhappy with how the panel selection had happened. The Afghani woman replies that the team should perhaps have had more time to better communicate, however, she quickly adds that this problem was not serious. The Cuso representative agrees that 'some more reflection time was needed' and elaborates that she thought that 'some really deep thoughts were shared' but that these could have been better articulated with more time for reflection. Next on the meeting's agenda, is the discussion of a survey created by the networking group to map the presence of diaspora organisations working towards the SDGs in the GTA and beyond. The facilitator shares a preliminary analysis of the survey which summarizes the specific goals that organisations are working towards, and what their development focus is 'in the homeland', again framed in the language of the SDGs. A discussion then ensues about uses of the survey data and the general purpose of the networking group going forward. The Afghani woman asks whether the report will lay the foundation for more intense cooperation around diasporas and the SDGs. The response she receives from the reps of OCIC and Cuso is that this will hopefully 'come organically out of the working group' and that this would be a good time to discuss what people's expectations are. The Cuso rep states that 'as an International Development organisation', for them it is a priority to know 'where the actors are' and what their technical capacity is. Based on this, their work involves a series of 'diaspora capacity-building workshops', for example, on fundraising and organizational strategy'. She then suggests that this group could become a 'diaspora knowledge expert'. K asks if there is a plan to formalize this working group into the OCIC governance structure. His question is met by an explanation from the OCIC worker that the functioning of OCIC working groups depends on membership and staff support levels. The underlying strategy pursued by OCIC, she states, is to create 'multisectoral dialogue'. Her colleague then starts to

wrap up the meeting by restating that 'we're moving in the direction of this group becoming a knowledge resource', while the Cuso International worker adds that a 'roadmap' for organisations towards financing and technical assistance and capacity building will also be required. She continues by asking whether she can send around information about Cuso International's diaspora 'strategy sessions' but qualifies this by saying that she does not want to give the impression that Cuso is trying to monopolize the group.

As mentioned, the vignette outlined here describes the proceedings of a meetings of the Diaspora Engagement Networking Group (DENG). I was invited to the very first meeting of the group when I reached out to the OCIC for an interview in the summer of 2016 and then continued attending them throughout the course of my fieldwork. The initial meeting in the summer of 2016 was arranged and facilitated by the Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC), a Canadian government-funded organisation whose mission it is to connect and build the capacity of its member organisations working in the international development sector. Much like the meeting just described, the initial meeting was attended by representatives of organisations who were working with diaspora that had 'diaspora engagement' written into their strategy, as well as diaspora-run organisations, as well as some who self-identified as members of a diaspora. Amongst them were international NGOs (INGOs) like Cuso International, with many years of experience implementing diaspora and development programmes, as well as a local diaspora-run organisations still in the process of applying for charitable status. While the OCIC representative facilitated the session, they made clear that members should take charge. Participants revealed mixed reasons for attendance and also a broad range of understandings of what 'diaspora' meant to them. Most had only a vague understanding of the term but felt like it could be a useful frame to get their community to rally behind the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and most revealed an urge to leverage their privileged position in Canada.

Thus, since the summer of 2016 the DENG has brought together individuals and NGOs across the GTA that work in the field of international development either with organisations that 'engage' diaspora communities or organisations that are diaspora-run, or both. During my fieldwork these meetings were held semi-regularly, about every other month. According to the OCIC website and the OCIC and Cuso International staff that I interviewed, the DENG was set up by the OCIC to facilitate continuous 'multisectoral dialogue' and seeks to build capacity and 'influence and inspire'. The DENG is then understood as a way of including diasporas in international development networks, building their capacity, and facilitating knowledge exchange between diasporas and non-diaspora actors. At first glance, it appears that the DENG

was set up as a functional response to problems faced by diaspora organisations and other development actors. Diaspora organisations can use it as a resource to 'build capacity', while development organisations can draw on diaspora expertise. As a result, equitable "partnerships" would be formed.

But there is a more complex story here. In my interviews and online research, I only had to dig a little deeper to begin to see the DENG in a different light. I learned quickly from interviews and online research that the DENG built on a GAC consultation event,[66] which took place in the spring of 2015 before the International Assistance Review, and which framed diaspora groups as potential 'new' partners in achieving Canada's international development policy aims (Global Affairs Canada 2016). It was then decided that a working group should follow up on this submission with the long-term aim of creating 'best practices' for diaspora engagement and also to facilitate access for diaspora engagers/OCIC members to GAC (e.g. through participation in the Global Citizen's Forum). Indeed, DFATD had made the top-down decision that the OCIC should organize these consultations as a matter of urgency. Suddenly the inclusive and non-hierarchical nature of the DENG is called into question. The DENG, as it turns out, although couched in the language of networks, cooperation and partnerships, is both a site and an outcome of political struggles; both global and local.

The vignette already alludes to a few of such struggles: There emerges a divide between the smaller more explicitly diaspora-run organisations and the larger Canadian development NGOs. The OCIC and Cuso International representatives try to avoid being perceived as too prescriptive, or hands-on in directing the working group process. On the other hand, the diaspora organisations seem to want clearer guidance and direction. With extremely limited budgets, and many of them working on an ad hoc, non-professional basis, they seek clarity about the benefits that involvement in this working group will bring them. But there are not just political struggles being fought out *inside* the DENG (as I explore later). The DENG itself is the *outcome* of struggle; struggles over how best to govern international development more generally. Neither networking, nor capacity building, nor partnership are value neutral or apolitical terms or practices. (Net)working groups, like the DENG, today form part of the toolkit of 'networked' governance, a public administration and organizational management strategy which suggests a flattening of hierarchies in decision making. Advocates of network governance operate under the assumption that the flatter the hierarchies, the more inclusive or participatory the governance becomes. A shift towards 'participatory' and 'inclusive'

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[66] Cultural Communities for Sustainable Development Consultation, OCIC website http://www.ocic.on.ca/what-we-do/influence-and-inspire/cultural-communities-for-sustainable-development-consultation/

governance (Brown 2002), has also become the doxa in the development field, particularly since the PWC and more so since the launch of the SGDs (see section 3.1.1.). How inclusive or participatory this governance really is will be explored below.

Another crucial dimension of the (net)working group, is the assumption that it fosters the creation of 'partnerships. Indeed, the person representing Cuso International at the DENG meeting[67] holds the title 'Outreach and Partnerships' officer. In an interview she tells me that for Cuso International "diaspora for development has always been a strategy within the organization as a whole" and she elaborates that this involves "learning, having that exchange of knowledge (and) supporting a collaboration-spirit of international cooperation." Crucially, she repeatedly reassures me that diaspora engagement is all done "in the context of partnership". What does this emphasis on 'partnership' signify? The development field has been structured by varying understandings of global politics over the years. Currently, there is an (discursive) emphasis away from 'aid' and assistance from North to South towards less hierarchical relationships between states and nonstate actors. Importantly, partnership is one of the key components of the Agenda 2030, beside "People, Planet, Prosperity and Peace". In the preamble of the UN Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on September 25th, 2015 partnership is understood to denote the following:

> We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused (sic) in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.[68]

What does this mean for how 'diaspora' is understood in this field? I propose in this chapter that in the development field, 'partnership' is the dominant role that diasporas are assigned in the development field. But what does this actually entail? What are the political consequences of governing diasporas as partners? While the partnership discourse suggests the flattening of power relations, this is deceiving. What emerges from my data is that: diaspora individuals and organisations are not all equally fit for 'partnership'. Some diaspora will be considered effective partners and will therefore be included in mainstream development governance practices/have

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[67] Although she is also there as a member of the broader African diaspora herself.
[68] UN Resolution A/RES/70/1, https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

their voice heard while others will not. The following section will explore the question: What are the conditions that must be met in order for diasporas to be governed as 'partners' in the development field?

Governance practices like the DENG, which promise to flatten the power dynamics inherent in development governance, are thus far from apolitical, rather they stipulate what kinds of diaspora transnationalism/engagement in homeland development are permissible. This chapter will untangle different practices of diaspora governance which purport to broaden access to development governance. By untangling such practices of diaspora governance (i.e. those emphasizing networking, capacity-building and partnerships) it will emerge that this is not always/rarely the case, as it underestimates the barriers that exist to inclusion. From my participation in the DENG and from interviews with people engaged in practices of diaspora engagement for development, I got a real sense of the need to 'discipline' diasporas in their development efforts. How are diasporas disciplined? How is their engagement in development managed? To answer these questions, the next section will disentangle different practices of diaspora governance, with an eye to the different forms of power that condition diaspora 'engagement' or 'inclusion' as partners in development. Importantly, it will show that within diaspora governance practices, different forms of power are at play: legitimacy, connectivity, and spatiality. However, these different modes of power are differently structured in different overlapping fields, which creates additional barriers to inclusion and 'partnership', as diaspora members must navigate power relations in multiple fields at once. Accordingly, this section is first discussing the structuring of the development governance field before it shows how this 'global/universal' field interacts with more local fields.

I will now further (dis)entangle diaspora governance practices in the development field to shed light on the power struggles that are contained in such practices. It will be organized around the following four power dimensions: legitimacy, connectivity, bureaucracy, and spatiality. It will begin with teasing out power struggles over legitimacy and show how ideas about what is legitimate conduct are embedded in overlapping fields, from the global to the local. It will then tease out power struggles over social connectivity, including over links to sites and sources of power. Finally, the section will look at the spatial power dimension of practices, which includes physical access to particular places, and the possession of material resources.

3.2.1. Becoming legitimate partners in development governance

How are distinctions made between diaspora actors in the international development field? What forms of diaspora mobilization for development are permissible? This first section is concerned with questions of legitimacy. My data reveals that certain forms of diaspora-driven development are considered more legitimate than others. Who is a good 'partner in development' is tied to struggles around who conducts themselves in a legitimate manner. Consequentially, many, if not, most Tamil diaspora groups in Toronto are excluded from contributing to homeland development based on a lack of legitimacy. My participation in and observation of activities of the DENG, as well as interviews with various working group participants revealed in order to be included as partners in development governance, diasporas need to a) signal their commitment to and understanding of the SDGs, b) show that their development efforts are sustainable, effective and go 'beyond remittances', c) demonstrate technical capacity and professionalism, all whilst d) possessing local knowledge in order to be representative of their homeland compatriots. Finally, they have to e) appear legitimate in the eyes of fellow Tamils in order to have enough financial buy-in to action their development programmes.

My fieldnotes from the DENG meeting reveal the importance placed by members of the group on the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030. During the meeting I attended, members often made a point of highlighting their commitment to the UN's Agenda 2030, sometimes criticizing their fellow diaspora members for lack of adherence to them. In an interview with one of the Tamil members of the DENG, he laments the mobilization practices of his fellow Tamil-Canadians:

> they are not doing development as we understand it, they are doing development as they understand. Not based on any Sustainable Development principles. Not based on understanding the existing social inequities in SL. They are just doing it like 'let's hold a party, raise money and give back'.[69]

He continues to criticize other Tamil organisations by saying that:

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[69] Interview with Tamil-Canadian founder/development activist, summer 2016

one time I remember going to a meeting, where (…) a lot of money was raised and it was given to an organisation in the North (of Sri Lanka) where they brought a hundred sewing machines and gave those to women. And I pretty much yelled at that meeting, saying: 'Why couldn't we invest that money in sending these women to like computer classes or programming classes? Why are we reinforcing gender-stereotypes?' And the thing is, the women who have sewing machines already are producing, but they don't know how to market that and sell it. So, it is a different skill that they actually (need) - not the sewing machine. They actually need somebody to tell them how to do business planning and marketing. So, that is the kind of nuanced approach to development that is really missing.[70]

These excerpts suggest that diasporas mobilizing for development need to be committed to the UN's Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically their commitment to gender equality. Beside verbal proclamations, alignment with the UN Agenda 2030 was performed by members of the DENG in multiple ways: In the year after the SDGs were launched in 2015, most public communications material of the OCIC and Cuso International featured visual references to the SDGs. Cuso International even features the recognizable SDG colour wheel in its logo. The SDGs can therefore be considered doxa within development field at the time, which also manifests in the DENG. Here they have an important disciplining function in that they establish who is considered a legitimate partner in development governance and who is not, rewarding compliant behaviour. Thus, one way in which diaspora groups and individuals are governed is by practices that reinforce the SDGs, for example, by asking groups to frame their work in SDG terminology,[71] or by awarding funds based on fit with SDGs. One important global political consequence of the disciplining of diasporas in line with the SDGs is that that these groups end up reproducing a specific model of 'development' and 'sustainability'. An Instagram post by the Tamil diaspora organisation, which is part of the DENG reads:

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[70] Interview with Tamil-Canadian founder/development activist, summer 2016
[71] The survey conducted by the DENG of diaspora-run organisations in the GTA explicitly asks them to mention which goal they are working towards.

Sustainable development has three connecting elements of social inclusion, economic growth, and environmental protection. Our goal is to create positive change in these aspects so that one day the communities we aim to help, can become stronger.[72]

Evidently, here the term sustainability is used in the very limited sense of the SDGs, not challenging the reliance of the capitalist system on economic growth.

Beside conduct that is compliant with the SDGs, another distinguishing factor is engagement with the concept of remittances. My Tamil interlocutor at the DENG criticises that Tamil diaspora mobilization for development has historically taken the form "giving money and not asking questions":

(The) remittance economy, (…) is too expensive. The return on investment is very low. Second, what is happening is that remittance money is going into these areas. So, there is a new caste system that is being set up in the North and East, depending on whether you get remittances from a higher-class system, ... I actively advise family and friends not to send remittances back home. People take a very broad approach to the North and East in terms of not understanding that each of those are segmented markets and need to be segmented, and I didn't find that as such. I think what Jaffna needs is not money, as much as it needs skills and development. There are parts of the North East, like Mullivaikal, that do need financial investments, but people don't quite get that. The remittance economy - people out there told us - made people lazy. Drug and alcohol consumption have gone through the roof. There are other kinds of social inequities that are created as a result of the remittance economy. What is also happening through the remittance economy is, it's in many ways a continuation of what people in the diaspora have always done and don't know any better to do, which is giving money and not asking questions. (…) the matter of fact is we still don't ask questions about how the money is being spent. We don't ask for reports, we don't ask for measurement. We just give it and hope for the best. It's stupid, right? So, as a result, what has happened is: charitable giving is on an

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[72] Instagram post made by a Tamil development organisation, 1 August 2019, accessed 10 December 2020.

amazing tangent right now. Every weekend in Toronto you are guaranteed a fundraiser for Sri Lanka. And every single fundraiser nets at least 50,000 CAD on average. There are a couple of fundraisers that net 100,00 annually - through one event. The funny part is these multiple fundraisers are mostly going to the Vanni region. I have been to the Vanni region. How big is this god damn region that all you different organisations are funding the same region?[73]

He very eloquently, if somewhat exasperatedly, points out a range of problems that plague the 'remittance economy', as he calls it, which has been set up between the Tamil diaspora and its homeland. He even goes so far as to claim that remittances act as spoilers or disincentives for local populations to put in the effort to build their own capacity. His words echo what has recently become doxa in development practice: that diaspora remittances need to be managed in order to be effective. In mobilizing for development, the expressed willingness to move 'beyond remittances' (Newland and Patrick 2004; Minto-Coy 2011) towards capacity building and knowledge and skills transfer is considered central for diaspora legitimacy. In the DENG meeting, the representative of Cuso International explicitly mentions that her organisation facilitates "diaspora capacity building sessions". Like networking, capacity building is considered a tool of participatory governance, used to empower and enhance democratic decision-making, and to build social capital and trust among community members (Putnam 2000). To what extent is this end achieved in the case of 'diaspora capacity building'? What kind of capacity is built? My interview with an NGO worker sheds some light on this. She laments the 'emergency-centered' money-based and therefore less sustainable approach to diaspora remittances by the Toronto-based Philipino community:

> they don't know what our development projects are because they as a community have given less around capacity-building. So, what does that really mean? Not understanding what international development is around the kind of work and knowledge-sharing that CUSO does, they're more disaster relief so a) it's like: "Oh, there's a Taifun. We're going to give 10 to 20 dollars" and that's how they feel engaged or through the church.[74]

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[73] Interview with Tamil-Canadian founder/development activist, summer 2016
[74] Interview with NGO worker, Toronto summer 2016

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My interviews with members of the DENG, thus reveal a clear hierarchy between different 'kinds' of development practice, whereby capacity building and knowledge sharing were considered preferable over remittance sending and disaster relief, which was considered short term, or unsustainable. These findings resonate with what Sinatti and Horst have argued, i.e. that, broadly speaking, diasporas are not doing the right kind of development. They write that "while Western development assistance is seen to be based on neutral, planned and rational development processes, people's engagement with their countries of origin is understood rather as 'charity' or 'philanthropy'." (Sinatti and Horst 2015: 140). Such an understanding seems to suggest that diaspora organisations mobilizing for development derive legitimacy from being regarded as 'effective'.

The above paragraphs illustrate how legitimacy is linked to effectiveness, indicated by a mastery of discourses around sustainability and development, but also a commitment to 'going beyond remittances', towards capacity building and knowledge exchange. But there is another key component to legitimacy that I want to unpack. My findings suggest that whether diasporas are regarded as legitimate and are included as 'partners' in the development field, also has to do with their representativeness. My data reveals that diaspora gain legitimacy as partners in development governance when they are seen to be representing 'the local', or the people who are at the receiving end of external development interventions. As mentioned in the section above, for a long time the field of international development was dominated by top-down interventions and suffered from a local representativeness deficit. In the 1990s, in the so-called *local-turn* (Paffenholz 2015), practitioners and scholars instead started to favour bottom-up peacebuilding and development interventions (also prominent in other areas of global governance, see other chapters), situated in *local* knowledge. In my interview with the Cuso International representative, she describes to me what her organisation thinks the added value of doing development work through diaspora volunteering programmes is:

> the credibility of a diaspora member: sometimes they have the language. Not all the time. But these are just commonalities that support an easier conversion, an easier transition into your placement (in the field). I think language, knowledge - cultural knowledge - idioms, that are inherently known through family and just, you know, your cultural background ... support getting to work that much faster. But there is also that emotional bond of a young person - or any diaspora member for that matter - going home, so to speak, to support ... you know, helping their

country develop and contribute and give back and make an impact. I think that also has a personal meaning that I can't articulate on their behalf, but I have definitely seen it in their videos.[75]

Here, diasporas are framed as ideal partners in development interventions because they represent local populations, they are understood to possess local knowledge, thus bolstering legitimacy or 'credibility'. This local knowledge may come in the form of cultural competency, language skills, or ancestral ties. This assumption, that diaspora are - by default - carriers of local knowledge and thus in some ways representative of local populations, is of course problematic, as Sinatti and Horst (2015) have discussed. Interestingly, the people I spoke to were often very aware of the tensions that arose when they defined diaspora and diaspora competency in this way. Indeed, my interlocutors at the DENG were often careful not to overemphasise the way in which diasporas represent the 'local'. Among many, there was an awareness of the neo-colonial power dynamics that such a perspective entailed and also of the contestation this could lead to in the homeland if they were indeed perceived as "a cog in the machine of imperialism", as has been suggested by Varadarajan (2008: 268). In studying the Somali diaspora, Kleist has found that diaspora engagement in development is often contested at home, based on the assumption that it reproduces the ideology of the new host state of the diaspora. This is further underscored in the debates around the practice of volunteering and voluntourism. The Tamil diaspora organisation that is part of the DENG employs a volunteering model to engage diaspora in development. At the same time, they are keen to distance themselves from the concept of voluntourism. In my interview with the founder he states that his organisation seeks: "to provide a platform for young Sri Lankan-Canadians to rediscover their roots by going on this structured cultural quasi-volunteer, well not voluntourism ... we don't want to run the risk of making it voluntourism, but that is one aspect." Later, an Instagram post by the organisation reads:

> Voluntourism merges the words volunteering and tourism. This concept refers to the idea of volunteering in a foreign country in need of help, while on vacation. Voluntourism is usually viewed negatively due to the lack of training volunteers are provided before entering the field. This can cause more problems than solutions, as it creates short-term solutions to problems that need long-term

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plans of action. Volunteers often lack knowledge about the community, which perpetuates existing power dynamics and privilege paradoxes. At (our organisation) we avoid encouraging voluntourism by ensuring volunteers understand the history, current living conditions and are culturally sensitive of the communities they work in. #FactFriday #voluntourism[76]

This post echoes a critique that has been levelled at the mushrooming diaspora-volunteering industry which purports that diaspora volunteers lack actual development expertise and may not even speak the language, thus leading to deficits in both governance effectiveness and legitimacy, even though individuals might have ancestral links to the local context.

Finally, my fieldwork revealed another type of conduct that should be avoided by diasporas mobilizing for development because it reduces legitimacy, and that is being regarded as 'political'. For diaspora Tamils, whose relationship with the homeland has been defined by violent conflict and ongoing political strife, this becomes a tight balancing act. I learned from interviews with Tamils that politics 'back home' were best not talked about in conversations with mainstream development actors. This 'no politics' rule then resulted in Tamil diaspora organisations policing each other's development conduct. For example, one Tamil diaspora driven development initiatives that was supporting a particular local initiative was accused by fellow Tamils as being based on a "a political decision", in an attempt to delegitimize this initiative. Further, one interlocutor told me in no uncertain terms what happened to his Tamil compatriots who did not abide by the 'no politics' rule:

> a few of the people who went back (to Sri Lanka) then got into trouble and are sitting in jails in the US unfortunately. Because they were trading military intelligence and all that stuff that went down, which we didn't touch with a 10-foot pole, right?

Steering clear of contentious political debates in the homeland is thus a key strategy for Tamil diaspora actors to be considered legitimate partners in development.

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[76] Post made on 2 August 2019, accesses 10 December 2020.

In sum, my data shows that the majority of Tamil diaspora groups are excluded from being 'partners' or engaged in liberal development governance practices like the DENG, if they engage in illegitimate conduct. At the time of my field research, legitimacy is based on an impossibly delicate balance between being perceived as conducting effective and representative development at the same time. Effective conduct includes acting in line with the SDGs and signaling sustainability more generally, demonstrating technical capacity, and a commitment to eschewing purely remittance-based development in favour of capacity building. Meanwhile, diasporas are also expected to carry local knowledge and to represent local populations in their homeland, which in the Tamil case creates a further barrier to 'partnership' or inclusion. In sum, this section illustrates that diaspora organisations face an almost impossible task in trying to conduct themselves as legitimate partners in development governance. They must attend to expectations around both effectiveness and representativeness, which often are at odds with each other. They are constantly walking a tightrope, navigating a complex global political terrain, and the tensions that exist within the global development field itself.

But diaspora mobilizing for development are not just embedded in one field. Another argument that I advance in this section is that diaspora engagement in development is not only embedded in 'global' cultural fields like that of international development. Here the concept of the assemblage becomes useful, as it allows us to think about how agents are able to be simultaneously embedded in multiple fields. Situations where agents seem to move between different overlapping fields, suggests a flattening of scales. Naturally, a study of inclusion of diasporas in international (or global) development governance must be preoccupied with exploring the internal working of the development field, in order to understand diaspora access to and agency within this field. However, the reality for most diasporic actors is that they enter these 'global' fields only very infrequently. In a way, the 'global' cultural field only exists in the encounters and events that include global governance representatives, e.g. from the UN or World Bank. Tamil diaspora actors are more often concerned with their relations to their new country of residence. Diaspora organisations need to appear legitimate to the broader Canadian population and state actors if they want to attract funding. Hence, they must position themselves in a national cultural field. How do they do this? We know from the literature on integration that migrants are constantly negotiating their new home environment. Here, the idea of the 'model migrant' becomes central, especially for diasporas residing in liberal Western countries like Canada. Success is measured in terms of work ethic, educational attainment against structural odds, integration into mainstream culture, or the upholding of values of respectability. For example, on the Instagram page of the small Tamil development charity, the organisation

repeatedly expresses a commitment to 'grind culture' (one post reads "TGIF: The Grind Includes Friday"), signaling professional performance and work ethic, in line with the neoliberal capitalist system. This is in line with the arguments made by Varadarajan about the diaspora contributing to an expansion of neoliberal capitalism. This is also explored in the literature on migrant cultural capital (Erel 2010). Specifically, the position of a diaspora group or individual within the Canadian national cultural field is shaped by their performance of Canadian citizenship, i.e. upholding liberal Canadian values of multiculturalism, feminism and diversity, practicing aboriginal solidarity, performing 'hyphenated Canadian' identity. Finally, the nascent Tamil diaspora organisation I encountered at the DENG also wanted to appear legitimate in the eyes of second young (second or third) generation Tamils. These make up a large faction of the Toronto-based diaspora and form the core pool of applicants for their development volunteering programmes. Here, affirmations of technical capacity are less important. Rather, in order to appear legitimate and representative to these young people – many of whom are highly educated and hard-working young professionals - organisation have adopted discourses and practices that display what Savage et al. (2018) as emerging cultural capital. Emerging urban cultural fields are structured around educational attainment, emphasis on youth engagement, usage of youth jargon and 'millenialisms', highlighting innovation and 'newness', referencing popular culture, emphasizing reflexivity and spirituality (Savage et al. 2018). In Toronto this entails quoting Drake lyrics in social media communications. These practices become particularly important when diaspora organisations seek to enlist youth volunteers for their development programmes or as they compete for municipal funds to implement projects that foster Toronto's involvement in strengthening the SDGs.

What the above paragraphs make evident is that in order to be included in diaspora practices or networks that engage diasporas as 'partners' for development, it is not enough for Tamil diaspora organisations to mobilize for homeland development. They must do so in a way that is orthodox in the international development field. This in itself is difficult because the expectations set for legitimate diaspora conduct are often in tension with each other. But not only that. They must also conduct themselves in a national field, where both the Canadian state and fellow diaspora members are governing and evaluating their behaviour, often with very different expectations than those set by the development field. Thus, beside tensions within a single field, they also have to navigate tensions between fields. Diaspora members, but also the development professionals are constantly engaged in this delicate balancing act between communicating their technical expertise and their apolitical problem-solving capacities, and emphasising their passion, purpose and the meaningfulness of their professional pursuits. This

insistence on emphasising 'thoughtful', 'mindful', 'spiritual' engagement with development topics is a reaction to critiques of the development field as having become overly bureaucratic and soulless, as well as overrun by neoliberal norms and values. However, in a sense, these practices of self-censoring perpetuate the conditioning of the subject by a neoliberal governmental logic.

What happens if this delicate balance is not maintained? For the Tamil diaspora in Toronto, performing as a Canadian model migrant also means positioning oneself in relation to a number of contentious political debates and practices, i.e. positioning in the Tamil nationalist struggle largely determines whether the broader Tamil community views an organisation as representative or not. This is actually where a lot of the development-oriented organisations seem to falter. A diaspora organisation may be so plugged in to the global SDG debate and Canadian national politics that they are no longer considered legitimate 'representatives' of the Tamil diaspora or the local Tamils in Sri Lanka. Their legitimacy within the development field is traded in for legitimacy in the eyes of the majority of Tamil-Canadian community, and vice versa. The flipside of this is that some of the longest existing Tamil diaspora organisations, with the most extensive networks and links to all major political party leaderships, as well as the most widespread membership among the Toronto Tamil diaspora community itself, struggle to be included in the development field. This is because they may have political power in the national political field, as they influence federal MPs through electoral politics. However, they fare less strongly in terms of both development-related and emerging cultural capital.

The above section has explored how the Tamil diaspora in Toronto is governed, its conduct shaped by dominant discourses and practices in multiple overlapping fields. But who exactly is doing the governing? The answer to this question also illuminates how different fields become connected. As mentioned above, individual Tamil diaspora members may be the ones disciplining their fellow Tamils. At first glance, this seems like evidence to suggest that the Tamil diaspora is self-disciplining and that competition exists between diaspora groups. Does this qualify as self-disciplining? What if the Tamil diaspora member doing the disciplining also occupies another position? Indeed, the Tamil-Canadian setting these expectations about what diaspora-driven development should look like, also holds a post inside the Ontario Provincial Government. He is also in some ways external to 'the diaspora'. He is thus a representative of some section of the diaspora and of the host state. But he is not just a representative of the state at the national level. Through him, scales are flattened, as he moves from his position as a provincial public servant in the Queens Park buildings in downtown Toronto to attend meetings

as a representative of Toronto's local/municipal Tamil community. No doubt, occupying both of these positions at the same time creates tension.

In sum, the preceding section has explored some of the political struggles that become visible when (dis)entangling diaspora governance or 'engagement' practices. It has centered struggles over legitimacy in the (global) development field, and how these interact and stand in tension with more local fields. But other than struggles over what is considered legitimate development practice, or good diaspora conduct in the development field, my data also revealed another type of power at play. The politics of diaspora engagement in development were not just oriented around struggles around what is considered good, sustainable and therefore legitimate development practice. For diaspora individuals and organisations to exist in multiple fields at the same time, networks are important. Social connections allow diasporas to travel between different fields, proving again the importance of entanglements between different power relations. Whether diaspora were included as 'partners' also depended on where they position themselves in social space (networks) – in the development field this is not left up to chance, rather social networks are strictly governed. As briefly alluded to in the introduction to this section, many contemporary governance practices are centered around the creation of networks. By further disentangling a number of diaspora governance practices, in the next section I will now show how power operates not just through legitimacy, but also through connectivity in the governance of diaspora.

3.2.2. *Keeping the connection alive: diaspora governance and network power*

The Diaspora Engagement Networking Group (DENG), founded in Toronto in 2016, presents an example of a diaspora governance practice that seeks to foster diaspora inclusion in international development processes. As briefly mentioned above, the DENG was founded on the back of an event titled **"Cultural Communities for Sustainable Development Consultations"**, which took place in the spring of 2015. In the lead up to its International Assistance Review, the Canadian DFATD had made the top-down decision that the OCIC should organize these consultations as a matter of urgency. Indeed, I learned from interviews with the organisers that the consultations were planned very last minute, leaving little room for a well-thought out strategy on who to invite or engage in the consultations. Consequently, existing networks were leveraged. The OCIC and Cuso International already shared an office in the Centre for Social Innovation, which meant that Cuso was a shoo-in for the consultation event. In fact, much of

OCIC's focus on diaspora had emerged from close cooperation with Cuso International and its diaspora partner organisations. In the end, the diaspora organisations that were invited and thus able to be heard by the Canadian government in the consultations, were already all in the OCIC's extended network. But the ad hoc creation of guest lists was not unique to this particular event. Other evidence from my fieldwork suggests that decisions to include or engage diasporas in development governance or peacebuilding followed a similar pattern. Below is a response from the Mosaic Institute's executive director to the question of how the decision was made on whom to invite to an engagement event held in 2012, titled Diasporas@Toronto:

> Mosaic has an amazing network. (…) Mosaic is about people. We were the only game in town that did not have a connection to a specific diaspora community, which meant that we were in a position to partner with a lot of ethno-specific organisations, as well as with non-ethno-specific orgs, academic, business. We knew a lot of people. And I think we generated the list through our own networks, and we also had a significant in-kind contribution from my former employer, which was the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. They loaned us the Ontario Investment and Trade Center - of which I had been the inaugural director - which is a beautiful international trade presentation centre on Yonge Street (…) so I think it might have been a bit quid pro quo in that they provided a lot of names to investors as well. Which was great because they wanted to be seen as actively engaged in diaspora communities and conversations about business networks. So that worked for them. The peacebuilding part worked for us, the development piece worked for us, and for Cuso International, and for IdEA. And IdEA was able to say 'look, we have this partner event happening in Toronto that extends the region, the footprint of IdEA, but is organised through a particular Canadian lens' and ... everyone was happy.[77]

This excerpt confirms that the decision-making process around whom to include in the event is based in large part on existing social networks and communication channels. My data suggest that because of the ad hoc nature of many such events, a crucial dimension of diaspora inclusion in government-led consultations or civil society capacity building events is whether or not an

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[77] Interview with NGO executive director, Toronto, summer 2016.

organisation or individual has a powerful network. The founding of the DENG is ultimately an indicator for the importance given to the creation and maintenance of network relations in the development field. This, in turn, also has an impact on the importance ascribed by diaspora members to their own networking practices. I asked the Tamil member of the DENG how he and his organization became part of the networking group and how he established a relationship with the OCIC more generally:

> Oh, in a very round-about way. (...) I met a gentleman (…) who was with the Mosaic Institute. (He) knew of what I was trying to do with (the organisation), and he was very happy to see that kind of thing. And so, he asked the OCIC to invite me to be a participant in the round table that they had in 2015. And since then we kind of kept that connection alive. So, I sometimes exchange emails with the Executive Director at the OCIC and we just kind of stayed close to OCIC. (…) But I think I want to get more involved. So, this is why we decided a couple of months ago to actually apply for membership at the OCIC. And get access to the resources, but also get access to the policy formulating tables that OCIC has in Ottawa.[78]

He mentions the importance of repetition in maintaining social connections ("We kind of kept that connection alive", "I sometimes exchange emails … and so we kind of stayed close"), but he also emphasises the importance of more formal relations to create and maintain access to resources and "the policy formulating tables" where decision around international development policy were being made. But my data suggests that even beyond the development field diaspora actors need to spend a large proportion of their time and energy building social capital. This is illustrated in excerpts from an interview with the national spokesperson of the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC). This was his response to my question on how the CTC began its operations in Canada in the mid to late 2010s:

> (…) we believe in engagement. And engagement will always work. Initially, sometimes people don't engage with you, but they don't know you. (…) you have to get to know them. We believe in that very firmly. Unless you get to know

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[78] Interview with Tamil-Canadian founder/development activist, summer 2017.

somebody, you cannot pass on remarks to them. So, we went, and we sat with those people and started explaining to them. And they got to know us. (…) Locally we met with MPs and nationally we met with leaders of the parties. We went to their conventions, we met with their delegates and met with ministers, you name it. And when we go to parliament, we make it a point of meeting all different parties and leaders of the parties, at least the person who has some say in the party.[79]

Here he describes some of the struggles that the organisation experienced after its inception, and the strategies that were used in trying to establish itself in the Canadian public sphere as *The Voice of Tamil Canadians*.[80] What emerges from the excerpt is that my interlocutor is convinced that CTC's success is intimately linked to 'engagement', and that "engagement will always work". But what exactly does 'engagement' mean in this context? He seems to employ the term to describe a range of practices, from reaching out to journalists for media coverage, meeting with politicians to communicate concerns and issues affecting the Tamil community, to attending events and seeking out opportunities for face-to-face interactions with public representatives and decision-makers. He also emphasises the importance of persistence and repetition in these practices ("But I didn't go down", "It was a learning curve for us"). Ultimately, both of the above examples illustrate the importance placed by diaspora organisations on deepening and expanding the reach of their professional networks. And indeed, based on what we know about how organisations like OCIC and Mosaic make decisions about who to include in development events and consultations, the prioritisation by diasporic actors of social connections and networks seems warranted.

Evidently, we need to take networks seriously in the study of diaspora governance in development. That networks are of central importance for diasporas is a popular policy perspective (Kuznetsov 2006). Mainstream discourse suggests that the creation of networks and virtual communicational channels is the key to eradicating barriers to inclusion in and access to spaces of power. Governance actors, like the OCIC or the Canadian government, have identified access to networks as a barrier to effective public contributions to development. Thus, opportunities for networking are increasingly provided in the form of consultations, events, networking groups, lobbying. The proliferation of shared workspaces, networking groups and

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[79] Interview with spokesperson of Canadian-Tamil diaspora organisation, summer 2016.
[80] This is the official CTC slogan.

events (such as the DENG) and virtual communication tools that foster networking are considered the key to achieving inclusion in development governance. In academia the power of diasporas has also often been associated with their unique position in transnational social (Wayland 2004) or financial networks (Elo and Minto-Coy 2018). Diasporas have been conceptualized as brokers or norm entrepreneurs with an "in-between advantage" (Brinkerhoff 2016) allowing them to act as norm entrepreneurs by connecting ideas from their home and their host land.

In sum, we have now discussed two conditions that shape the ways in which diasporas are governed in the development field. The social relations between actors and the relations of these actors within overlapping fields of practice. These two are themselves interconnected in the sense that no single actor would find themselves occupying fields at different scales (global, national, local) if it wasn't for their networking capacity. Conversely, we also cannot reduce diaspora power to network position. Connectivity to networks and channels of communication on its own does not guarantee diasporas' power and inclusion in global politics. As Sinatti and Horst correctly point out: "((n)etworks are, in fact, always rooted in local realities that are of central importance to understand transnational practices, although these local realities are often numerous and not just those of ancestral origin." (2015: 148). The interconnection (and simultaneous operation) of multiple forms of power is demonstrated by the tight entanglement of legitimacy and connectivity in shaping diaspora governance as 'partners' in development. What is still missing is an understanding of a third power dimension that shapes diaspora governance in the development field; that of spatiality.

3.2.3. Spatial power: Tamil (im)mobility in the Greater Toronto Area

Ultimately, even if a Tamil diaspora organisation positions itself as a legitimate development actor and maintains social connections with powerful actors in charge of diaspora engagement in development, barriers to inclusion or 'partnership' remain. This is because connectivity and legitimacy are also always spatially anchored. Diaspora governance practices contain a spatial dimension. Consider the Robertson Building at 215 Spadina Avenue in downtown Toronto: On its website we can read that: "the building is home to a cluster of community businesses, social entrepreneurs, and non-profit organizations, as well as a bio-wall (a completely living-breathing wall made of plants), and extensive green roof, greenhouse and

cedar viewing deck."[81] Approximately 30% of my fieldwork in Toronto took place in or in close proximity to this building located in the middle of Toronto's Chinatown. The restored warehouse with a history of manufacturing of plumbing fixtures and fittings, today contains the offices of the OCIC, Cuso International and the CSI, and thus forms a crucial component of the context in which diaspora engagement strategies are embedded. A cluster of refurbished warehouse buildings on downtown Toronto's Spadina Avenue formed the space where most of the diaspora governance practices that I observed during my fieldwork took place.

Image 3.1. Robertson Building lobby with 'bio wall'

Why is this important? We learnt in the above paragraphs that buildings which house the OCIC's AGM, the meetings of the DENG, and the offices of international development NGOs have been the site of power struggles over how diaspora are governed in the development field. But the buildings are not empty containers of political struggle; they actively shape the struggle. The Robertson Building has agency as a symbolic and a social space. Is it a social 'hub' where people can mingle and where organisations share office space, and create and build their networks. As mentioned above, OCIC and Cuso International have built much of their collaboration around sharing a large open plan office.

The building also holds symbolic power. As I described in the opening of this chapter, the industrial warehouse-turned-event space in which the OCIC's AGM was held and in which the first DENG meeting took place, was redecorated in such a way that it made - what is essentially a functional room - feel like more like an upper middle-class living room, through the motley assemblage of objects and design features. Similarly, inside the office of Cuso International and the OCIC, wooden paneled floors and a shared open kitchen made it feel less

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[81] Robertson Building website, www.robertsonbuilding.com

like corporate headquarters (let alone an industrial warehouse) and more like an open plan living space. More generally, this form of reappropriation of a former industrial space, also symbolizes the informalization of labour conditions, as well as the blending of the public and the private sphere in the knowledge economy of the 21st century.

Image 3.2. CSI event space on Spadina Avenue

Henri Lefebvre (1991) has famously written about how spaces can be appropriated, reappropriated and disappropriated, shaping their role in urban politics. We can think about the Robertson Building as having been reappropriated from its original function as an industrial factory, buzzing with migrant labourers, to a hub for social enterprises employing urban middle-class workers competing for capital in the knowledge economy. Importantly, and in contradiction to its original purpose, it now symbolically excludes members of the migrant working class in Toronto, who often lack the symbolic or cultural capital to legitimize their existence in these spaces.

Image 3.3. Robertson Building rooftop view, source: Google Street View

These two spatial-dimensions (symbolic and social) are captured by socio-spatial positionality (Koinova 2017). They both affect who is included in development governance. But the Robertson Building also has agency as a material space. Who gets to enter the building is not just about who has the cultural capital to do so. The building occupies a particular territory in downtown Toronto and in embedded in the city's public infrastructure. Adler-Nissen has suggested that we must thus study the interplay between symbolic and material resources in International Politics (2012). So how do material resources affect a diaspora inclusion in development governance? Whenever I attended an event that was hosted by Tamil diaspora, I had to plan for about 1.5 hours on public transit, driving through what seemed like endless parking lots (or what Roger Keil refers to as 'post-Fordist ruins', 2018). Meanwhile, the sites of diaspora engagement for development, like the Robertson Building and the CSI are located in downtown Toronto, and not in Scarborough or North York - where the largest proportion of Tamils reside and most diaspora organisations have their offices. The representative from the Tamil organisation that was part of the DENG mentioned to me on occasion that they would like to be more closely linked to the CSI through obtaining actual office space there. Diaspora inclusion in development governance is evidently dependent on geography and economic capital needed to obtain geographical proximity to sites of power. Material resources determine where diaspora organisations can afford to rent office space. In combination with geographical distance, it also determines whether they have time and money to travel to regularly attend networking events. During my time in Toronto, each time a DENG meeting was scheduled, there were some members who could not attend based on their geographical position within Toronto. Members sought to overcome this spatial barrier through measures like teleconferencing and occasionally meeting in other locations across the GTA. But this was

always considered second best. Members of Cuso International and OCIC could always meet up in person more spontaneously than others, consolidating already existing hierarchies within the network.

In sum, this last section has explored the role of space in diaspora governance. It has shown that who is included is as much a question of who is connected, who is seen as legitimate and who has physical access to the sites of engagement. In sum, if a Tamil diaspora member says and does all the right things and shows up on the radar of the development governance network, barriers to inclusion – and especially sustained engagement - remain. This is because social relations, and legitimacy claims are also always spatially anchored. What the above paragraphs show is the close entanglement of power dynamics that all shape the possibility for inclusion of diasporas in development governance.

3.3.   Summary and Conclusion: A 'Partnership' Pipe Dream

The preceding chapter has offered a practice-centric analysis of diaspora governance in the development field. The chapter has offered original ethnographic data on diaspora engagement practices in Toronto, through the case of the Tamil diaspora. It has shown that in the global development field diaspora are predominantly viewed through the lens of 'partnership' and subsequently governed as such, but also that a global idea of diaspora 'partnership' takes on different forms, when it is confronted with the reality of local Tamil diaspora politics in Toronto.

The first section of the chapter offered a historical exploration of the emergence of diaspora engagement practices in the development field. Beginning in the mid-20th century, it showed how a migration and development nexus emerged in the development field, largely centered around actors and institutions based in Washington DC, eventually positing diaspora as crucial stakeholders in the development of their respective homelands. It then showed how these ideas that circulated in DC were first 'de- territorialized' - reconfigured as 'global' development conduct - and then again re-territorialized by specific actors and institutions in Toronto, Canada. I then traced how these emergent diaspora governance practices in Toronto began to engage members of the Tamil diaspora community who were involved in homeland development. I showed why (both local and global) Tamil diaspora politics created barriers to Tamil diaspora inclusion in liberal development governance, and that those Tamil diaspora

actors who were eventually invited in as 'partners' were already part of liberal governance networks.

In the second section of the chapter, I then (dis)entangled in more detail the practices through which these liberal Tamil diaspora actors were being 'engaged'. Here I demonstrated that the dominant framing of diasporas as 'partners' in development rests on a definition of diaspora as (neo)liberal rational and normative agents, and outlined what kind of conduct is required or expected from them. I showed that legitmate conduct of diaspora in the development field is structured by discourses of sustainability and the SDGs, a willingness to 'go beyond remittances', and the simultaneous enactment of technical capacity and local knowledge, which poses certain contradictions.

The chapter then showed that, while governance of diaspora as 'partners' dominates the development field and also sets expectations for diaspora engagement in Toronto, when these (global) expectations hit the ground, and become entangled with local Tamil diaspora politics, the story becomes more complex. At a more local level Tamils have to contend with differently structured power hierarchies. I.e. what is expected or deemed legitimate conduct for diaspora populations in Canada (a certain kind of Canadian nationalism, respectability politics, and adherence to multicultural norms) is different from what is expected by the broader Tamil diaspora community (adherence to Tamil nationalism, representativeness, appeal to diaspora youth). This creates a complex political landscape for Tamil diaspora development organisations to navigate and requires large amounts of diverse forms of social and cultural capital, which most Tamil diaspora actors and organisations do not possess.

The chapter then showed that diaspora inclusion as 'partners' in development governance is also shaped by their ability to network. I demonstrated how expanding or deepening their social connections can provide Tamil diaspora actors (who lack in other forms of capital) with the capacity to navigate this complex multi-scalar political landscape and be included in development governance. In fact, I showed that networking activities are the main focus of most Tamil diaspora organisations hoping to influence spheres of power, in the field of development and beyond.

Finally, the reterritorilisation of global diaspora governance practices means that Tamil diaspora inclusion or 'partnership' is conditioned by their ability to be in the right place at the right time. For many, the spaces where diaspora engagement practices take place are inaccessible, not just due to symbolic and social forms of exclusion, but also due to the urban

geography of the Greater Toronto Area, limited access to public transportation, and high prices for real estate.

In sum, only a select number of elite (neo)liberal Tamil diaspora actors are included as 'partners' in engagement initiatives and manage to shape the global development field by jumping scales or being in the right place at the right time. This suggests that Varadarajan's argument that diaspora are most often a "cog in the machine of imperialism" (2008: 268) has some traction in the case of the Tamil diaspora in Toronto. Often liberal Tamil diaspora elites reproduce uncritically the (neo)imperial discourses of their host land (see also Sinatti and Horst 2015). However, in (dis)entangling specific diaspora governance practices that I encountered through abductive ethnographic research, I have been able to show what this means for a largely conflict-generated diaspora based in Toronto, a city proud of its multicultural politics and diverse population, and within Canada, a country with its own local imperial history and shifting role in international politics.

4. Advocate, Victim or Conflict-mongerer? Negotiating the Ambiguous Roles of Tamil Diaspora in Transitional Justice

It is a slightly overcast day, as I make my way from the bike racks opposite the headquarters of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), across the Place de Nations. Because my gaze is focused on the grand front entrance of the Palais de Nations looming in the back, as well as the 'Broken Chair' in front of it, I almost walk into a sign that has appeared right in front of me. I study the sign, which displays a horrific but not unfamiliar scene of a distraught mother and a child bleeding through a head-bandage, and notice that it is part of a display of at least 25 such signs, all lined up next to a gazebo on which a banner reads "Conduct UN sponsored Referendum for Tamil Eelam".

Image 4.1. Gazebo and placards of Tamil victims of human rights abuses

I am approached by what I presume is a Tamil man who proceeds to tell me in French about the plight of the people who can be seen on the signs. I try to start a conversation with him, to ask him how long he has been there, what he is hoping to achieve at this session etc., but my French is too poor and his English almost non-existent so that I eventually excuse myself and continue to walk across the square, while taking in the rest of the scene.

Image 4.2. Placard of Rajapaksa and Ban Ki Moon shaking hands

Beside harrowing images of wounded Tamils, there are portraits of men, women and children disclaiming 'Genocid of Tamils in Sri Lanka (sic)', as well as pictures of Mahinda Rajapaksa[82] and Maithripala Sirisena - former and current Presidents of Sri Lanka - with statements comparing their respective human rights records during and after the civil war. Finally, there is a picture of Rajapaksa and former UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon shaking hands. It reads:

"Who are they?

Failed to Act against Tamil Genocide.

Failed to Protect Tamils,

Unpunished Sri Lankan Crimes against Humanity.

Handshaking to the Genocidal Terroriste

Mahinda Rajapaksa and Let the

Tamils be Killed by him without witness. (sic)"

The images and banners continue to play on my mind, as I pass another group of Tamils who are taking photos of each other outside the Palais and filming what looks to me like a news segment, with the iconic UN building and its member state's flags swaying in the background.

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[82] Replaced as President in 2015, since 2019 he once again holds high office as Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in SL.

The compound is fenced off, with people passing through a big set of gates, with security guards and an automated entry system. Throughout my stay in Geneva, the fence remains a reminder of the arduous process of first accessing the UN compound, which I have explored in the methodology chapter and will delve into more detail later on.

Nevertheless, half an hour after studying the images of displaced and wounded Tamils on the square outside and struggling to communicate with the Tamil activist manning the stall, I find myself inside the Palais, sitting at a table of the Serpent Bar, which comes with a glorious view over lake Geneva and the Swiss alps on the horizon. Evidently, the scene I find myself in now is a very different one. It still features Tamils – many of whom I recognize from various events and meetings in Toronto and London. In fact, my immediate impression when I arrive inside is that the scene at the Serpent Bar seems to be dominated by various members of the Tamil diaspora community.[83] Much like the man I briefly met outside, these Tamils have come to Geneva to mobilize for Transitional Justice (TJ), to seek redress for Tamil victims of human rights abuses and hold perpetrators accountable. One key difference is of course that these Tamils are *inside* the UN compound. Here they are dressed in suits, carrying briefcases and laptop bags, rushing around between meetings with high ranking UN staff and diplomates, either in private rooms or huddled around tables at the Serpent Bar.

The scenes I describe here unfolded during my fieldwork at the 34th UNHRC session held in Geneva in March 2017. During this session, the UNHRC was scheduled to take a decision under its agenda item 2, on a resolution titled "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka".[84] It was a recommitment to a resolution that was co-sponsored by the GOSL and passed at the UNHRC's 30th session in October 2015. While the initial 2015 resolution was co-sponsored by the GOSL and deemed an important step towards ensuring that people would be held accountable for atrocities committed during the civil war, after 18 months the newly elected Sirisena government had made few credible commitments towards implementing the resolution.[85]

The UNHRC sessions in Geneva have become a focal point for Tamil diaspora mobilization over the last decade. Indeed, by March 2017, 'Geneva' has become shorthand for

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[83] It is an impression that is confirmed over the following weeks, that I spend immersed in the UNHRC proceedings, engaging in conversation, reading leaflets, and simply 'hanging out' - in true Geertzian sense - and observing over the course of two weeks. This is despite the fact that at the time much of the attention of the international community and also the spotlight at the session were on the Human Rights situations in Syria and Yemen.

[84] UNHRC Resolution A/HRC/34/1.

[85] Sri Lanka's Slow Dance on Transitional Justice, Lowy Institute, 2017, https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/sri-lanka-s-slow-dance-transitional-justice

the varying ways in which human rights and transitional justice claims are being pursued by members/groups within the Tamil diaspora.[86] While Tamils have been coming to Geneva to mobilize for Tamil human rights for decades, the 'Geneva' process has only really made it into the mainstream Tamil vernacular since 2009. Around that time, it is generally understood that the UNHRC became a key site for Tamil mobilization for TJ. Since the final months of the Sri Lankan civil war, Tamils have been attending the UNHRC sessions regularly to advocate for human rights and accountability for war crimes in various ways. But of course, the diaspora's involvement in the TJ process has not been homogenous or straightforward. As illustrated above, while some diaspora groups are able to influence the TJ process through direct interactions with diplomats and politicians inside the UNHRC, others have had to limit their advocacy to public demonstrations or seeking media attention outside the UN grounds. The way in which the Tamil diaspora can mobilize around the TJ process is thus highly uneven, regulated and political. In and around the UNHRC process, various governance forces either enable or constrain Tamil diaspora involvement in TJ (and, by extension, global politics more broadly). Much like the practices (conferences, networking groups, workshops, and hearings etc.) through which members of the Tamil diaspora are 'engaged' in development, as explored in the preceding chapter, the practices that govern Tamil diaspora actors in the TJ field and the UNHRC space, contain within them different power dimensions, which need to be further (dis)entangled.

TJ can be defined as the "measures to deal with the legacy of largescale atrocities in societies transitioning from conflict or repression" (Orjuela 2008). As will be explored in more detail further down in this chapter, over the last 30 years, there has been an exponential growth in TJ mechanisms across the globe (Teitel 2003, 2015). This has led to TJ being described as a 'global project' (Nagy 2008). The empirical increase in TJ mechanisms and norms has brought with it an increase in opportunities for diaspora mobilization (Orjuela 2018). In turn, increased opportunities for diaspora involvement in TJ issues produce practices that structure/govern such involvement. What do we know about diaspora mobilization for TJ? What kind of diaspora governance practices have scholars identified? And what do we know about the politics of such governance?

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[86] Geneva is of course, first and foremost, a city in Switzerland. But, as mentioned in chapter 2, it is also much more than that. It is a city where International Relations *take place*. It is home to some of the most formally representative International Organisations in the world, such as the UNHRC, the WB, the ILO and the IOM. Importantly for this chapter, it is also the primary home of the organisations and institutions (as well as their office buildings and employees) that make up the post 1945 international human rights regime.

The involvement of diasporas in transitional justice is receiving increasing scholarly attention. While early accounts looked at specific historical TJ cases and how diasporas featured within them (Roht-Arriaza 2005; Young and Park 2009; Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011), or highlighted potentials of diaspora contributions to TJ (Haider 2013; Bala 2015; Baser 2017), more recent scholarship has begun to theorize about the involvement of diasporas in TJ more broadly (Haider 2014; Orjuela 2018, 2020; Koinova 2018, 2019; Koinova and Karabegovic 2017, 2019; Karabegovic 2017, 2018; Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2013, 2016).

A groundbreaking book - *The Pinochet Effect* by Naomi Roht-Arriaza - was published in 2005 and examined the role of political exiles in bringing about the indictment of the former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. The book traced with meticulous detail the process whereby a coalition of lawyers and activists made use of universal jurisdiction law and succeeded in having Pinochet arrested whilst he was travelling to London to receive medical treatment in 1998. The author argues that the case set a precedent for the application of transnational jurisdiction across the globe. However, she also highlights that many of the conditions that made the process a success are not easily replicable. On the one hand, the preparation of the case was incredibly complex and consumed a lot of time and labour. She also suggests that since the Pinochet proceedings, states like the US have intervened in other state's universal jurisdiction laws to make these less forceful. Finally, she attributes a large portion of the success to "serendipity" (2005: 211). Besides making use of juridical measures, a few scholars have written about ways in which diaspora participation has been formally designed into TJ processes. Hoogenboom and Quinn have mapped the sequence of events whereby the Haitian diaspora – particularly those living in Canada and the US - was instrumental in devising the Haitian TJ mechanism, the Commission Nationale de Verité et de Justice (CNVJ). They argue that the Haitian TJ process was almost entirely diaspora driven, from its initial conception to the implementation and design of the process, to its intended audience. That the Haitian TJ process was diaspora-led was arguably its downfall as it was never owned by the local population. Finally, Young and Park offer an assessment of Liberia's Diaspora Project. Their work reveals that in the Liberian case, diaspora involvement in TJ was organized slightly differently. Rather than being diaspora-led, the design of the process through which the diaspora would be engaged, was outsourced to the US-based NGO *The Advocates for Human Rights*. Diaspora participation was formally designed into the Liberian TJ mechanism, primarily by calling on them as witnesses, but with no real diaspora buy-in. It has been suggested that mistrust in the mechanism as well as insecure immigration conditions that Liberians faced in their host countries played a role in undermining the initiatives' success. Huma Haider (2013)

has systematically set out possible pathways for diaspora involvement in both formal and informal TJ mechanisms. Baser (2017) has drawn on evidence from the Kurdish diaspora to theorise about the potential for 'engaging' diasporas in TJ processes and the risks and constraints faced in the process. While her account is situated within the liberal peace paradigm and perhaps tells us less about the political struggles around TJ processes themselves, she does identify a number of ways in which diasporas might contribute to TJ and what stands in the way of them doing so in a successful way. She suggests that in designing peace processes and TJ mechanisms policy-makers (i.e. peace-builders) may run into the problem of having to determine both the 'representativeness' and 'capacity and motivation' of diaspora groups (2017: 477). She suggests that politicisation and rifts in the diaspora group will make this difficult but also acknowledges that maintaining division in diaspora also may be in the interest of a home state that is seeking to curb diaspora involvement in the TJ process. Beside fostering division, the home state might also try to keep the diaspora out of the group of stakeholders in the TJ process by ignoring them altogether. Another problem she identifies is that often diaspora 'engagement' in TJ only pertains to elites and no grassroots involvement is fostered. Finally, she suggests that absence of third-party support for diaspora involvement in TJ and the absence of a durable TJ mechanism for such involvement will likely hamper success. Ultimately, while these accounts of diaspora involvement in formal TJ mechanisms are still relatively few and far between, and their insights quite case-specific, they do give us some crucial empirical indication of how diaspora mobilization for TJ might be structured by formal governance processes, i.e. what governance practices could look like (see figure 4.1.).

But beside empirical case studies, there is now a growing body of scholarship that has set out to theorize more deeply about diaspora involvement in TJ. Most of this has focused on the analysis of grassroots diaspora mobilization such as transnational advocacy (Walton 2014), lobbying (Godwin 2018) and memory practices, such as commemoration events and memorial building (Orjuela 2018; Karabegovic 2017; Koinova and Karabegovic 2017). For example, Walton (2014) has examined how, since the end of the Sri Lankan civil war, UK-based Tamil diaspora organisations have navigated the use of the discursive 'genocide' frame in their domestic and international advocacy campaigns around TJ. He shows that the changes in the framing process reveal a tension between the need to create internal and external organizational legitimacy. Koinova (2019) has also done work on coalition-building around genocide claims, which I will examine further below. Meanwhile, Godwin (2018) has shown how diasporas have made use of parliamentary systems to impact upon UK and Canadian foreign policymaking, which has encompassed voting on TJ issues at the UNHRC. Wiebelhaus-Brahm (2016) has

conducted one of the few comparative studies of diaspora mobilization in formal TJ mechanisms. In hypothesizing about the conditions that enable diaspora engagement in TJ processes, he identifies 'the nature of the violence, the current status of the violence, characteristics of the diaspora, and the interests of the international community' as the most important factors in determining TJ outcomes. He insightfully observes that "diaspora groups vary significantly in terms of the technical and material resources as well as social capital they have at their disposal" (2016: 26) so that only "sometimes diasporas possess the expertise to serve as transitional justice architects, or at least have connections to policy entrepreneurs and activists who have such knowledge" (2016: 23). Ultimately, this means that "highly educated individuals with histories of activism and connections to transnational networks should be better able to promote their transitional justice agenda" (2016: 26).[87] Karabegovic (2017, 2018) has theorized about how diasporas utilize conditions in their host countries to advocate for TJ at home, and how diasporas make use of education reform and youth initiatives as pathways to TJ. Meanwhile, Koinova and Karabegovic (2017) have looked specifically at how memorialization practices are embedded within different contexts and at different scales, each offering different opportunities for mobilization. They make important discoveries about how claims made by diasporas for TJ can jump between scales. In a later article they identify causal mechanisms that feature within diaspora mobilization for TJ and typologise their underlying rationales. Finally, Orjuela (2018) has done some of the most compelling (comparative) bottom-up theorizing on diaspora involvement in TJ. Her work also bridges the gap between examining diaspora involvement across formal and informal TJ mechanisms. She has recently argued that the way in which the diasporas mobilize for TJ, through commemoration, but also truth-seeking and legal justice practices, is shaped by 'opportunity structures', i.e. the dominant norms and practices that constitute TJ.[88] She suggests that such political, legal and discursive opportunity structures have expanded because today there are more and more mechanisms that are considered part of the TJ toolkit. But she also acknowledges that "opportunity structures interplay with the resources available to diaspora groups to determine their strategies; litigation is costly, advocacy requires skills and connections, and protests demand an ability to bring people to the streets" thereby alluding to constraints to mobilization (2018: 1361). Orjuela's theorization of diaspora mobilization for TJ builds on more than 2 decades of research on the

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[87] He concludes that in the case of Sri Lanka, the Tamil diaspora has been central to providing opportunities for TJ but the main factor constraining the Tamil diaspora's effectiveness in shaping TJ process is their one-sidedness (2016: 30), meaning they are not holding LTTE to account.

[88] Wiebelhaus-Brahm also identifies the 'growing acceptance of the right to truth' as an important structural factor in legitimizing diaspora involvement in TJ processes (2016).

Tamil diaspora and its relation to local and global politics. She has pushed diaspora studies forward by examining Tamil diaspora mobilization and in turn has provided exceptionally nuanced empirical insights about the Tamil diaspora. Her argument that diaspora mobilization for TJ is shaped by opportunity structures, is convincingly supported by her in-depth analysis of the Tamil diaspora's engagement in TJ processes, such as commemoration, legal justice measures and truth telling. For example, she suggests that spaces have opened up for diasporas to grieve and memorialize their lost relatives in the host country, which in turn has allowed for different forms of storytelling about the past – what she calls 'past presencing'. In the Tamil case, this has included the making of the UK Channel 4 documentary 'No Fire Zone'[89] that was circulated amongst policy makers and politicians and challenged the narrative given by the GOSL about the final stage of the war (Orjuela 2018: 1367). In studying commemoration events from an ethnographic perspective, Orjuela (2020) has also recently shown that diaspora mobilization for TJ is structured by material space. This is an important insight, which will help me to make sense of diaspora governance at the UNHRC and in the TJ field. Overall, the above accounts offer insight into how diaspora may mobilize or have mobilized around TJ issues.

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[89] No Fire Zone, website https://nofirezone.org/

What role do diasporas play in TJ processes?

Formal judicial mechanisms

Criminal investigations
- lawyer & prosecution
- case building
- defendant

Peace processes
- signatory

Truth Commissions
- designing institutions & policies
- testimony giving
- evidence gathering
- victim

Agenda setting & awareness raising
- conducting research
- lobbying diplomats and politicians
- report writing
- naming and shaming
- protest

Non-judicial & informal mechanisms

Reconciliation initiatives
- participant
- facilitator
- designing reconciliation programme

Memorialization
- victim or mourning family
- memorial building & funding
- designing memorial

Legend:
- Type of TJ mechanism
- governance practice
- role or function of diaspora

Figure 4.1. Map of diaspora roles in TJ mechanisms

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In sum, existing studies already tell us a lot about the empirics of diaspora mobilization for TJ and some explanations for failure/success of mobilization. They offer evidence of various mechanisms through which diasporas 'engage' or are brought into in formal and less formal TJ processes (see figure 4.1. for a non-exhaustive overview) and what conditions might stand in the way of them achieving their ends. This work can help make sense of different forms of Tamil diaspora involvement in TJ, and also begin to shed light on the practices that govern, discipline and structure this involvement.

As mentioned in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, the Tamil diaspora has played a central role in initiating a Sri Lankan TJ process. From the final months of the civil war, Tamil diaspora organisations have been lobbying their host country governments domestically and internationally (Godwin 2018; Amarasingam 2015) to pressure them to push for accountability for war crimes and human rights abuses in Sri Lanka. But this work does not to explain why there is such variation even within the Tamil diaspora's efforts to mobilize for TJ at the UNHRC, or why the UNHRC-driven Sri Lankan TJ process has largely stalled.

For help in answering these questions, I suggest we look at an earlier study by Orjuela and Höglund, which I find promising for untangling the politics of diaspora governance practices in TJ. In it they make use of Anna Tsing's concept of 'friction'. Höglund and Orjuela have shown that the Tamil diaspora has been "actively involved in justice initiatives through campaigns, truth-seeking and attempts at third country prosecution" but that this involvement is shaped by various 'frictions' between international and local actors (Höglund and Orjuela 2013: 308). For example, they show that one way in which the Tamil diaspora has been engaged in TJ is through legal mechanisms, by making use of the law of universal jurisdiction: "TAG and other diaspora groups have on several occasions taken action against alleged war criminals visiting or residing in Western countries" (Höglund and Orjuela 2013 2013: 313). However, at the time these efforts were struck down by immunity claims filed by the Obama administration, which echoes the observations made by Roht-Arriaza (2005). The authors thus show how the Tamil diaspora's attempts to employ universal jurisdiction law to seek justice are shaped by a) Sri Lanka's attempts to discredit or co-opt the Tamil diaspora and b) liberal host states' concerns for their diplomatic relations (2013: 314). Further, Höglund and Orjuela have suggested that Tamil diaspora "attempts at legally holding perpetrators accountable have been supplemented by rallies and advocacy campaigns, aiming to raise awareness and pressure the international community to intervene on behalf of Tamils" (ibid. 313). Like legal measures, such rallies and advocacy campaigns are also subject to 'frictions'.

Building on this work, I will untangle further the political struggles that characterise the diaspora governance practices that I encounter in my research. By centering the governance practices, we don't assume *a priori* where the 'friction' sits, i.e. between local and global actors or between state and non-state actors. Rather, we can ask empirical questions about these things. The UNHRC session in Geneva offers a lens through which to study the logics, interests and motivations that inform diaspora governance in TJ. Ultimately, the UNHRC session is not just a TJ mechanism in and of itself – a site for truth telling and evidence gathering - but it is a place where the wider politics of diaspora engagement in TJ are fought out. It is a space in which one can observe the playing out of different (global and local) hierarchies between a) competing TJ practices, b) diverse governance actors, and c) different diaspora roles.

While the UNHRC process is highly formalized and emphasis is certainly placed on the formal mechanisms inside the TJ toolkit, the broader field site of Geneva also reveals other forms of mobilization that are more informal and bottom up. So, Geneva, then, is not simply synonymous with the UNHRC process, although it plays a key role. It is also a city where the broader political struggles of TJ governance play out. I travelled to Geneva to observe at first-hand how Tamils mobilize around the Sri Lankan TJ process, and to investigate what sorts of governance practices structured this mobilization. In Geneva, I observed and participated in the political discussions and debates that took place with reference to the Sri Lankan TJ process and saw how actors in the Tamil diaspora were being engaged in and excluded from certain parts of the discussion. I could then immediately compare and contrast governance that was happening both *outside* and *inside* the formal (and highly closed-off) UNHRC process, which also brings in an important socio-spatial dimension.

This chapter is centered around practices through which the Tamil diaspora has become involved in the Sri Lankan TJ process. It will unfold as follows: in the next section I will explore the historical emergence of different Transitional Justice governance practices and situate Tamil mobilization within this. It will show how Transitional Justice has emerged to encompass a wide range of governance practices, and also how diasporas have at various points in time played diverging roles within the emergent TJ field. I will begin by outlining the emergence of human rights governance as an area of global cooperation in the post WWII period. It will then zoom in on the emergence of a Transitional Justice paradigm within this broader governance field and show how this sub-field has evolved over time into a veritable TJ industry (see e.g. Teitel 2015), that is internally heterogeneous. I will then illuminate Tamil diaspora engagement in Human Rights governance during the Sri Lankan civil war. I will subsequently zoom in on the critical juncture of that engagement at the end of the war in 2009, which marks

a decided shift in Tamil diaspora mobilization and governance responses. I will then trace how global Tamil diaspora mobilization begins crystallizing spatially around Geneva and the UNHRC process and thematically around calls for transitional justice in Sri Lanka (thus simultaneously localizing and globalizing). Here, I will illustrate the different types of Tamil diaspora mobilization occurring in Geneva and at the UNHRC, from demonstrations to secret meetings, to drafting of resolutions in the years immediately after the end of the civil war. Finally, I will show how the year 2015 presents another historical turning point for the engagement of the Tamil diaspora in global human rights governance, as their efforts at the UNHRC begin to stall following the election of a new (and, allegedly, more democratic) Sri Lankan government. The second section will then center in more detail the practices that structure diaspora engagement at the UNHRC session and (dis)tangle them more systematically. It will look at formal UNHRC side events, formal hearings and testimonies, the ECOSOC accreditation policy, as well as the formal designation of space for demonstrations. The section will draw out four distinct but interconnected dimensions of power that shape the politics of diaspora governance at the UNHRC, namely legitimacy, realist state power, bureaucracy and spatiality. By (dis)entangling practices, the chapter finds that the governance of the Tamil diaspora at the UNHRC is characterized by ambiguity, as different global (and some local) ideas about how diaspora should engage in TJ collide.

4.1.   A history of Transitional Justice and the Tamil diaspora

This section will lay out some of the key historical conditions and junctures that have shaped Tamil mobilization for human rights and TJ and have made Tamil diaspora inclusion in spaces of global Human Rights governance, such as the UNHRC, possible.

4.1.1.   Emerging exile activism in the Post-WWII period

According to mainstream IR accounts, the end of the second world war presented a radical break in world history. International relations, so the story goes, were reinvented, nay started again from scratch, symbolized by the founding of the UN in 1945. Global cooperation around human rights was cemented by the Genocide convention in 1951. The concept of TJ emerged out of the end of the second world war, with the Eichmann trials in Nuremberg setting

the scene for an emerging global human rights regime and international legal governance. Ruti Teitel has termed this short period after WWII as the 'heyday of international justice' (2003: 73), in that it laid the basis for subsequent TJ debates to be framed in universalizing – although of course decidedly liberal-western - rule of law terms.

The emphasis in this early post-war period lay on the creation of an inter-*national* legal system that would govern legal disputes between nation-states. This liberal internationalist understanding of world politics left little room for non-state actors, except for when individuals were judged and held responsible for their criminal offences, as in the case of Eichmann et al. Although certainly not formally integrated into or recognised as stakeholders in international justice processes, diaspora and members of exiled communities played a role in these proceedings from the get-go, and already perceived in diverse roles: both as victims of abuse and as advocates for a universal conception of human rights. After all, those to whom justice was arguably being served through the Eichmann trials, would come to form the 'original' diaspora, namely Jewish exiles and holocaust survivors.[90] On the other hand, an early example of an intellectual exile who mobilized around questions of justice in their former homeland during this period is Hannah Arendt, who, after fleeing from Nazism during WWII dedicated herself to the Jewish cause. What was her encounter with 'governance actors' and how was her activism received? She attended the Eichmann trials in the early 1960s, after having suffered at the hands of Nazi Germany's 'extraterritorial authoritarianism/fascism' and has been widely lauded for her defense of the human rights of refugees and stateless people. However, many in the Jewish American diaspora vehemently distanced themselves from he and made clear that she did not represent the broader Jewish diaspora, largely because she eschewed the argument that the holocaust was driven specifically by monstrous antisemitic hatred, but instead by the 'banality of evil'. Importantly, today Hannah Arendt is not remembered primarily as a diaspora activist speaking on behalf of her community of co-ethnics, but an exceptional individual and scholar.

As the 20th century progressed, the nascent practices associated with Transitional Justice, began shifting from international to more local, national justice concerns, mostly in post-colonies and countries emerging from authoritarian rule, e.g. in Latin America. While during this time the international human rights law field already began to shift (at least intellectually) from a concern for retributive toward restorative justice - arguably, in order not

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[90] There is only limited scholarship linking the Eichmann trials to the topic of migration of diaspora, but scholars have written about how the Eichmann trials shape the identity of the American Jewish diaspora (Ouzan 2007).

to jeopardise peace in fledgling democracies (Teitel 2003: 77) - retributive justice practices remained a central feature of the international legal toolkit.

The theoretical/intellectual shift in the nascent field of international human rights law was embedded in a broader global political context which saw increased recognition of the role played by non-state actors. These non-state actors were increasingly challenging or substituting state-led human rights protection, which was resembling more a tool of great power politics during the Cold War.[91] It was a time that saw the emergence of NGOs and transnational advocacy networks (TNAs), many of whom could trace their roots to the New Social Movements that emerged in the aftermath of the various global uprisings of 1968, as well as out of the decolonisation movements. Meanwhile, developments in information technology, fostering human mobility, imbued non-state actors with unforeseen connectivity to each other and to channels of power. Taking advantage of increased access to formerly state-dominated decision-making spaces, these new actors and movements began to challenge the bipolar world order, which had caused deadlock on global cooperation on human rights issues (and across global governance fields more broadly). Thus, while top-down state-led global human rights cooperation (including on TJ issues) was constrained by the great power politics of the Cold War, a more bottom-up human rights protection field emerged, constituted by transnational advocacy networks and international human rights NGOs – mostly based in the global North - that claimed to represent victims, and minorities largely in the global South, offering them a way to dissent from abroad (as explored in Keck and Sikkink's theory of the "Boomerang Effect", Keck and Sikkink 2014). As the role and logic of TJ practice changed so did the roles of diaspora in this process. Or at least this is the traditional narrative.

An alternative reading of the history of the emergence of diaspora as players in global politics and the international human rights field, suggests that, rather than follow the structural opening up of global politics to non-state actors, the causal dynamic is, in fact, reversed. Fueled by changes in transport and communication technology, political exiles were increasingly able to mobilize transnationally around human rights abuses occurring in their countries of origin, which in turn played a key role in 'globalizing' international politics and opening international relations up to non-state actors. So, while immediately following WWII, we could identify only individual exile activists, such as Arendt, the number of individuals that engaged in political activism from their position of exile increased drastically during the 1970s. Exiles were often lawyers and elite political dissidents, who became central to the formation and implementation

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[91] Helsinki Final Act, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1975

of TNAs more broadly.[92] The diaspora lens here gives us a new perspective on a familiar IR story about the key role played by transnational advocacy networks in the transformation of international relations of the mid-20th century. Importantly, this also challenges Hirschmann's theory on "exit and voice" in Argentina in the 1970s (1978), in that it demonstrates that emigration and protest are not mutually exclusive but work in tandem (see Brubaker 1990).[93]

Within the broader field of international human rights protection, the Transitional Justice subfield started to come into its own in the late 1980s. One TJ practice, which was first implemented as countries in the Southern Cone began to emerge from decades of violently oppressive rule, was the introduction of truth commissions. Truth commissions in Bolivia, Argentina and Chile exemplified the growth of a restorative justice paradigm and was largely driven by people working within the UN system, rather than lawyers. At the same time, formal retributive justice practices continued to be pursued – and with increased fervor - in the form of indictment and trials. Universal jurisdiction laws largely functioned as the legal conditions that made this form of transnational retributive TJ practice possible. Crucially, it is a practice, which was (and still is) widely pursued by political exiles/diaspora members, functioning as an opportunity structure for them to engage in the TJ field. That exile activists played a crucial role in newly emerging formal institutional transitional justice practices in Latin America, is by now widely accepted.[94]

The preceding paragraphs have laid out some of the key historical developments in the emergence of the – still nascent – TJ field and its broader global political context. Crucially, they have explored early iterations of diaspora involvement in this area. This is the context in front of which we must now examine early Tamil diaspora involvement in the field.

4.1.2. Human Rights advocacy in Sri Lanka and the growing Tamil diaspora

While in the 1970s and 80s, there could be no talk of transition in the Sri Lankan context and the country did not become the target of TJ governance measures until decades later, it was

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[92] Indeed, when looking closely at the histories of the formation of large TNAs and human rights NGOs, these stories revolve around the fates of political exiles; exiled precisely because they were defending human rights in their homeland. For example, the Argentinian Juan E. Mendez was exiled in 1977 for representing political prisoners, and later led America's Watch and International Centre for Transitional Justice and became the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture in 2010.

[93] Hirschmann also acknowledged this in a 1993 article on the breakdown of the GDR.

[94] For example, Eric Wiebelhaus-Brahm has argued that "In the cases of Argentine and Chile (though somewhat less so of Uruguay), exiles in Europe and North America have been instrumental in shaping their country's transitional justice processes." (2016: 25).

a time when transnational activism on human rights issues began to take shape. Understanding these early post-colonial iterations of diaspora activism in the Sri Lankan context, will provide a background for exploring later engagement of the Tamil diaspora in the Transitional Justice processes. This period saw a massive expansion of the number of human rights defenders in Sri Lanka as well as huge growth in the NGO sector. On the one hand, this development could be attributed to the deteriorating human rights situation on the ground in Sri Lanka. By the late 1970s increased government repression and ethnic riots meant that minority non-Singhalese Sri Lankans increasingly became the subject of violence and abuse. This development mirrored other post-colonial or post-authoritarian country settings, where the number of human rights defenders seeking to address these abuses and achieve justice multiplied. As time went on, they started organising more formally. For example, the organisation INFORM was established in Colombo in 1990 to "monitor and document the human rights situation in Sri Lanka" and later became a part of FORUM-ASIA. The period also saw an expansion of local women's organisations working towards ethnic reconciliation, such as the Mothers and Daughters of Lanka.

However, local/bottom-up NGOs and civil society actors actually did not make up the majority of the expanding human rights NGO sector during this time.[95] This was primarily because in the 1970s Sri Lanka - at that time widely considered a 'donor darling' despite evidence of state violence against minorities - saw a huge influx of foreign aid and foreign NGOs to administer governance reform, in line with the neoliberal structural adjustment programmes imposed by the Bretton Woods Institutions under the Washington Consensus (explored in the preceding chapter, in section 3.1.1.). This pattern of externally led, top-down governance was again repeated after the 1983 anti-Tamil violence[96], when "international attention generated an influx of foreign-relief funds, much of which was handled by NGOs" (Orjuela 2003). Beside competition with powerful international NGOs, local human rights defenders also faced other challenges during this period. Ethnic tensions and conflict had weakened civil society. And, perhaps more importantly, the Sri Lankan state now exhibited a high degree of suspicion both towards international and local NGOs, particularly if these had a human rights focus. These were seen as a challenge to state sovereignty. Tamil human rights defenders faced additional constraints, as they were viewed with increasing suspicion both by

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[95] Indeed, as Orjuela argues: "most civil-society activity in Sri Lankan villages is introduced or dominated by international or local NGOs with a rather top down approach" (2003: 199).
[96] And repeated again after Tsunami and after 2009, which has a large impact on what kind of funding actually reaches the Tamil areas, interview with Tamil organizational leader, March 2017.

the GOSL and the more militant Tamil organisations, such as the slowly dominant LTTE. Thus, the local Sri Lankan human rights sector started to become decidedly Singhalese-dominated.

While these local and global conditions posed constraints to grassroots activism, there were individuals and groups who found ways to defy these constraints. As noted in the preceding section, historically, human rights activists had often been forced into exile by state repression. And often such exiles were elite political dissidents. So already in the 1970s and 80s one could identify a number of Tamil diasporic individuals and organisations that were advocating for justice in their homeland for the Tamil ethnic community, or other minorities, albeit with varying amounts of recognition and success. On the one hand, a gradually expanding Tamil diaspora began organising to protect Tamil co-ethnics from human rights abuses committed by the Sri Lankan state. At this point, the LTTE had not yet gained a monopoly over Tamil transnational mobilization so there existed a number of Tamil diaspora run human rights organisations. For example, the Tamil Centre for Human Rights was founded in 1990 in France. The organisation's primary mandate was (and still is) to raise awareness on human rights violations in Sri Lanka. They have also gone on 'fact finding missions', and participate in UN mechanisms, e.g. by submitting written statements to Universal Periodic Review (UPR).[97] By the end of the 1980s, these organisations were having to operate within an increasingly liberal western-centric Human Rights regime.[98] Also, increasingly, Tamil diaspora activism was conflated with the activities of the LTTE, which further discredited actors concerned with the collective liberation of Tamils, both in the eyes of the Sri Lankan state and the broader liberal international system of states.

On the other hand, another kind of human rights defender was borne out of the ethnic tensions of the 1970s and 80s, perhaps best personified in by Nimalka Fernando. Fernando was a Singhalese Christian woman born to working class parents in Colombo, who began working towards minority rights at a young age and would later become one of the central actors in the Sri Lankan peace process (named the "token woman" by a senior UN diplomat in an interview, 2017). Today she heads the ECOSOC-accredited NGO International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) and is still considered one of the most prominent Sri Lankan activists for peace and human rights.[99] A number of things set her apart from other exiled human rights defenders at the time. Specifically, as a vocal advocate for 'reconciliation', she was able to broker between both sides of the conflict and appeal to

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[97] Tamil Center for Human Rights website, www.tchr.net
[98] Which places higher value on the struggle for individual political and civil rights, over collective economic and social rights.
[99] Especially when measured by number of appearances at Sri Lanka-related UN side events.

international actors through her non-ethnic claims-making (she met with Rajapaksa during the ceasefire).[100] Some have argued that it was her very specific upbringing that allowed her to build the kind of social capital needed for negotiating across cleavages.[101] In a way, her success shows how there can be agency within a totalising structure. She is the exception that proves the rule that 'political entrepreneurship' is possible, albeit only if certain forms of capital are present.

In sum, it was this period of increased repression of – especially Tamil – political activism in Sri Lanka that forced a whole generation of activists into exile, thus establishing the diaspora as a crucial actor in the governance of human rights in Sri Lanka. It is arguably also here that the seeds were planted for who would feature in the formal Sri Lankan TJ process over 20 years later, namely a small fraction of elite actors, both from within Sri Lanka and the Tamil diaspora, as will be explored later in this chapter.

Now, while mobilization around human rights issues remained problematic for local, international and diasporic actors in the 1980s, this changed in the mid-90s. On the one hand, local actors began to rally around an impending Sri Lankan election, which promised peace in 1994/95, thus creating some space for human rights claims across the ethnic divide. But beyond domestic factors, this shift also took place within a wider global context. The following section will elaborate on this changing global political context and, importantly, changing global (diaspora) governance practices in the emerging TJ field.

4.1.3. Diaspora and a diversifying TJ toolkit

If the period following the end of the second world war was the 'heyday of international justice', according to Teitel, then the period following the end of the Cold War can maybe be described as the 'heyday of Transitional Justice'. Where international cooperation on Human Rights issues was deadlocked throughout the Cold War due to geopolitics, the 1990s heralded the golden age for global liberal cooperation around human rights protection. As I discussed at more length in chapter 3, this period brought about a changed understanding about how 'the global' *should* be governed, shifting governance responsibility away from the state to include supranational institutions, NGOs and the private sector. Further, in the majority of the Western world the end of the Cold War was heralded as the end of history (and also geopolitics),

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[100] This will be explored further in section 4.2.1.
[101] *Busybody for peace: The life and work of Nimalka Fernando* (Diaz 2014).

signifying the inevitable triumph of capitalism, liberalism and universal human rights. Institutionally, the global human rights regime was strengthened by the Vienna Declaration of 1993, which set out the parameters for human rights protection in this 'new era' and re-instilled power in the UN. The Vienna Declaration also established the first UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and explicitly enshrines minority rights in its framework, thus setting the expectation that states can be made accountable for violating these rights. Another key formal institutional development, that would later affect the course of Tamil diaspora engagement in the Sri Lankan TJ process, was the 1993 ECOSOC implementation of rules to formalize and regulate the participation of NGOs in international conferences organised by the UN (Otto 1996). ECOSOC consultative status allowed NGOs to "publicly criticize governments for human rights violations, and to participate in drafting the Commission's resolutions." (Nowak 2003: 258). According to Nowak, NGOs now entered UN human rights regime as 'civil society', or the 'conscience of human rights' (2003: 257). Without them, it was believed that, human rights would not be protected. As, mentioned above, this occurred in the context of debates "about the growing importance of international civil society" (Otto 1996: 108), especially also in IR theory, where "liberal and postliberal paradigms (…) place importance on individuals and social movements as international actors." Arguably, the formal opening up of the UN to ECOSOC consultative organisations, has been used by scholars in IR as an indicator for increased importance of non-state actors in global politics. But the regulation of NGO participation became of course also a governance practice that closed off access, through forcing organisations to formalise and professionalise if they want to be considered as legitimate actors within the UN system. Together, these post-Cold War developments within the global human rights field played a key role in shaping Transitional Justice practices from the 1990s onwards and continues to structure diaspora involvement in TJ processes (as I will discuss in section 4.4.2).

Meanwhile, another geopolitical condition of possibility for this becoming governance field relied on an entirely different reading of the end of the Cold War, not as triumph but as breakdown. After all, the disintegration of the USSR resulted in widespread political violence in places like the Balkans that suddenly seemed in threateningly close geographical proximity to the recently triumphant liberal West. This political violence within (rather than between) newly formed nation states in the post-soviet space[102] created a problem, especially for European states in close geographical proximity (as will be further explored in chapter 5). Ultimately, these two seismic global political shifts – the increase in international cooperation

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[102] But also in other geographical locations like Sri Lanka, see Laffey and Nadarajah 2012.

and concern with intra-state warfare – together formed the conditions of possibility for a TJ field to come into its own in the post-Cold War period. In turn, they triggered fundamental changes to TJ practice. As the TJ toolbox expanded, this also threw up contradictions and inconsistencies within the field. What TJ practices emerged or consolidated after the end of the Cold War?

One important shift was the increasing consensus in the field that TJ should be administered with external support, exemplified by the conception of international tribunals in Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda (ICTR). At the same time - and entirely in contradiction to the above - an emphasis on bottom-up TJ practices and on local ownership emerged (see Paffenholz 2015). This was exemplified by the Gacaca courts in Rwanda, which first employed a hybrid model of Transitional Justice. The international vs. domestic vs. hybrid debate is perhaps one of the primary divides characterizing the TJ field today (Dickinson 2003). Finally, actors within the TJ field began to envisage whole of society transformations, which included transformation at the level of the individual, not just the state in the form of either past or present governments. In order to achieve this, TJ practices increasingly encompassed tools that went beyond legal processes or even truth telling, such as storytelling and art therapy. This period also saw an increase in commemoration and memory practices that incorporated such tools.

It was in this period of complex restructuring that the first formal state-led TJ process to involve diasporas or a transnational element came about. The Haitian National Truth and Justice Commission (Commission Nationale de Verite et Justice - CNVJ) was established in 1994, in the aftermath of a military coup by the Cedras regime, which then went on to kill thousands of supporters of the ousted Aristide government. Its mandate was to investigate the human rights abuses that had occurred between 1991 and 1994 when the military was in power. The commission was composed of seven members: five men and two women, including four Haitians and three so-called 'internationals'.[103] The CNVJ was not an entirely prosecutorial body, like the Yugoslavian process, which was being established around the same time. Rather, it was an investigative body, aimed at judicial reform and was the first formal TJ mechanism to include the word 'justice' in its title. The case of the CNVJ has become a key reference point for contemporary scholars studying diaspora and transitional justice. First and perhaps foremost, this is because the Haitian diaspora played a key role in the conception and design of the CNVJ.[104] In particular, the process was driven by a number of elite members of the Haitian

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[103] United States Institute of Peace, Truth Commission: Haiti, website
https://www.usip.org/publications/1995/04/truth-commission-haiti
[104] This has been notably explored by Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011.

diaspora in the US and in Montreal, Canada, many of whom were connected to the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). One of the ICHRDD's mandates was to support the human rights situation in Haiti, to which end it placed its political might behind the Haitian diaspora community. The organisations employed a large number of Haitian diaspora professionals, while the leader of the institution - and former head of the Canadian National Democratic Party (NDP), Ed Broadbent - had strong professional links to ousted Haitian leader Aristide. In 1994 a preliminary investigative tribunal named, "The International Tribunal on Rights in Haiti", was held in Montreal, organised by the ICHRDD in close consultation with the diaspora community. Ed Broadbent then travelled to Port-au-Prince in October of that same year to lay the groundwork for the possible creation of a truth commission. By November 1994, a framework was finalised for how the truth commission should be set up. It was essentially based on the report of the preliminary tribunal, and "(m)any of those who eventually became involved in the Haitian CNVJ were involved in this initial attempt at truth-commission-style investigation in Montreal" (Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011: 19). Beside conceiving of the mechanisms and pushing for its establishment diasporas were also built into the mechanisms itself from its initial mandate to its eventual audience. Specifically, its mandate sought "to globally establish the truth concerning the most serious Human Rights violations perpetrated between September 29 1991 and October 15 1994, inside and outside the country and to help to the reconciliation of all Haitians without any prejudice against seeking legal action based on the violations".[105] This phrasing of the mandate broadened the conception of TJ beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, thus making room for diaspora, even without explicit mention. Beside a mandate suggesting that the process pertained to processes "inside and outside the country", the institutional set up of the CNVJ also called for 'international commissioners', which suggested a more explicit and formalised involvement of diaspora in the process. Members of the Haitian diaspora/exile community were effectively 'built into' the mechanism as commissioners and advisors. The Haitian diaspora community also participated in the mechanisms as witnesses by "sending written accounts and coming themselves to testify before the Commission" (Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011). Finally, and to the detriment of the Haitian TJ process on the ground, it was the diaspora that also ended up being one of the primary audiences of the CNVJ's final report.

The preceding paragraphs are evidence to the fact that the impact of the diaspora on the Haitian TJ process was immense. Hoogenboom and Quinn's central argument has been that the

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[105] Amnesty International 1996, Haiti: Still Crying out for Justice". https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/amr360021998en.pdf

Haitian diaspora was central to the international diffusion of ideas and ideals about TJ. The authors conclude that "the Haitian diaspora was an integral player in putting the truth commission on the table at the peace talks" and that "(i)t was, indeed, an agent of change, and not merely an object of more powerful international actors." (ibid. 23). In sum, there would not have been a Haitian TJ process if it had not been for the actions of the Haitian diaspora. While the authors highlight the role of diaspora as 'agents of change' or drivers of the process, the case reveals that already diaspora are appearing in multiple roles in TJ, i.e. as advocates and lawyers for TJ and Human Rights, as commissioners, as witnesses, and as 'recipients' of TJ.

The CNVJ process did not become a game-changer in the TJ field at a macro-level. In fact, the failure of the TJ process reflected badly on diaspora involvement in TJ and the case did not become a blueprint for formal diaspora involvement in TJ, at least amongst an emerging class of TJ professionals who were interested in exporting TJ practices across the globe. On the other hand, it was also fairly difficult to draw any broader lessons from the Haitian diaspora's involvement in TJ. The conditions that made it possible for the Haitian diaspora to become involved in, let alone drive the TJ process were highly contingent/case dependent: For example, the spatial positioning and connections of the Haitian diaspora to centres of power, e.g. in DC and Montreal – played a key role. This condition is of course difficult to replicate. Indeed, explaining why the Haitian diaspora occupied the powerful spatial and relational position that it did, would require a historical deep dive on the slave trade, the Haitian Revolution, and post-colonial relations in the Americas, which goes far beyond the scope of this thesis.[106] Another reason why the Haitian case did not become a model for formal diaspora-driven TJ practices is that, in hindsight, the CNVJ process itself was deemed a failure. Scholars have suggested that it was "unable to contribute appropriately to the acknowledgement of Haiti's conflicted past, undermining donor attempts to advance reconciliation in the country" (Quinn 2009). Several reasons have been given for this perceived failure, a key one being that the mechanisms did not have much local support. Its final report was written in French, rather than the local Creole language which suggested that it was more intended for an international than a local audience.

Another early example of diaspora involvement in TJ was the Liberian Diaspora Project, which took place from 2006-2008. The Liberian mechanism was different from the CNVJ in that in the former diaspora involvement was more 'externally mandated'. But neither the Haitian or the Liberian case lead to a cascade of governance efforts to either include or exclude diaspora from TJ processes. While both processes today are thought of as key cases of diaspora

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[106] Another factor that could explain why the Haitian diaspora did particularly well in Montreal is the city's bilingualism, which provided fertile ground for formation of a Haitian diasporic elite.

involvement in TJ mechanisms, neither allowed for much subsequent generalization about diaspora and TJ. Any yet, to a degree, the cases still left their marks on the emerging diaspora-TJ nexus. While they triggered neither a general opening up or a complete closing down of the TJ field towards diasporas, they did set some form of precedence. From the perspective of the Haitian diaspora, their efforts to contribute to the improvement of the human rights situation in their homeland by initiating a TJ process proved a success, even if a short lived one. It certainly widened the imagination in terms of what forms of diaspora involvement might be possible in the future, i.e. the Haitian case, in particular, demonstrated the importance of access to elite policy networks

Another key reason exists for why neither the CNVJ nor the Liberian Diaspora Project became the blueprint for diaspora involvement in the TJ field. It was exactly at the time of the CNVJ that the TJ field began to embrace the concept of reconciliation, which would soon have an impact on the ways in which diaspora could engage with TJ, as will be explored further down in this chapter. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) was a critical juncture for the emergence of a reconciliation (and restorative justice) practices in the TJ field. This was a drastic departure from the purely retributive justice framework that had been applied in the transitions in Rwanda and former-Yugoslavia. The SATRC was established in 1996 and presented a defining moment not just for the imagined South African 'Rainbow Nation' but for the field of TJ as a whole. The SATRC was set up to deal with the gross human rights violations committed during the country's apartheid era, which formally ended in 1994. In contrast to some of the TJ mechanisms that had preceded it (ICTY, ICTR), the SATRC was intentionally not a criminal tribunal. Rather, it's mandate was to "to enable South Africans to come to terms with their past on a morally accepted basis and to advance the cause of reconciliation".[107] What was the rationale for moving beyond retributive justice and from the prosecution of war crimes to the granting of amnesties and reconciliation? The arguments made at the time – and still espoused by some mainstream liberal theorists today – were the following: a) a purely legalistic interpretation of justice was deemed inadequate, b) legal justice through prosecutions would lead to destabilization of the fragile peace and wouldn't allow for reconciliation, and c) the practice of granting amnesty was deemed more forward looking. In hindsight, a more realistic explanation might have been that the racial hegemony of the apartheid era could thus be kept intact. For international elites, punishing the perpetrators of apartheid seemed an uncomfortable prospect, considering the complacency and complicity of

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[107] South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, website https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/

Western actors in committing these racial injustices. In many ways, the SATRC presented a milestone for the TJ field but also laid bare various conflicts and contradictions that continue to structure the field. In moving beyond a legal conception of justice, it highlighted its political nature. It also laid bare the conflict between retributive and restorative justice. And finally, it showed the difficulties of navigating both domestic and international politics.

In sum, while there was no explicit mention of the involvement of diaspora, or even displaced populations, migrants, or expats in the design of the SATRC mechanisms, the commission shaped the TJ field in such a significant way that would shape conduct for decades to come, more so that CNVJ (as I explore in section 4.4.1.). By the time that the Tamil diaspora - and diaspora populations more broadly - did start to mobilize more explicitly around TJ issues, the sort of justice that was available to them, the claims, measures and mechanisms that they could draw upon and that were legitimate within the field, was determined largely by what unfolded in SA in the early 1990s. For example, many of today's high-ranking UN staff and TJ experts (especially those that were not criminal lawyers but human rights experts, such as Yasmin Sooka) who are now working on the Sri Lankan process, first cut their teeth on the SATRC. In many ways then, the early 1990s lay the foundation for the contemporary TJ field, in that it established certain practices as doxa, and in that some people began to distinguish themselves as TJ (and not just legal) experts.

As mentioned above, beside formal, top-down TJ processes, the period following the end of the Cold War saw in particular an expansion of less formal, bottom-up TJ practices, such as commemoration practices and memorial building. Importantly, and as mentioned above, such TJ mechanisms could include a much broader spectrum of the population, going beyond the elite level diaspora actors encountered in the more formal processes. Bottom-up TJ could also be administered everywhere – beyond the homeland territory – and so became a way for diasporas to partake in TJ in the places where they were now living. This period saw the proliferation of so-called 'diaspora dialogues' and reconciliation initiatives in diaspora host countries, which continue to be a key practice of diaspora governance, as identified in this thesis.[108]

In sum, the 1990s and early 2000s saw an immense expansion of the global TJ apparatus. This included the broadening of the toolkit beyond strictly legal mechanism, as well

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[108]What's Diaspora Got to Do with It?, International Alert https://www.international-alert.org/publications/whats-diaspora-got-to-do-with-it, Diaspora Dialogues, https://diasporadialogues.com/programs/, The Media and the Future of Sri Lanka: Young Canadians Peace Dialogue, https://groundviews.org/2010/10/28/the-media-and-the-future-of-sri-lanka-young-canadians-peace-dialogue-on-sri-lanka/

as the increase in transitions administered across the globe from Bosnia, to Chile. Meanwhile, the period also saw changes and increased mobilization of diasporas for TJ causes. A complex TJ opportunity structure began to emerge (Orjuela 2018), which diasporas could relate to in multiple ways, e.g. as prosecutors, providers of testimonies, human rights advocates and builders of memorials. Importantly, however, no clear singular governance mechanism to engage with diasporas in TJ emerged. As the field changed, so did diaspora involvement in it.

4.1.4. The emergence of TJ practices in the Sri Lankan context

How did the above outlined changes in TJ practices play out in the Sri Lankan context, and for the Tamil diaspora? By the end of the Cold War the Sri Lankan civil war was raging, with no formal transition on the horizon. And yet, governance practices that were growing dominant within the TJ field and also the broader peace-building paradigm at that time, did find a way into Sri Lankan politics. During the 1990s, most moderate Tamil diaspora human rights activism remained eclipsed by LTTE activism. As a result, the international community (led by liberal Western states) had shut down to human rights claims referencing Tamil collective rights or espousing ethno-nationalist rhetoric[109]. Most groups who tried to raise awareness of Tamil human rights abuses, let alone genocide, were silenced either by the LTTE or by liberal norms and discourses. As a result, the defence of Tamil human rights in Sri Lanka fell primarily to those who eschewed ethno-nationalist rhetoric and advocated for the rights of the individual and inter-community dialogue, such as Nimalka Fernando. Along these ideological lines a 'peace-movement' formed around Sri Lanka in the 1990s, leading up to the peace process. Indeed, by the early 2000s, a ceasefire was on the horizon, albeit perhaps less as a result of liberal activism and more because of exhaustion on both sides of the war. In 2002, the Norwegian-led peace talks began. These events meant that the by now complex and internally heterogenous TJ apparatus turned its attention towards the Sri Lankan civil conflict.[110] How did the 'prospect of a transition' play out for the Tamil diaspora? Were they in any way included in the peace process?

It has been argued that some parts of the Tamil diaspora had a small (if any) role to play in the formal peace talks in that they were involved in bringing the LTTE to the negotiating

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[109] See recent paper by Rampton and Nadarajah 2019.
[110] Including Kumaratunga's Presidential Truth Commission on Ethnic Violence 1995-2000, which latter engaged select witnesses in diaspora although there was no systematical 'engagement'.

table.[111] After this initial involvement there was not much room for diaspora Tamils in the process. Advisors to the peace process emphasized the need to engage with the Tamil diaspora but were unclear on how to do so. The overall consensus was still that they were more likely to 'spoil' peace talks and that they were too radical. In the context of the formal state-led (pre-transition) peace process, the Tamil diaspora was mostly considered one homogeneous group of peace-wreckers and governed as such (a view that is challenged in chapter 5 of this thesis). This view was propped up by events unfolding within the diaspora. For example, in 2000, a young Tamil set themselves on fire in Geneva's Place de Nations, followed by a protest of 14.000 Tamils in that same space. This form of collective activism taking place in Geneva (supported by various European Tamil diaspora organisations) sustained the perception in the mind of many UN staff and international diplomats that the Tamil diaspora was too radical to engage for (liberal) peace.

However, during this same time select NGOs in the peacebuilding sector were beginning to push for increased diaspora involvement. For example, in 2004 recommendations were made in a joint policy paper by the German Civil Peace Service, and the Berghof Foundation that advised the GOSL and host states to pass legislation (including citizenship status) to increase the likelihood of positive diaspora contributions. Diaspora members were here named as potential 'agents of change' by other civil society actors working in the peace-building sector. Importantly, these engagement initiatives were geared at moderate Tamil diaspora factions, such as youth groups or cross-ethnic organisations. Select members of the Tamil diaspora were thus encouraged to became involved in less formal more bottom-up peace-building initiatives, which resonated with the local-turn in the TJ field more broadly (Paffenholz 2015). And indeed, in 2004 a small group of Tamil youth activists from across the world were invited to Sri Lanka in an attempt to build peace through inter-ethnic exchange. This trip would prove to have quite far reaching consequences, that were not immediately visible, e.g. two of my interlocutors were inspired to become more involved in homeland issues after the trip. However, while one of them remained engaged in the political and human rights situation in Sri Lanka and the Tamil struggle more generally, the other decided to shift his attention to engaging in homeland development (as explored in chapter 3).

Around the same time, commemoration practices started taking place in the diaspora. However, these practices became subject to strict regulation, for example by Swiss authorities, who in 2001 outlawed all fundraising activities at these commemoration events, based on the

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[111] Cochrane et al. have suggested that " in 2001, the diaspora was an important factor in encouraging the LTTE to agree to participate in the negotiations" (2008).

claim that this money was being funneled directly to the LTTE.[112] The proscription regime - which will be explored in the following chapter - targeted the Tamil diaspora around this time. Indeed, the LTTE was kept from entering into formal peace talks in the US because they were proscribed there, albeit not in Sri Lanka at the time. The peacebuilding potential anticipated by liberal civil society organisations - and also much of the diaspora scholarship - was evidently hampered by hostile host-state governance practices and Tamil diaspora involvement in TJ did not take off during this period.

When in 2006, the ceasefire broke down and the final and most deadly stage of the civil war commenced, all hope for peace and peaceful transition seemed quashed. Of course, this juncture also brought about shifts in Tamil diaspora engagement in Sri Lanka. One of my interlocutors, a young Tamil-Canadian who had been engaged in administering development aid in Sri Lanka during the ceasefire, mentioned that when it came apart his organisation "couldn't guarantee the safety of our interns, so the mode of engagement shifted from development to political rights and human rights. Because that we could do from the safety and security of Canada."[113] Thus, while on the ground more formal professionalized humanitarian NGOs with a focus on relief and emergency response took over, outside of Sri Lanka, voices calling for human rights protection, especially in the Northern and Eastern parts of the Sri Lankan island, grew louder. In 2007 and 2008 a number of human rights organizations, including IMADR and Gesellschaft für Bedrohte Völker, Forum Asia, Pax Romana,[114] started their advocacy at the UNHRC. It was also around that time that a number of organisations were founded specifically with the purpose of Tamil human rights protection, e.g. the Act Now campaign was founded by British humanitarian aid workers in cooperation with Tamil diaspora activists. Thus, began a period of more visible and large-scale diaspora mobilization for human rights.

4.1.5. *Taking the Tamil struggle to the streets ... and then to parliament*

The final months of the Sri Lankan civil war presented a turning point both for Tamil diaspora mobilization as well as engagement of the diaspora by the wider international community, but especially those concerned with TJ. By 2008 the situation for Tamils in the

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[112] Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft, website
https://www.admin.ch/gov/de/start/dokumentation/medienmitteilungen.msg-id-22835.html
[113] Interview with founder of Tamil development NGO, Toronto, Summer 2016.
[114] All organisation with ECOSOC 'special consultative status'.

North and East of Sri Lanka was becoming increasingly dire. Tamils across the world watched in horror as the war continued to escalate, and harrowing images of hardship and slaughter reached them via their TV screens and through desperate telephone calls from relatives at home. In response, Tamil diaspora activists began to call on their various host country governments to put an end to the fighting. For example, in Canada many of the main diaspora organisations were hard at work lobbying their government to trigger an intervention or at least public debate on the human rights situation in SL. In the early days of 2009, some of the leaders of these organisations were arranging meetings with politicians in the Canadian House of Commons to convince individuals to place the Sri Lanka-issue on their agenda. Similar events transpired in the UK, US and Australia.

As it became increasingly clear that their governments were not responding, Tamils around the world took to the streets. In the early months of 2009, Tamils were engaging in large scale collective action filling the squares outside parliaments in cities like Geneva, London, Toronto, and Sydney. Added to this were reports of dozens of people immolating themselves to protest the inaction of their governments as well as the EU and UN, e.g. in India, Malaysia and Switzerland (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010: 6). Governance responses to such Tamil diaspora collective activism were varied. In London, Tamil demonstrators were met with police crack downs and arrests, while in Toronto the high visibility of the protestors grabbed public and media attention, thus making it harder for Canadian politicians to ignore Tamil calls for them to do something. A debate on the events transpiring in Sri Lanka was called in the Canadian House of Commons in February of 2009.[115]

And yet, from a macro perspective, the global demonstrations did little to prevent atrocities from continuing in Sri Lanka, and both LTTE and government sanctioned human rights abuses exacerbated further in the months leading up to May 2009. Sri Lanka then declared the official defeat of the LTTE in May 2009. A few days after, the UNHRC called a special session where the situation in Sri Lanka should be discussed. The outcome of this session proved a huge blow to Tamils across the globe. It concluded with a resolution that essentially congratulated the GOSL on its defeat of the LTTE in the name of combatting terrorism and was bitterly silent on atrocities committed against Tamil civilians by the GOSL itself. The resolution stated that the UNHRC was

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[115] Canadian House of Commons, Hansard – 9 (February 5, 2009),
https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/40-2/house/sitting-9/hansard

Welcoming the conclusion of hostilities and the liberation by the Government of Sri Lanka of tens of thousands of its citizens that were kept by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam against their will as hostages, as well as the efforts by the Government to ensure the safety and security of all Sri Lankans and to bring permanent peace to the country[116]

The resolution, co-sponsored by Sri Lanka, was passed by 26 against 12 votes. While the UK and Canada were included in the list of countries that voted against it, their failure to stop the resolution from passing was seen by the majority of members of the Tamil diaspora as indicative of the little regard their leaders had for the lives of Tamils across the globe. This exacerbated disillusionment amongst many diaspora Tamils, especially those who thought their host governments would protect them, and arguably activated a broad section of the Tamil diaspora population (the 'moveable middle') who had been less involved in street-level protests until that moment. Those Tamil diaspora groups with more anti-imperialist ideologies were perhaps less surprised at the inaction, as for them it was business as usual.

But despite the initial disappointing response given by states at the UNHRC special session, and the perceived lack of concern for both Tamils in Sri Lanka and those living in diaspora, over the following months there was a shift in the way that the international community responded to and engaged with the Tamil diaspora at large. Selected host country government representatives were slowly coming around to the realization that their inaction on Sri Lanka had been ill advised, confronted with images emerging from the battle zone. Hence, by the next UNHRC session held in September 2009, the Sri Lankan government was being officially condemned for committing human rights violations by a number of Western governments, and the Tamil diaspora at large finally began to feel like they were being taken seriously. But what actually did cause this shift in governance response?

Many scholars have argued that the demonstrations and large-scale collective action that took place in the final months of the war were the crucial turning point for the way in which the international community engaged with the Tamil diaspora. They raised awareness, and changed the discursive environment, adding legitimacy to claims for victimhood. However, these actions alone did not necessarily sway the public or the politicians in a particular direction. In order to understand the change in tack by some Western governments when it came to their

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[116] UNHRC Resolution A/HRC/RES/S-11/1

engagement of the Tamil diaspora, two (more micro-level) developments must be examined: One the one hand, this is the information emerging from people that were on the ground during the final phase of the civil war, such as members of the local NGO community and UN staff. On the other hand, we need to look at the networking efforts made by a small group of Tamil diaspora professionals starting in the early months of 2009.

On the one hand, voices from the broader civil society sector - especially individuals and organisations that were on the ground in Sri Lanka during the final phase of the war - were loudening. They engaged in the whole gamut of 'norm entrepreneurship' (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998), e.g. through the circulation of news articles and of images of human rights abuses in North-East Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, former UN staff held panel events, and the influential documentary *No Fire Zone* made the rounds in centers of global power in 2013 (this also demonstrates privileged access by some established international NGOs). Members of the Tamil diaspora featured in this broader campaign not through claims of collective victimhood, but as members of an elite 'global civil society' concerned about ensuring accountability for human rights abuses. Their agency was now increasingly recognized as 'expert knowledge' or in being able to hold states and IOs to account through gathering evidence or engaging in naming and shaming practices. In turn, the practices of engagement by states or IOs began taking the form of formal events or procedures such as 'being a witness in parliament', or 'submitting evidence', or to 'offer perspectives from below'. It appears that as a result, politicians and MPs in host countries began to increasingly acknowledge Tamil victimhood, both in domestic discourse, but also at the UNHRC sessions in Geneva. But this does still not fully explain why and how Sri Lanka became the subject of international scrutiny at the UNHRC.

Another key driver of the shift in governance practices was located at the very micro level of Tamil diaspora mobilization. While, as mentioned above, a large proportion of the global Tamil diaspora tried to affect change by taking to the streets by the end of 2008 and early 2009, some decided to pursue a different course of action. As was relayed to me in numerous interviews, it was the initiative of less than a handful of individuals - or political entrepreneurs - that set in motion a major shift in how the Tamil diaspora would be viewed/treated by key members of the international community, going forward. In February 2009, in response to the huge Tamil protests taking place outside the American Embassy and the Ontario provincial government in Toronto, later spilling onto the Gardiner Expressway, the Canadian federal parliament in Ottawa finally decided to conduct a debate on the political and human rights situation in Sri Lanka. In the room at the time was a young Tamil federal MP who had called

for the debate and who had been working hard to place the issue of Tamil human rights violations on the government's agenda. This MP was also part of a steadily growing and politically influential Canadian Tamil diaspora organisation (the CTC). After the debate, which yielded little in terms of actual commitments from the Canadian government, it was decided in consultation with other CTC members, that internationally oriented action was necessary. Advocacy needed to be scaled up, beyond the national level. The initial suggestion to take this route, and guidance on how to best go about it came from the MPs wife, a lawyer and academic who had previously completed an internship in Geneva and was thus well versed in how the global human rights capital functioned; what practices were deemed legitimate, what claims would be heard, in the hallowed halls of the UNHRC (which had replaced the Human Rights Commission in 2006). Thus, a letter was quickly drafted requesting a meeting with Navi Pillay, then High Commissioner for Human Rights, albeit with limited hope to receive a response, let alone a positive one. It was then to everyone's surprise, that a reply came within mere days. It contained an invitation for a face-to-face meeting with Navi Pillay herself in Geneva. The Canadian diaspora members decided then that it would be advantageous to attend this meeting not merely claiming to represent the Canadian-Tamil diaspora, but as representatives of Tamils across the globe. They immediately placed phone calls to friendly Tamil organisations in the UK, US and Australia, and booked last-minute flights and hotels to the Swiss city. Thus, only days after a coalition of Tamil-diaspora organisations from Canada the UK and the US, had arrived in Geneva, albeit without the Australian partner who was constrained from participating due to long flight times and costs. The face-to-face meeting with Navi Pillay took place, as promised. In the meeting the group communicated to her their concerns about the grave violations of human rights that the GOSL had committed. The parties then left Geneva as swiftly as they had arrived. The result of the meeting, I was told several times, was that Navi Pillay's office issued a statement condemning the actions of the GOSL. These events were always relayed to me with great pride, and people were certain that the initiative was indeed the key turning point in the Tamil struggle for justice.

While, of course such causal claims must be treated with care, shortly after the group left Geneva, Navi Pillay's office did publish a statement officially condemning the atrocities committed both by the GOSL and the LTTE. And indeed Navi Pillay was one of the only people, who in her formal video address at the UNHRC special session on Sri Lanka, officially condemned not just the LTTE but also the atrocities committed by the GOSL in the final months of the war, subsequently calling for an "independent and credible international investigation

into recent events".[117] Thus, even if a direct causal link between the networking efforts of the English-speaking Tamil diaspora coalition and the eventual condemning of the GOSL by the High Commissioner cannot be established, the meeting did fulfil an important function. Namely, it signalled to these Tamils that their efforts to mobilize in this way – namely by seeking a face-to-face meeting with Geneva-based diplomats – could bear fruit. It also gave them an important claim to legitimacy and strengthened their (self-imposed) mandate of representing the interests of the global Tamil community at this international forum, also vis-á-vis other Tamil diaspora organisations who had not been granted such privileged access. Ultimately, the fact that this high-level UN official had invited them to her Geneva office had a huge impact on the mobilization tactics chosen by this coalition of Tamil diaspora actors going forward, and also had a significant effect on the (perception of the) Western-Tamil diaspora at large.

For one, the Canadian Tamil MP, who also happened to be a lawyer by profession, subsequently made attending the UNHRC process his personal mission.[118] In pursuit of this mission, he formed a coalition with British and a US American Tamil organisations and gathered a number of young lawyers and students of the law around him whose shared goal it would become to hold the GOSL to account over human rights abuses committed during the war, and in its aftermath. Together they began reaching out to ambassadors and drafting resolutions in advance of upcoming UNHRC sessions, as well as connecting with large international NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to organise side events inside the Palais de Nations. With that, the Tamil struggle became firmly situated - not just in Geneva -, but *inside* the UNHRC, where it came into direct contact with the professional agents and mechanisms of the TJ field, which we have been exploring in the preceding sections. One member of the group attending the initial meeting with Pillay relayed to me the following sentence, which illustrates the tenacity with which this Canada-UK-US faction of Tamils now pursued the UNHRC route:

> The first year, it was a heartbreaking devastating blow to Tamils because Sri Lanka was congratulated by the UN, the Human Rights Council. But we didn't give up, we thought that we didn't do our job well and once the job is done well and we start engaging with the place over there, the truth will come out, and a

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[117] Video Message of Navi Pillay shown at special session, condemning the GOSL
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-Gg3NaWmAE

light will be shone on the Tamil community. We were right, year after year, perseverance and patience and workmanship was rewarded.[119]

In sum, it is not that the Tamil struggle was suddenly reoriented towards Geneva in 2009. Tamil mobilization in Geneva was happening before, in the form of protest actions. Rather, in response to more elite-level diaspora mobilization, the type of governance practice through which the Tamil diaspora was now engaged changed. This is not to say that the diaspora was suddenly 'invited in' or explicitly engaged by governance actors. Rather the agency here lay clearly with select members of the Tamil diaspora. They imposed themselves on the formal TJ field (rather than sticking to demonstrations/commemorations etc.), subsequently becoming a different 'problem' for the actors in the field, required to be governed through different modes of power. The Tamils inside the UN compound were a 'governance problem' that could no longer be ignored or kept at bay through spatial segregation (like the protestors outside) but had to be treated with formal respect and diplomatic professionalism. But of course, even within that general professional engagement there still remained inequalities, as my ethnographic analysis will later show.

4.1.6. Diaspora engagement in the UNHRC process

Once the Tamil struggle for justice had reached inside the halls of the UNHRC, from September 2009 onwards, Sri Lanka was firmly on the radar of global TJ practitioners. The following years then saw an exponential increase of Tamil mobilization for TJ and around the Geneva session in particular. Several critical junctures stand out.

Following accusations of severe human rights abuses, the UNHRC sent a panel of experts to Sri Lanka to investigate in late 2009. In 2010 the GOSL agreed to set up the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), a domestic mechanism to look into abuses committed during the war. In the panel of expert report published in 2011, both the GOSL and the LLRC received a damning assessment.

Year	Resolution/Report Title	Notes

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[119] Interview with Tamil organizational leadership in Toronto, summer 2016.

2009	Special Session on Sri Lanka in Geneva	
2010	Sri Lanka establishes LLRC	Domestic TJ mechanism
2011 (March)	UN Panel of Experts Report published	(damning Sri Lanka and LLRC)
2011 (September)	Aborted resolution	
2012 (March)	**UNHRC Resolution on Sri Lanka**	**(deemed a success for Tamil diaspora)**
2012	Internal Review Panel on UN Actions in Sri Lanka	(finds grave mistakes)
2014	OHCHR Investigation into Sri Lanka (OISL) established	
2015	Report of UN Human Rights Office	
2015	OISL Report	(details violations and offers recommendations)
2015 (October)	**Resolution A_HRC_30_L.29 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka'**	**(US-led, co-sponsored by Sirisena government)**
2015 (December)	Founding of Monitoring and Accountability Panel (MAP)	(by Tamil diaspora members)
2016	Consultation Task Force at work	

Table 4.1. Timeline of key dates in the formal TJ process (UNHRC resolutions and expert reports on Sri Lanka)

The year 2015 presented a critical juncture for the Sri Lankan TJ process in a number of ways. It was the year that saw the election of Sirisena's 'good governance' government, which promised drastic reform measures[120] and a renewed commitment to the TJ process. In October of 2015, this commitment manifested as the GOSL co-sponsoring a resolution A/HRC/34/L.1 on *Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights* in Sri Lanka at

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[120] Such as cracking down on corruption, and a more Western-friendly foreign policy, https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-sri-lanka-politics/sri-lankas-sirisena-promises-new-era-of-clean-government-idUSKCN0R140T20150901

the UNHRC (with the US as main sponsor). This signaled a huge change in the GOSL's engagement with the liberal TJ framework. But before long, it became clear that 'signaling' was all it was.

Yet, in 2015 the Sirisena government made it seem like Sri Lanka was turning a page. This also included its relationship with the Tamil diaspora. In fact, an event held in Colombo in December of 2015, laid out a roadmap for engaging the diaspora in the post-conflict transition process. The attendees all seemed cautiously optimistic that Sirisena would stand by his word.[121] Similarly, from 2015 onwards, governments of countries like Canada and the US, and of several EU states were relieved that their efforts to place pressure on the GOSL through GSP+ sanctions and international pressure seemed to have paid off. They quickly began introducing more moderate language into their condemnations of the human rights abuses committed in the final stage of the war. But this shift also rang the alarm bells of some Tamils. Amongst those that I met in London before my visit to Geneva in 2017, many were convinced that the reduction of pressure by Western governments on Sirisena, would have the reverse effect of what these anticipated. Sri Lanka, they argued, would backslide on its promises to ensure accountability for human rights abuses. Accordingly, organisations like Together Against Genocide (TAG – formerly Tamils Against Genocide) were already preparing to take more drastic measures than what was possible at the UNHRC. They were collecting evidence of cluster munitions usage and pushing for ways to bring the GOSL before the ICC.

And they were not wrong in their scepticism. During the discussion of Agenda Item 2, on one of my final days in Geneva, the roll-over of the resolution was adopted, granting the GOSL more time to implement a Transitional Justice mechanism as per its commitments made in October 2015. The outcome sparked dismay – although not surprise – among most Tamils who attended the session.[122] After all, in the 18 months that had passed since October 2015, the GOSL had made no progress or even credible commitments toward meeting the initial resolution.[123] There was a feeling among some in the diaspora that the international community has lost interest in Tamil claims for justice,[124] now that the Rajapaksa regime had been ousted and replaced by Sirisena's 'good governance' government.

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[121] The author was invited to this meeting on engaging overseas Sri Lankans and conducted interviews with participants and organisers during a visit to Colombo in December 2015.

[122] Interview with Tamil activist in London in December 2016.

[123] At the point of writing this, in March 2019, a new resolution 40/L.1 has recently been passed, rolling over 34 and 30.

[124] Interview with Tamil diaspora lawyer, Washington DC, spring 2017.

The preceding pages have demonstrated the way in which the involvement of the Tamil diaspora in TJ issues has shifted over time and in relation to - but not necessarily in line with - changes in the broader TJ field. In the 1970 and 80s Tamil diaspora advocacy for human rights began but had to make way for liberal international NGOs and non-ethnic human rights claims making. While the 1990s saw a huge growth of the TJ field, in terms of global spread and diversification of its toolkit, the Tamil diaspora was not yet engaged because the civil war was raging, and they were still considered peace-wreckers and governed as such. During the 2002-2006 ceasefire, the TJ field was keen on engaging diaspora populations in peace-processes and reconciliation initiatives, and so the Tamil diaspora was drawn into some such initiatives. However, as civil war resumed, Tamils were once again governed as 'peace wreckers' and also increasingly disciplined by governance practices in their host countries e.g. proscription, policing of demonstrations and commemoration events, as will be explored further in chapter 5. In the brutal final months of the civil war, Tamils managed to focus international attention on themselves and tides began to turn. Several forms of mobilization, from large scale protests, to domestic lobbying and international advocacy eventually led to an acknowledgement by the international community that the diaspora could not be ignored. Events leading up to the end of the Sri Lankan civil war in May 2009, placed the Tamil diaspora firmly amongst the group of actors that should be considered stakeholders in the post-conflict period and transition. While for much of the duration of the conflict Tamil diaspora activism for human rights recognition had been carried out by individual activists in tightly knit networks, by the end of 2008 the broad majority of the Tamil diaspora had been mobilized and thus successfully asserted itself as a force to be reckoned with in the transition process. Crucially, this included new diasporic actors, not just the established international human rights defending NGOs, or the most radical Tamil nationalist factions. The next section will now examine various governance practices that shaped Tamil diaspora participation in the TJ process during my period of field research.

4.2.   (Dis)Entangling Diaspora Governance at the UNHRC

Settling into my chair in one of the wood-paneled conference rooms of the Palais, I noticed how quickly the room was filling up. Indeed, this seemed like the best-attended side event that I had been to so far. I looked around and recognized faces from most, if not all Tamil diaspora organisations present at the UNHRC session, as well as many others who I knew had been engaged in the Sri Lankan TJ issue in Geneva over the past weeks. From the flyer that I

had been handed earlier in the day, I learnt that the event in question was titled 'Report of the Consultation Task Force and Human Rights Challenges in Sri Lanka' and that it has been organized by IMADR, Franciscans International, Human Rights Watch, Minority Rights Group International and Forum Asia (although the latter's logo is missing from the flyer). The panelists comprised of Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu - the former secretary of the Consultation Task Force (CTF), a well-spoken graduate of the London School of Economics, who now directs the Centre for Policy Alternatives in Colombo, as well as a Nimalka Fernando, president of IMADR, and two other less well-known panelists, both from Sri Lanka. A senior former UN- staffer was appointed to moderate.

Side events like this one take place throughout the course of each UNHRC session. They offer a space for discussion of issues related to the human rights situations in member states and are one of the primary mechanisms through which non-state actors can participate in the UNHRC proceedings. Here they may share testimonials and evidence on particular cases, or offer expertise, so as to persuade member states to vote in certain ways in the main forum. However, in order to register a side event at the UNHRC, you have to be either a member state, UN body or ECOSOC accredited organization. Only once the side-event has been registered, can it be informally co-organised or co-sponsored by non-accredited organisations. Throughout the duration of my fieldwork at the UNHRC in March 2017, the Tamil diaspora is very present at these side events. Various groups act as organisers, co-sponsors, or audience members. These distinctions in role are important, as will be explored in more detail below. At first glance, the event in question is not run or even co-sponsored by any of the major Tamil organisations from either Canada, the US, Europe or the UK.[125] Diaspora Tamils are in attendance merely as audience members. And yet, a closer look at the event will reveal that the diaspora it not just a silent/passive onlooker and does have a role to play in the proceedings.

The panel began with an opening address by Saravanamuttu, in which he recounted his experience of carrying out the consultations for the CTF that took place from June to September 2016 with the aim to ascertain the opinions of the local public on mechanisms for TJ proposed in the 2015 UNHRC resolution. He first outlines the process of consultation, stating that the GOSL was at first cooperative and "did at no point tell us what to do or what they wanted to hear". He then describes the findings of the consultations, reporting that people said that "the truth of what happened needs to be acknowledged by the government", and that "those that gave orders should not be granted amnesty" but those in lower ranks might. He then laments

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[125] Unless we include Nimalka Fernando, a former political exile, see above.

that the Sri Lanka government has been less cooperative in taking over the report of the CTF and in implementing its recommendations. He states that "we recommended a hybrid court and international involvement in prosecution" but that this recommendation has been rejected. At this point there is some commotion amongst the audience. The event moderator - a former UN-staffer with a long history of work in South Africa and Sri Lanka – asks people to quiet down and to not take photos if they have not been granted prior permission to do so. He adds a 'little plea' to bring less negativity to the process. His tone strikes me as a little paternalistic. He then signals for the second speaker to begin. She emphasizes the local ownership of the report of the CTF but also expresses her disappointment at the response of the government. A third speaker then addresses the room in Tamil. Her statements are translated on slides on the wall behind her. She argues that the Muslim minority has had their grievances eclipsed by the Tamil struggle. She outlines various shortcomings of the CTF process, including lack of funding, time constraints and that it did not explicitly make recommendations that addressed Muslim minority grievances. Finally, Nimalka Fernando offers her remarks. People are glued to her words. She speaks with authority and calm confidence. She has clearly done this many times before. In her address she asserts the importance of "civil society in Sri Lanka" for achieving "reconciliation, peace and justice", the need to "celebrate the diversity of our land". She goes on to say that the struggle for TJ should be about the "the people who want to remain back home in Sri Lanka" and argues that those who want to remain and create a life for their children are the "*real* voices" clamouring for justice. She makes a compelling case, drawing on testimonies from mothers who have lost their children and victims of sexual abuse. According to her, victims don't want to clamour for justice in Geneva, they just want to "find the truth of what happened to their children". She expresses her disdain for the removal of victims from the TJ process in Geneva and states that because victims are not here "we have a responsibility to make sure they receive redress, relief and reparations". Finally, she states that "I don't have faith in politicians, or leaders, but I have faith in the victims." She ends her contribution by emphasizing the need to create "a new Sri Lanka", one that "respects diversity". After Fernando's intervention the floor is opened up for questions. People immediately raise their hands to offer urgent reflections on the panelists' contributions. The first person to speak largely agrees with the sentiments brought forward by the speakers that "we need justice as Sri Lankans, not as Tamils or as Singhalese". But then there is an intervention by one of the members of a British diaspora organisation. Rather than pose a question, he begins to challenge most of the assumptions made by the panelists. He first asks what *reconciliation* means when "war criminals are still living as war heroes", before he asserts that the question guiding the TJ process must be "how do we stop the

genocide". He argues that there can be no talk of reconciliation before the truth has been brought to light, even if "truth hurts". He states that "justice can only come with independence". He ends his address by questioning the motives of those civil society organizations who have supported the roll-over of the Sri Lankan resolution, when it is evident that the GOSL is not implementing it. As he speaks the volume of his voice gradually increases and several members of the audience are visibly squirming in their seats and muttering disapproval under their breath. I can see out of the corner of my eye that an Australian expat[126] indicates to the moderator to use his hammer to end the intervention and restore order to the conference room. As the muttering fades, a young Canadian-Tamil is granted permission to speak. From brief conversations with her in the Serpent Bar, I know that she is a lawyer who for several years has been working for a human rights NGO in Colombo. She makes a dispassionate but very sharp intervention that ends with a precise question about legal process. The room remains quiet and attentive. Finally, another Tamil (who I recognize from prior Tamil-organised side events that he has spoken at) then challenges the representativeness of the CTF, claiming that many Tamils have been intimidated into not speaking up. He explicitly questions Fernando's remarks. She immediately responds with a surprisingly brusque tone - compared to her earlier composure - by saying that political leaders (by which I can assume she is referring to the person who just challenged her) must cease pursuing their own political agenda and instead provide "space for civil society *inside* the country".

This side event, and in particular the Q&A session at the end, reveals a number of political struggles that characterize the Sri Lankan TJ process today and allows us to assess the position of various actors – including Tamil diaspora members - within these struggles. This section will use this side event as a starting point to gradually (dis)entangle the different forms of (governing) power which shape the experience of the Tamil diaspora at the UNHRC - namely legitimacy, bureaucracy and spatiality - as well as the different governing actors that we encounter. It will begin by looking closely at the content of the debate that unfolds during the side event itself. This tells us something about the discourses that structure the Sri Lankan TJ process, as well as who is considered a legitimate stakeholder and authoritiative actor in the Sri Lankan TJ process. From there I will (dis)entangle the side event further, asking how it came to be in the first place, which will reveal other forms of power at work, driven by different forms of agency. Zooming out from the side event, I will problematize the governance practice of accreditation, using it to show bureaucratic power at play, in that only accredited organisations are allowed to take part in the first place, while state power determines who gets

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[126] She introduced herself as this earlier.

accredited. Finally, I situate the side event and the accreditation practice in geographical and material space showing how spatiality governs the participation of the Tamil diaspora in the Sri Lankan TJ process and UNHRC proceedings.

4.2.1. *Legitimate diaspora conduct inside the UNHRC*

The debate that unfolds during the side event can tell us a lot about the discourse that structure the Sri Lankan TJ process, as well as who is considered a legitmate stakeholder and authoritiative actor in the Sri Lankan TJ process. The interventions in the panel discussion and the contentious debate that takes place subsequently, suggests that conduct at this side event, but also at the UNHRC more generally, is governed by rules around what can and cannot be said about the Sri Lankan TJ process. As was demonstrated in the last chapter development, the way in which diaspora actors are governed, often depends on whether they are seen as legitimate or not. While the last chapter showed that diaspora legitimacy in the development field is often tied to the idea of 'partnership', this vignette reveals other powerful discourses. What can this side event tell us about who has authority and legitimacy to act in the Sri Lankan TJ process? Two discursive themes stand out from the vignette: genocide and reconciliation. These are also the two frames which Walton (2015) has identified as the two main 'competing frames' in the UK Tamil diaspora's quest for post-war justice. Indeed, these themes or frames act as faultlines between the various competing visions for the Sri Lankan TJ process. Whether a Tamil diaspora actor is considered legitimate stakeholder in the TJ process, depends on how they position themselves in relation to these two concepts.

What are the global and local politics of the "reconciliation" discourse in the TJ field and beyond? As mentioned, a key discursive faultline that emerges from the vignette is around the concept of *reconciliation*. Fernando, who sits on the panel at this particular side event and is considered an authority on the Sri Lankan TJ process more broadly, emphasizes that civil society has contributed to "reconciliation, peace and justice in Sri Lanka". For her, reconciliation is the path to justice, which echoes the dominant discourse in the broader TJ field since at least the 1990s (as explored in section 4.1.). On the other hand, she is challenged by an audience member who finds the term *reconciliation* meaningless, if it is not tied to truth telling about the past and a future of Tamil national self-determination. Here the primacy of reconciliation is challenged, suggesting that this interlocutor is primarily rooted in a field other than the TJ field where accountability is prioritized. Others do not go quite as far, but still

suggest that reconciliation must entail that perpetrators of war crimes are held legally accountable. The discourse around the pursuit of *reconciliation vs. accountability* structures Tamil diaspora engagement in TJ and echoes the broader structuring of the TJ field into the restorative vs. retributive debate (as explored in section 4.1.). Evidently, the side event and the UNHRC in general, is not a vignette into a singular bounded field, rather this section has shown how multiple fields overlap. While this side event may be dominated by TJ professionals in the TJ field – who prioritise reconciliation – other actors challenge this prioritization. At the UNHRC, I found actors present who primarily are embedded in fields other than TJ. This includes international lawyers, whose priority is universal legal justice and accountability (dominant practice in the field of international law), outspoken Tamil nationalists, whose priority is justice through accountability, as well as the right to self-determination (and through genocide recognition, as will be explored below) and whose legitimacy claims are mostly embedded in a "Tamil (trans)national political field" (Brun and van Hear 2012). But of course, it also includes actors in the Sri Lankan homeland, a field where the accountability vs. reconciliation debate is perhaps more nuanced, focusing on *who* should be held accountable and *by whom*?
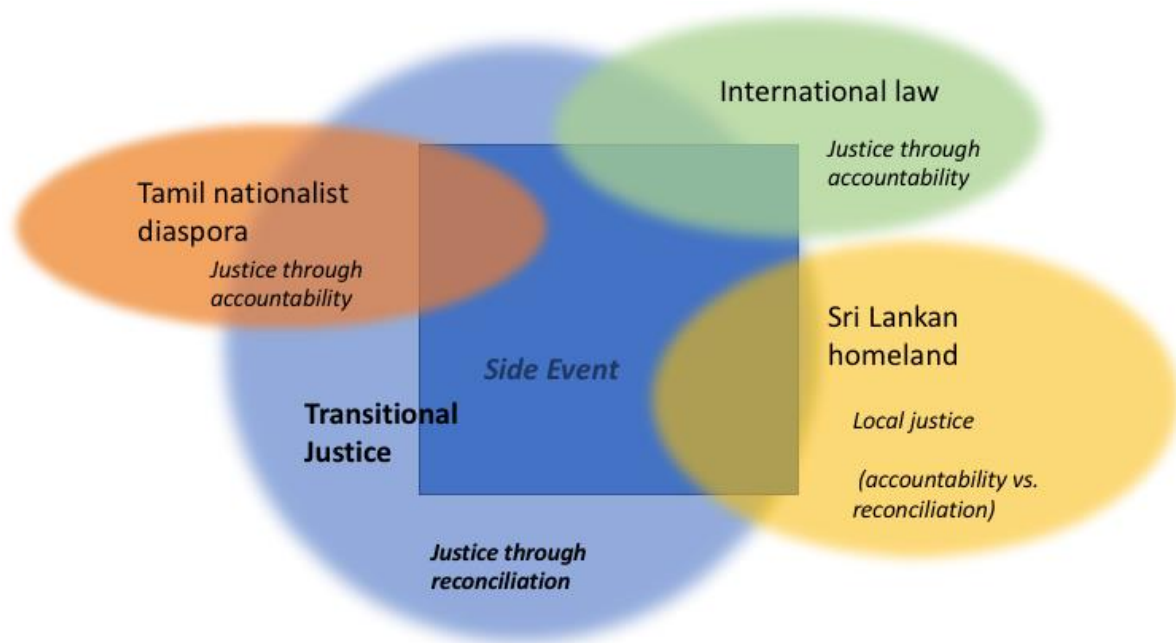
Figure 4.2. Illustration of how the side event brings into focus overlapping fields, with diverging dominant discourses

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It was repeatedly suggested to me that diaspora groups push for accountability over reconciliation because they don't have to suffer immediate ramifications of ongoing domestic conflict, while domestic actors are leaning towards reconciliation.[127] This suggestion corresponds with Anderson's (1992) 'long distance nationalism' argument. But the distinction is not so simple. My data reveals that the diaspora/local population binary does not map neatly onto the reconciliation vs. accountability debate. Within the Tamil diaspora there are also voices who have been pushing for reconciliation, especially those that have close links to local Sri Lankan NGOs or are deeply embedded in their liberal Western host states. But perhaps, more importantly, a number of Tamil diaspora organisations that I encounter at the UNHRC, most of them located in English-speaking countries such as Canada, the US and UK, are not vocally committed to either accountability *or* reconciliation. This faction of the diaspora is itself internally heterogenous and does not seem to focus their efforts on making their position in the accountability vs. reconciliation discourse explicit. Many of them seem able to be able to move between fields of power and thus are less reliant on the use of discourse to claim legitimacy and authority, although their mobility is also not unencumbered, as I will explore in section 4.2.3.

Figure 4.3. Illustration of how diaspora actors are linked to multiple overlapping fields and move between them

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[127] Interview with UN attaché, Geneva, March 2016.

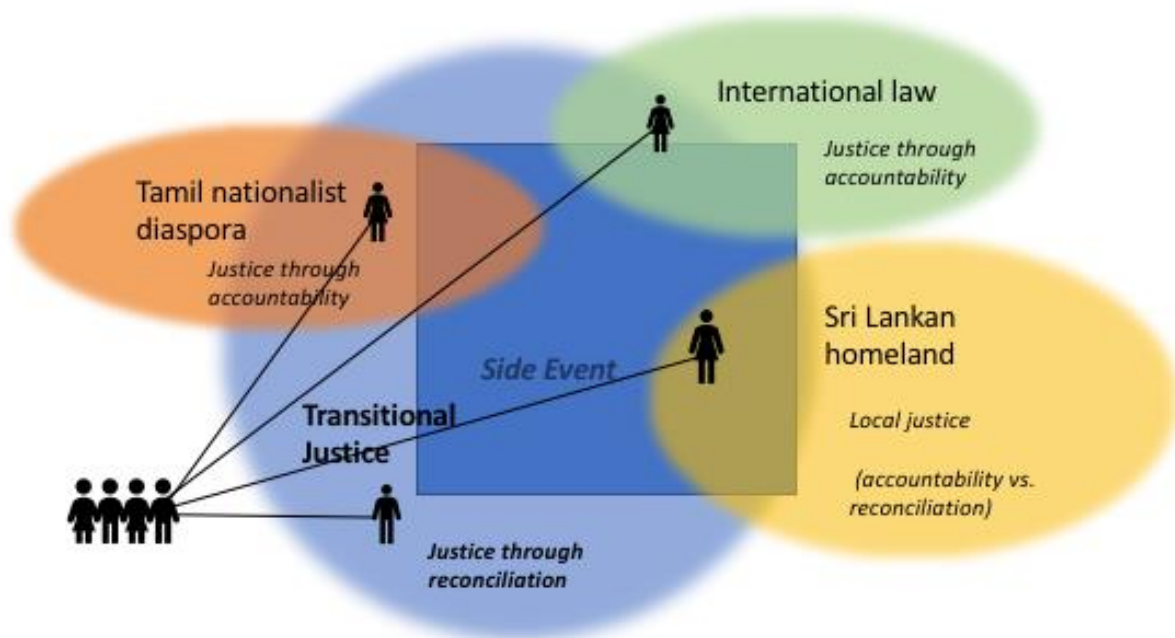Beside accountability vs. reconciliation, another faultline emerges from the side event. A discourse which I repeatedly encounter at the UNHRC and that appears to play a key role in establishing legitimacy in the broader Sri Lankan TJ debate revolves around the use of the "genocide" term. As mentioned above, in the second intervention of the Q&A one member of the UK-based Tamil diaspora organization suggests that a priority must be to "stop the genocide". This suggests that the legitimacy of the Tamil diaspora, as well as other actors present at the UNHRC, is linked to whether and how they make use of the 'genocide' term. A conversation I had with one of the European Tamil diaspora representatives on one of the final days of the 34th UNHRC session further illustrates this.

The conversation came about when I walked towards the meeting area on the ground floor of the Serpent bar, and ran in to the man I was introduced to by a Tamil lawyer just the day before. We begin a conversation about the side events that are scheduled for that same day. Our conversation then shifts to him telling me that he is was a founding member to three of the Tamil NGOs, that are involved in organizing side events at during the session. He relates to me the struggle that these three organisations had to go through until they finally gained ECOSOC consultative status last year. I try to prolong the conversation and ask him about his thoughts on the session so far – is he happy with the outcome of the resolution? He responds with a shrug and a sigh and tells me that he is frustrated by the fact that there are, in his opinion, too many people that want to speak for the Tamils and that consequently their message is becoming convoluted. He elaborates that some of the people that they have invited from Sri Lanka at great cost to speak at their side events, are being coopted by other NGOs, such as IMADR. He continues to tell me how he is particularly concerned that these organisations are not using the term genocide, or even accepting it, and thereby watering down the Tamil case. He specifically points to the sheet of paper that I am holding about a side-event sponsored by IMADR and says that people like Saravanamuttu and Nimalka Fernando are "claiming to represent the Tamils". His tone indicates that he is not happy about this.

The 'genocide' discourse is evidently of deep concern to my interlocutor. He is worried that 'other NGOs' are not using the term in their human rights claims making and are therefore 'watering down' and diluting the Tamil cause. His concerns reflect the broader contentiousness of the term. But what are the politics of the 'genocide' discourse and why does the use of the terms matter so much to my interlocutor? The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (from here on Genocide Convention) was adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in 1948. It defines genocide as:

any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such: a) Killing members of the group; b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the groups; c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Scholars have written extensively about the politics of the term. In the diaspora literature there have been several studies examining the ways in which groups lobby for genocide recognition. For example, Baser and Toivanen (2017) write about Genocide Recognition Politics (GRP) through in the Kurdish case. Meanwhile, Koinova (2019) has written about how genocide recognition politics lead to coalition building amongst different diaspora groups. These scholars give us an idea of why diaspora groups engage in the politics of genocide recognition and how they go about it. More specifically, Oliver Walton (2015) has written about how genocide functions as a 'discursive frame' in the Tamil case. He argues that deploying the genocide frame serves to "demonstrate groups' responsiveness to popular demands, and to challenge dominant international approaches". He suggests that the genocide frame is used to build legitimacy, albeit not just 'upward' vis-à-vis the 'international community' but also 'downward' to the Tamil community. This explains how diaspora actors who are aware of the power of the term use it to engage with powerful state actors. And yet, this framing perspective somewhat underestimates the constraining power of the discourse and also obscures how it is deployed by powerful state actors to govern. So, rather than think of 'genocide' only as a discursive frame deployed strategically by the Tamil diaspora, it is useful to think of it also as a governance practice. Indeed, the use of the term 'genocide' has been studied by IR scholars, as a practice of governance. In her book *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War,* Lene Hansen (2013) makes a compelling case about how framings of the Bosnian war as a 'Balkan war' required a different foreign policy response by Western powers than framing it as 'genocide'. The latter required intervention. During the height of the dominance of the R2P norm in the 2010s, it was thought that use of the 'genocide' term, would immediately trigger the need for international humanitarian intervention (Kuperman 2011). It has been suggested that during this period international conduct was structured by the "Obama Doctrine". The

'Obama Doctrine', suggests that because Obama eschewed the use of the genocide term during his reign (Zolyan 2019) - arguably to further 'externalise the burden of war' (Krieg 2016) – meant that any use of the genocide terms that was not followed by immediate interventionist action to, would result in delegitimization. This explains why during this period, actors sympathetic to the GOSL could delegitimize the Tamil diaspora in the eyes of the international community by suggesting that they were using genocide recognition as a strategic means to further their secessionist struggle (Grodsky 2012). However, by the time of the 34th UNHRC, more and more actors in the liberal international mainstream were starting to make use of the term. Unsurprisingly, by 2017 the Obama doctrine had lost a lot of its power.[128] Still, those Tamil diaspora members who were focusing their activity at the UNHRC on lobbying the liberal Western community of states, remained reluctant to use the term openly.

In sum, my fieldwork reveals that at the UNHRC discourses govern by imbuing actors with legitimacy. In the case of the Tamil diaspora, legitimacy is constructed through discourses around a) accountability vs. reconciliation an b) genocide. Importantly, my data has also shown that some Tamil diaspora conduct themselves in a way that is at odds with the broader TJ field.

This is because, what is considered legitimate conduct or discourse in the TJ field, clashes with what is considered legitimate by actors in the field of international law, or actors in the Sri Lankan homeland (which of course constitutes multiple fields). Interestingly, some actors in the Tamil diaspora, specifically those that describe themselves and have been described as the liberal Western Tamil diaspora faction seems to move between these fields, weaving in and out, in their quest for a kind of justice that sits uneasily between the accountability and reconciliation frames.

But beside the content of discourses, some of my fieldnotes reveal that another factor, which influences speaker legitimacy is representativeness: who is speaking and who are they speaking for? How members of the diaspora are governed is linked to what kind of authority they are perceived to have. The comment that my Tamil conversation partner makes about other NGOs claiming to "represent the Tamils" strikes me as significant because symbolizes one of the key struggles that seems to be playing out at the UNHRC session with regards to the TJ process in Sri Lanka; namely that around 'representation'. If the preceding section was about 'what can be said' about the past and the future of TJ in SL, then we must also pay attention to

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the question of 'who is allowed to speak' about the past and the future of TJ in Sri Lanka. For example, in the excerpts taken from the side event, Fernando argues that TJ is about "the people who want to remain back home in Sri Lanka" and goes on to say that those who want to remain and create a life for their children are the *real* voices are clamouring for justice. Her comments make evident that she does not see the diaspora present here at the UNHRC as representative of the victims 'back home in Sri Lanka'. Instead, she perceives members of the Tamil diaspora featuring in the audience of the side event primarily as outsiders and political opportunists, who are shut down if they take up time and space during the Q&A. Further, during another side events a senior former-UN diplomat who sat next to me, silently handed me a piece of paper. It was the printed invitation to the side event on which he had scribbled a few notes for me to read. The notes were written down next to the names of the list of speakers and read "Tamil from Tamil Nadu (not SLT)", "Tamil from South Africa (not SL Tamil)", and "SL Tamil". He seems to think it is important for me to know who is or isn't a Sri Lankan Tamil. I could hear him mutter 'he has not even been to Sri Lanka' about one of the speakers under his breath.
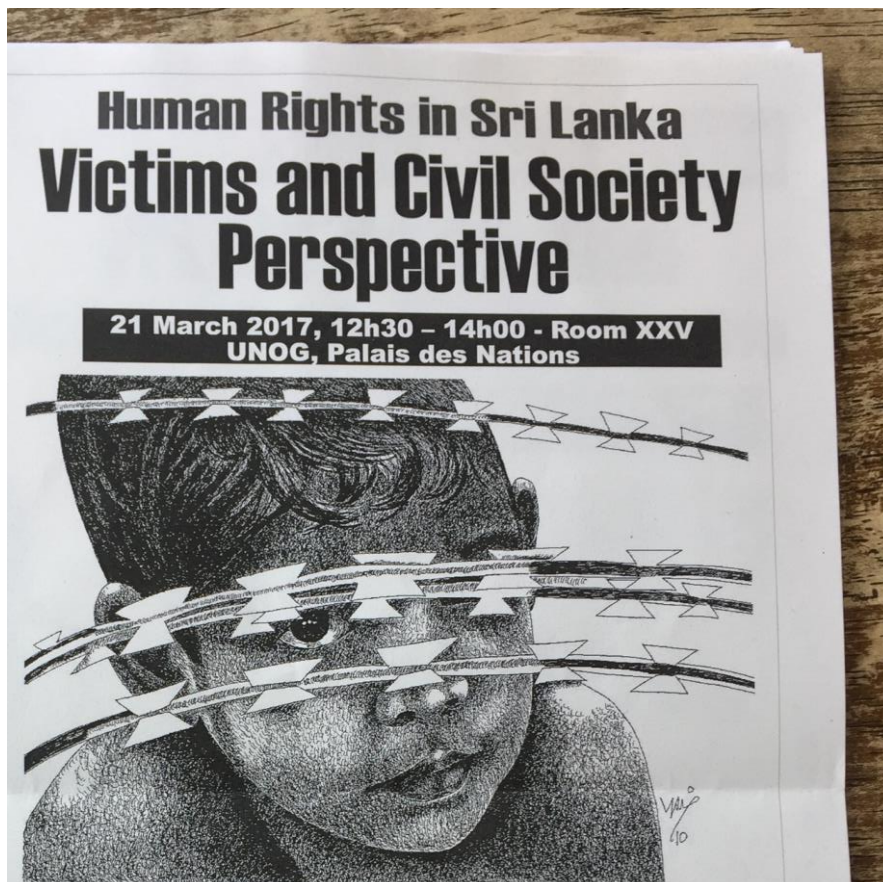

Image 4.3. Flyer invitation to a Tamil-diaspora sponsored side event

Competing claims over representativeness and authority are also made by European-Tamil faction, who hold a side event titled "UNHRC resolution: Victims and Civil Society Perspective", this claiming of representing 'victims' and local civil society actors. Further, from my interviews I gather that many liberal diplomats/policy makers think that only the younger generation of Tamil activists should be listened to, because they are perceived as not carrying the burden of the war and having a bigger stake in the future of Sri Lanka and the Tamil nation. Of course, these claims rest on the (perhaps flawed) assumption that all Tamil youth have a similar vision for the future of their nation.

While some Tamil diaspora members at the UNHRC claim authority based on their Tamil-ness or their victimhood, other Tamil diaspora members are able to present themselves at the UNHRC primarily in their professional capacity. When they speak at side events or on the main floor, they do this first in their role as lawyers, experts on Transitional Justice mechanisms, or human rights activists. Their ethnicity becomes secondary, even though they are still advocating on behalf of Tamil victims. Authority changes, it is fluid and field specific. As mentioned above, at the UNHRC, and even within a single side event, multiple field overlap. What we end up with at the UNHRC then, is a space where not only the fields overlap, but also the roles and identities of the actors within it. It is precisely this complex knot of entanglements which informs the ambiguity with which the Tamil diaspora is regarded at the UNHRC. Consider the following: A Tamil lawyer might have been raised in Canada but then returns to Sri Lanka to work for a local NGO: How is their authority to speak on the TJ issue in Sri Lanka determined? Are they a local actor? Are they part of the diaspora? Or are they a lawyer whose primary relation to the Sri Lanka TJ process is as a legal expert and defender of human rights? Meanwhile, another Tamil might have been raised in Sri Lanka, fled the conflict for Switzerland, founded an NGO that now operates within the UN system and advocates for human rights across ethnic divides with no particular focus on the Tamil cause. Are they considered diaspora or part of a northern NGO? Are they part of the 'international community' that many diaspora organisations are addressing their claims to? The answer to these questions can never be clear cut. Rather diaspora Tamils enter the UNHRC – and the overlapping fields – with equally intersecting identities and overlapping roles.

In sum, there are a multitude of ways in which diasporas enter the UNHRC setting and consequently governance of diaspora shapeshifts in line with such perceptions of authority. This echoes what we already know about the Transitional Justice field as a whole, i.e. that it seems to continuously grapple with various contradictions, from the restorative vs. retributive justice debate, local vs. global approaches, to the debate around victimhood vs. agency of

survivors of human rights abuses. Diaspora often complicate these binaries further, by showing up with multiple identities. They often defy the binary between state and civil society (non-state) actor, or between victim and perpetrator. They enter the TJ process both as defense and prosecution. They represent simultaneously the Global North and the Global South, or external or internal actors in the TJ process.

This section has untangled how legitimacy is constructed at the UNHRC, either through discourses around accountability and reconciliation or through assertions of representativeness. Both discourse and authority function as power structures which govern the Tamil diaspora at the UNHRC. Because the UNHRC contains so many overlapping fields, questions of legitimacy and authority are fluid and ambiguous. As a result of this complexity, there is little consensus on how the Tamil diaspora should conduct itself in the Sri Lankan TJ process or at the UNHRC. Now, in the above paragraphs, I have interpreted this side event as a space in which political struggles over legitimacy play out. Side events evidently reveal struggles between varying stakeholders in the Sri Lankan TJ process (for example, between Sri Lankan civil society and different factions of the Tamil diaspora) in real time. But side events are also a governance practice in their own right. They are a highly routinised format for civil society participation in an otherwise very state-centric governance process. Indeed, what has been left unexplored so far are the conditions or governance practices that make such side event possible in the first place. What bureaucratic, geopolitical, spatial and legal conditions have to be fulfilled in order for diaspora to take part in side-events, and the UNHCR process more broadly?

4.2.2. Accreditation and the power of bureaucracy

Beside struggles around important discursive structures, my fieldnotes also allude to the amount of energy and resources that go in to being able to attend the UNHRC session in the first place. The following paragraphs will show that one of the key governance practices structuring Tamil diaspora participation in the UNHRC process is the requirement to seek and obtain formal accreditation as an organization with ECOSOC 'consultative status'. After all, the most immediate answer to the question of who is kept out of the halls of the UNHRC is: those without accreditation. Accreditation is a governance practice that determines who has the power to submit formal statements for consideration in the UNHRC debates. It also determines who is granted physical access to the UN grounds and therefore, who can take part in the formal debate, and side events and the more informal lobbying and meetings with diplomats.

Accreditation has been theorised by Pouliot and Thérien as one of the key informal practices that constitutes global governance/global public policy making today (2018). Specifically, they define NGO accreditation as a "bureaucratic procedure by which an IO grants institutional standing to a non-governmental organization based on certain criteria" (2018: 167). They trace the roots of the accreditation practice in global governance to the early 20th century but suggest that it took off after the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment. Current UNHRC accreditation regulation is based on 1992 ECOSOC resolution 1996/31. Accreditation was introduced as a measure to 'open up' global governance to non-state actors and is widely considered a democratising measure. But of course, the accreditation practice is highly political and also leads to exclusion and creation of power imbalances. It is a practice in "which inclusionary trends combine with more exclusionary tendencies" (Pouliot and Thérien 2018: 163)

For example, unlike at the WTO where it is the secretariat (a bureaucratic body) that decides over accreditation, at the UN these decisions are made by a committee of member states. Any group that presents a threat to member state interests, would therefore be at a disadvantage. This is a fairly familiar IR story and suggests that Tamil diaspora participation at the UNHRC is partially dependent on geopolitical interests and alliances. While the above fieldnote alludes to this, in a follow up interview my earlier conversation partner confirms his suspicion that member states are 'blocking' the accreditation of his NGOs based on Sri Lankan state influence. He relays to me that, before they gained formal accreditation they came as regular 'visitors', their access was also restricted to the public gallery. He then explains to me the process through which they eventually won accreditation.

> B: The thing is, as I told you, we had tried for about the last 10 years. We tried with about 45 organisations (…)
>
> C: So, last year all three organisations got through. How many did you apply for in that round?
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> B: We had applied with about 5 NGOs. One was refused, one other was postponed.[129]

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[129] Interview with Tamil founder and organizer, Geneva, March 2017.

He attributes their eventual success to the fact that this time their application had the explicit support of the French Embassy. However, the struggle for accreditation did not end there. Even once they had won accreditation for one Tamil NGOs, this status was withdrawn again soon after. He blames this on interstate power politics at the UN Security Council in New York.

> (…) a lot of countries blocked us. (…) When they review the NGOs, if there is even one - out of 19 countries … for example, during this session there is Iran, China, Venezuela, Cuba, India, Pakistan. Those countries always try to block (us). For example, even now, when we tried to seek accreditation for one Tamil NGO last January, two of the NGOs were blocked.
>
> (…) countries have a support(-system) between them. For example, last year there was China, … for the last 4 or 5 years always China, Venezuela, Turkey.[130]

When I ask for the reason why he think they are blocked he responds that "it's always the Sri Lankan government. Or, the Sri Lankan government with the Indian government. They always try to block."

The above paragraphs reveal informal networking channels helped my interlocutor to overcome the barrier he identified: states blocking accreditation, on behalf of the GOSL. Only once he had established links with the French government, was their accreditation application successful. In the excerpt my interlocutor also describes how he has put in years of work to master the formalities of applying for accreditation, and even more years to access the lobbying channels and networks that eventually made the accreditation application successful. What is then perhaps less explored is how accreditation comes both at a high bureaucratic and economic cost. Pouliot and Thérien report how "ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 requires that applying NGOs have an established headquarters, an executive organ or officer, a democratically adopted constitution, an authority to speak for the members, and financial independence from governmental bodies." (2018: 168). Organisations that do not have the means to professionalise in this manner are kept out. For many Tamil diaspora organisations (and not just those working on human rights issues), the majority of their resources go to establishing and maintaining charitable status. The accreditation practice (much like practices of network governance explored in the preceding chapter) is designed to make it seem like decisions over which NGOs

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[130] Ibid.

get to attend the UNHRC are bureaucratic and procedural. But bureaucratic power does not function alone, nor in the abstract. There are actors setting the rules and controlling these bureaucracies. In this case, UN member states with veto-power have the authority to block applications for accreditation. This illustrates how the UN is still very much a place of inter*state* rather than inter*national* relations, as groups of nations without states continue to struggle to be seen or heard within the system.

At the same time, it helps non-state actors to have 'friends in high places' and the (economic) capital to maintain these friendships. Evidently, within this rigid power structure in which state power and capital rule, there is nevertheless some room for agency. One way in which Tamil diaspora organisations have circumvented the accreditation process themselves is by 'piggy backing' (Martens 2004) on organisations with ECOSOC consultative status. One Canadian-Tamil politician relayed to me how his organisation strategized for their first UNHRC attendance:

> we literally took the phonebook and called every accredited organisation in Canada. We were lucky to be accredited through Lawyers Rights Watch Canada.[131]

During the 2017 UNHRC session that I attended, the majority of the Tamils I interacted with were formally accredited by organisations that were not necessarily affiliated with or run by Tamils. The exception were the three NGOs mentioned above, for whom accreditation had been laboriously and expensively procured earlier that year, as well as Pasumai Thayagam from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.[132] This practice of allowing NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status to accredit individuals with no or little prior affiliation to their own organization is another way in which diasporas are governed and how their mobilization is structured. Here the already accredited organisations have governance power bestowed upon them; a hierarchy amongst non-state actors is established. What are the consequences of this 'piggy backing' practice for the mobilization of Tamils for TJ at the UNHRC?

As mentioned, the need for accreditation forces organisations and activists to form coalitions with already accredited organisations, many of whom have a long history of liberal

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[131] Interview with Tamil-Canadian politician, Toronto, May 2017.
[132] I discuss in section 4.4.1. that Tamil Nadu Tamils are not considered 'representative' of Sri Lankan Tamils or have stakeholdership in the Sri Lankan TJ process, by some.

human rights advocacy. As the following excerpt from an interview with a Tamil lawyer from Toronto illustrates, this creates opportunities for learning/socialization:

> G: Some in the NGO community I was able to build a relationship with. That was quite important. So, I think that really really helped. Definitely a number of people in the diplomatic community. That was really, really helpful. I really worked with all of them over the years. I don't have a background in International Relations nor with international law. So, we learnt on the fly.
>
> C: You say 'on the fly'. Can I ask what that meant? Would you come back to Geneva for every session? Or were there meetings here in Canada, when you were back here, with diplomatic staff? How did that work? Did they take you by the hand and say: look at what we are doing?
>
> G: No. This has always been about being at the table. It doesn't matter. Parents have dinner with their kids and kids learn from being at the table, right. So, it's that type of thing. You are at the table. You listen to what people say. You listen to others who are quite experienced, talk about things. You listen and understand what works and what doesn't work. And I think those are great learning opportunities. And I think that's really what it come down to. And then the drafting: you also realise that it's not plain black and white language. So, in diplomatic terms, they wouldn't say 'demand'. There are certain words that they would never use. But we also know what that means in diplomatic language. It's quite harsh. So, I think finding that translation/codeword is very important. And then at the end of the day you have a lot of countries that are very oppressive states and they all are referred to as Excellencies. And that common level of respect that is given creates that environment where you need to change or not be involved.[133]

The excerpt shows how Tamil diaspora organisations were 'shown the ropes' of international diplomacy. This of course is also a way of reproducing diplomatic practices, and of a particular ideological kind. Ultimately, accreditation is a pre-screening/pre-selection practice that creates

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[133] Interview with Tamil-Canadian politician, Toronto, May 2017.

a distinction between accredited and non-accredited NGOs (with significant political consequences.

In sum, my findings support the argument that accreditation is a key governance practice structuring the engagement of the Tamil diaspora in TJ. The practice is one of the main gatekeepers for the Tamil diaspora. The section showed how diaspora mobilization for TJ inside the UNHRC is shaped by 'geopolitics', given the fact that member states have to approve accreditation requests. This geopolitical struggle at the UN precedes any discursive struggles that can be had at the session around issues of justice, either through reconciliation or genocide recognition at the UNHRC. But accreditation also has a bureaucratic and a financial component. A large barrier to formal accreditation is having to present and perform as a professional NGO. This makes it difficult for diaspora organisations to gain formal consultative status.

4.2.3. Reterritorialising 'Geneva Internationale': spatial power and Transitional Justice

"Space matters in the production of collective action" - *Donatella Della Porta*[134]

But accessing the UNHRC is not just conditioned by discursive, or bureaucratic barriers. While some of my Tamil interlocutors emphatically relayed to me the geopolitical and legal difficulties of receiving accreditation, others located the main barrier to accessing and impacting the Sri Lankan TJ process elsewhere. When I asked a member of the Canadian cohort of Tamils in Geneva to talk me through some of the practicalities of attending the UNHRC sessions, he replied:

> Geneva is one of the most expensive cities. The very first time when I went to Geneva, I booked a hotel. I can still remember everything. 235 Dollars, Canadian. I thought 'Oh my goodness, this is going to be a suite! I haven't been in a suite before. I only need one bed. And the rest of the area: who is going to occupy it?', I was thinking about this and so I went. I landed at the airport, took a taxi and went to the hotel and the guy took me to the room. I was stunned, I almost collapsed. That was like a box, a coffin should fit in. Only a coffin can

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[134] In Miller (2016) *Putting Protest in Place: Contested and Liberated Spaces in Three Campaigns*.

fit in. I didn't have even breathing space in the room. When I get up from the bed the door barely opens.

So, the next day I had to cancel this hotel and I had to stay with X and Y (names redacted). They booked a nice suite. Luckily, they went to the French side (of Geneva). They took a hotel that was much bigger, so I had to sleep on the sofa. Those are the side stories [LAUGHTER].[135]

Even though he makes light of this barrier to accessing the UN, he also reports that from then on, aligned diaspora organisations from Canada, the US and UK started planning their trips to Geneva together. On the one hand this allowed them to put their heads together and strategise before and after every single day inside the UNHCR. But it also meant that they could share expenses:

We rented an apartment and we rotated people, two from Canada at the same time, two from BTF, two from USTPAC. Six or seven in the apartment at one time. We cooked and ate the food. And ... it worked really well.[136]

Why is this response important for understanding diaspora governance practices? It shows how coalitions between diaspora organisations might be formed out of financial/material necessity, thus expanding Koinova's (2019) argument that diaspora coalitions form out of strategic or rational calculation. My Tamil interlocutors mentioned how everyday practices like sharing a hotel room, affected feelings of solidarity between them and also shaped ho they divided lobbying activities between themselves. This corresponds to an argument made by Tilly that "(s)patial distance between potential participants thwarts mobilization, while co-presence facilitates it" (in Della Porta 2003: 29). The data presented here, also shows how the physical distance from Canada to Geneva affects the diaspora's ability to get their voices heard at the UNHRC. Funds that European Tamil organisations can allocate to seeking formal accreditation, are instead spent on hotels and flights. Similarly, Tilly suggests that spatial distance can sometimes be mitigated by financial means, but a trade-off must be made (ibid.).

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[135] Interview with Tamil leader, summer 2016, Toronto.
[136] Ibid.

As my own experience reveals, accreditation never operates/governs alone. It is only one step towards accessing the UNHRC. On the one hand, you can seek accreditation as an individual and be granted access to the public gallery, but unless you have the resources to show up in person and to negotiate with UN staff on the ground, then you may not ever move beyond the public gallery. On the other hand, even if an organisation has been formally accreditation, representatives of this organisation still need to physically move their bodies to the UNHRC. This shows us that Tamil diaspora mobilization is not just structured by legal mechanisms (such as accreditation) or state policy. Evidently, it is also structured by material and spatial conditions. And this spatial and material governance far precedes any accreditation process. The fact that Geneva is a 9-hour plane ride away from Toronto, has a significant impact on what mobilization can look like for the diaspora based there. Global travel and telecommunications infrastructures may be better now than they were years ago, which has improved access to Geneva, but they still require significant funds.

So, other than discursive, bureaucratic and geopolitical constraints, what conditions the ability of Tamils to attend the UNHCR sessions? Who is doing the governing? The above paragraphs have highlighted how geography and global infrastructures, e.g. cheap air travel, and telecommunications networks shape the ability of Tamil diaspora individuals and groups to access the UNHRC. Access is also conditioned by urban infrastructures, e.g. availability of accommodation. For the EU-based diaspora organisations geographical proximity makes access to Geneva easier. However, while for them getting to Geneva might be easier, they struggle to 'get in', past the accreditation barrier, and past the physical barriers that are erected outside the UN compound.

But my data also reveals another way in which infrastructure and materiality shape the political struggles around TJ in Sri Lanka, thus demonstrating the "reterritorialisation" of TJ practices (see Orjuela 2020) and global politics more broadly. Consider my opening vignette. I describe my walk across the Place de Nations, my encounter with the Tamil demonstrator and my walk towards the main entrance of the UN compound. In my fieldnotes I note my expectations for this space. I see the 'broken chair' and the flags of the UN building, and I associate these images with a false idea of global democratic accountability. When I see the Tamil protestor – and even the harrowing images of and stories about the murder of Tamils - I am not shocked. Rather, I expect to find this kind of protest action in this space. The Place de Nations has been created for this purpose. It sits right outside the UN compound, suggesting that the actions outside in this square directly affect the proceedings *inside*. But is this actually the case? Does the Place de Nations open opportunities for political protest and citizen

engagement or does it perhaps foreclose them? I would argue that the physical barriers around the UNHRC compound, has the effect of eliminating public spaces designated for protest from the sight of diplomats, thus further segregating between the outside and the inside. Protestors are confined to the Place de Nations, which must be passed by anyone entering the Palais de Nations on foot (e.g. the tourists, and NGO & UN interns) while remaining entirely invisible to anyone inside the building or those entering the compound by car (e.g. the diplomats). The designation of a particular physical site for protest (like the Place de Nations) also makes politics a spectacle and desensitizes the viewer; no actual disruption of the UNHRC sessions ever occurs in light of these protests.

Image 4.4. Security fence around the UN compound with sign designating it a *Secure Area*.

Image 4.5. Pictures of 'fencing' around WTO building

Image 4.6. Pictures of 'fencing' around Palais de Nation

Image 4.7. A ringfenced monument that reads *'The Vietnamese refugees are grateful to Switzerland and to the host countries. We are happy to live in a space of peace, freedom and democracy.'*

According to Della Porta "places have material aspects as 'by shaping social interaction and mobility, the materiality of space also shapes the nature and possibility of contention' but they are also imbued with meaning and power, as they are symbolically constructed, with symbolic cues that signal appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, ownership etc." (Leitner et al 2008 in Della Porta 2003). If this is the case, then how might governance practices actively constrain/thwart protest? The building of the Place de Nations does exactly this. In a Foucauldian sense, while from one perspective it might seem that the place is there so that bottom-up protest action can be seen and heard by those in power, the other side of the coin is that protestors 'are seen' by the institutions and actors of power. They are literally overlooking the place, in a manner that reminds of the Panopticon (Foucault 2012).

How does position in geographical space render the Tamil diaspora differently governable? When Tamils voice their claims *outside* the UN compound they are 'protestors' and are subsequently governed as such (i.e. by policing, security fencing). When they voice them *inside,* they are advocates or lobbyists, and governed as such. Thus, even discursive governance power has a spatial dimension. Using the genocide term is not the same everywhere. It has different connotation/different power in different spaces. By adding a spatial dimension to the politics of 'genocide' claims, we can begin to understand why certain things that can be said outside the halls of the Palais de Nations are not heard or deemed legitimate inside. For example, the restraint shown by some members of the Tamil diaspora in using the term *inside*

the UNHRC buildings, contrasts considerably with the liberal use of the term by the protestors *outside* on the Place de Nations.

The last paragraphs have examined how the Tamil diaspora's engagement in TJ is governed also by the urban infrastructures present in Geneva, specifically those that 'close off' access to the UN grounds while designating other spaces for protest action. Even if members of the diaspora that are able to travel to Geneva by virtue of their more proximate location to the city, they are still kept at a distance from the actual UNHRC proceedings through physical barriers. The section then examined the political geography of Geneva as a city, specifically buildings and compounds of the city that conduct global governance and make up "Geneva Internationale", to discuss how geographical positioning of organisations, e.g. their proximity to decision-making spaces but also to each other, has an effect on which part of the Tamil diaspora is engaged and how.

In sum, this final section has untangled the different power dimensions that characterize the governance of the Tamil diaspora during the 34th UNHRC session in Geneva. By centering practices, such as the holding of side events, accreditation, and protest management, it has shown how different forms of power work together to govern the Tamil diaspora at the UNHRC (e.g. legitimacy, bureaucracy, spatiality) and how governance at the UNHRC is embedded in multiple overlapping fields, not just the field of TJ. It then examined the, often unanticipated, political consequences of such governance, such as coalition-building out of necessity and everyday interactions, but also the reproduction of elite diaspora networks and the removal of the TJ conversation from the diaspora' grass roots. Ultimately, the sheer financial cost of travelling to and staying in Geneva during the UNHRC session is so high that it precludes the majority of the diaspora (but also of course also Tamils still residing in the homeland) from participating.

4.3.   Summary and Conclusion: A Tangled Politics of TJ

This chapter has explored the politics of diaspora governance by centering diaspora governance practices in the TJ field. Through the lens of Tamil diaspora involvement at the UNHRC in Geneva, it has shown that there is much ambiguity regarding the governance of diasporas in relation to the Sri Lankan TJ process.

The chapter began by offering a historical exploration of the involvement of diaspora in TJ processes. It began by tracing the institutionalisation of international cooperation in the fields of justice and human rights, as well as how they became entangled through the gradual emergence of global (read: deterritorialised) Transitional Justice processes. The chapter further detailed the emergence of transnational activism around issues of human rights and justice by political exiles, both immediately after the Second World War and then rapidly accelerating in the 1970s and 80s. This acceleration was driven by a confluence of global political developments, including dynamics of globalization, the end of authoritarian rule in multiple Latin American regimes. The chapter then illustrated how in the early 1990s TJ became increasingly professionalised, emerging as a global field of practice, encompassing an increasingly broad range of formal and informal justice mechanisms. By the mid-to-late 1990s there were then increased opportunities for diaspora to become involved in the TJ processes of their former homelands. The chapter then untangled how these (global) developments of a still nascent but consolidating TJ field with increased opportunities for diaspora involvement played out locally (were reterritorialised) in the Sri Lankan context. The chapter showed that the Sri Lankan context was characterized by civil war and wide-spread suspicion of the intentions of the Tamil diaspora community, and thus, with some exception, few opportunities for involvement in TJ emerged throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. This changed by the end of the Sri Lankan civil war. The period leading up to the defeat of the LTTE by the GOSL created an opening for Tamil diaspora involvement in the formal legal TJ process centering around the UNHRC. On the one hand, this was due to the emergence of (global) narratives around war crimes committed by the GOSL, something which the literature on Sri Lankan TJ process has explored. However, the chapter showed that this opening for Tamil involvement in the UNHRC process was also driven by dynamics that were territorially embedded in Toronto. Actions among local Tamil diaspora members who have connections to spaces and networks of global power, means that the Tamil struggle was made 'global' in 2009. Since the Tamil struggle for justice has been brought in to the UN process, and thus territorially resituated in Geneva, it has become subject to the local power struggles that characterise this space.

The second section of the chapter then (dis)entangled precisely what power struggles this reterritorialised fight for Tamil justice at the UNHRC in Geneva has entailed. In order to do so, the chapter centered a number of the governance practices that structure Tamil diaspora activism in and around the UNHRC.

A closer examination of a UNHRC side event organised by NGOs involved in the Sri Lanka TJ process, as well as a diverse selection of Tamil diaspora activists and other

stakeholders, revealed the deeply entangled politics of the Sri Lankan TJ process, as well as the multiplicity of roles that Tamil diaspora members occupy in the process. During the side event, these politics manifest as struggles over the type of justice that is envisaged for Sri Lanka, as well as uses of the genocide frame. While in the professionalized TJ field, dominated by a concern for inter-ethnic reconciliation, the Tamil diaspora is broadly regarded as an important TJ stakeholder, at the side event (and inside the UNHRC more broadly) this assumption is much more contested. This creates a complex local environment for Tamil diaspora activists to navigate. For this reason, diaspora groups may spend years, or even decades understanding how these global institutions work. Meanwhile, a closer look at the accreditation practice revealed that even before Tamil diaspora activists get a chance to engage with the entangled politics *inside* the UNHRC, they often struggle to even get there. While the ECOSOC regulation for formal consultative status was originally intended to broaden access for civil society organisations in 'international' institutions, the bureaucratic accreditation process presents a barrier to many smaller less-professionalized diaspora groups. Meanwhile, behind the seemingly apolitical bureaucratic regime, powerful UN member states still decide on which organisations to accredit, bringing geopolitics back in to the discussion around diaspora and TJ. Finally, the chapter looked at how the UNHRC and the 'global' human rights regime are deeply materially and geographically embedded in Geneva, which creates further barriers to access for diaspora who seek to shape the politics of their homeland, but also shapes coalition formation between diaspora groups.

In sum, what the diaspora perspective on governance at the UNHRC reveals is that the assumption that TJ processes can be deterritorialised (or made universal) by situating them inside 'global institutions', is ultimately false. Local political struggles in Geneva, both inside and outside the UN compound, reveal the complex entanglements which Tamil diaspora actors have to navigate in their activism. These struggles including navigating overlapping and contradictory expectations for diaspora involvement inside a 'global' institution, significant spatial segregation at multiple scales, as well as exclusionary international bureaucracies.

5. Security Governance and the Tamil Diaspora

It is November 2016, and I have been invited to attend *Maveerar Naal*, or 'Heroes Day', a commemorative event organised by several Tamil diaspora organisations in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford, East London to commemorate Tamils that have lost their lives during the Sri Lankan civil war. It is a cold and cloudy morning, as I emerge from the underground at Stratford station. I quickly find a stream of people heading in the same direction as I; a stream from which emerges a familiar chatter of Tamil mixed with English. I follow the stream out of the station and on to the sidewalk by a wide but empty road. Indeed, as we are walking, I notice that this part of Stratford is - at the time - still barely inhabited. Construction sites characterise the landscape. The high-rises to the left and right of us appear to me mere skeletons.

Image 5.1. Photo of Maveerar Naal site in Stratford, London

As we approach a bridge that would go on to cross the River Lea, the group of pedestrians that I was now part of veers right onto the riverbank. And it is then that I see it: The roaring tiger. The by now equally familiar and intimidating animal (intimidating because of its expression, but also because of the guns that were crossed behind it - *see image below*), that can be usually found jumping out of the centre of the Tamil Eelam national flag, is perched above a huge archway through which my fellow pedestrians are now filing.

Image 5.2. Photo of Maveerar Naal entrance gate in Stratford, London

But the Tiger proves to be only the beginning of the spectacle. As I watchfully walk under it, I come face to face with a huge, simulated graveyard, the size of approximately half a football field. I am now looking at not-to-scale models of graves ('Thuyilum Iilam') that – as I later find out - could historically be found in the North and East of the island, but are consistently destroyed by the Government of Sri Lanka, in an attempt to keep Tamils from mourning their dead in this way, especially since the end of the civil war and defeat of the LTTE. Soon after I pass through the gates, I meet my host who sits me down next to a number of other researchers and politicians at the front of the tent, which is packed to the brim. I later learn that approximately 15,000 people are in attendance of the event this year. At least an hour passes before anything happens on stage, so I take the time to look around. There is a separate queue for people who are laying down flowers and gifts in front of pictures. The event seems very well attended not just by British Tamils but also by researchers such as myself, as well as UK political leaders and MPs who mingle and hold speeches, paying their respects to the Tamil community. While we wait, we are all fed a full Tamil meal and chai tea. When the formal proceedings begin, I cannot help but wonder about the event's politically contentious nature. I am struck by the openly nationalistic and militaristic symbolism displayed during the event. [1] A central feature of the day's proceedings is the singing of the Tamil national anthem and other 'Tiger Songs' (Bruland in Fuglerud and Wainwright 2015: 93). The Tamil

Eelam national flag also plays a crucial role in the evening's proceedings; it adorns the walls of the stage, is hoisted (alongside the Union Jack) ceremoniously at the start of the event, and smaller versions are draped neatly over the hero's graves.

At the end of the day, as mourners were making their way home, I gather with a few academic colleagues and Tamil activists over hot drinks at a nearby coffee shop to reflect on the day. In conversation, I learn that many diaspora Tamils across the globe were celebrating Maveerar Naal that weekend. And indeed, by the next day, the Tamil Guardian, one of the most prolific and widely read Tamil-run English language newspapers, reports that Maveerar Naal commemoration events took place in the Tamil homeland towns of Kilinochchi, Batticaloa, and Jaffna, but also Aarhus, London, Toronto and the detention facilities on Nauru Islands.[137] And yet, I also learn that, while in 2016 Tamils in London - and the global diaspora more broadly - were able to engage in the collective memory practice (Seoighe 2021) in huge numbers, this has not always been the case. Indeed, as I dig deeper into the practice of Maveerar Naal, I learn that the event is hotly contested and that many challenge it ferociously. At the time of my fieldwork in November 2016, Maveerar Naal, known also as Great Heroes Day, is forbidden inside Sri Lanka. Since the end of the war in 2009, the Sri Lankan government has sought to eliminate any remains of the LTTE on the island, including going to great lengths to destroy cemeteries dedicated to fallen LTTE cadres, many of whom were young Tamil men who had little or no choice but to leave their families and join the ranks. As part of its ongoing counterinsurgency practice in the war's aftermath, the Sri Lankan government has banned Tamil commemorative events, with the justification that these are celebrations of the LTTE itself. This crack-down on Tamil memorialization in the Tamil homeland, in turn, has led to an increase in commemorative events and practices unfolding in the diaspora. But the diasporic space is not as free from security governance, as this numeric increase in and geographic sprawl of politically contentious nationalist events suggests.

While there are neither Singhalese protestors or police visible to me outside the event I attend in 2016, my follow-up research quickly reveals that Maveerar Naal is highly securitized also in spaces of the diaspora. While there exist no outright bans, contestation ranges from suggesting that holding the event sends wrong signals by glorifying war and violence, to claims that the LTTE is still operating, and that Great Heroes Day is an exercise in terrorist fundraising. Prominent critics of the events held in London or Toronto include, unsurprisingly,

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[137] Tamils mark Maveerar Naal worldwide, 2016, Tamil Guardian
https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/tamils-mark-maaveerar-naal-2016-worldwide

the Sri Lankan state, and the (online) Singhalese diaspora community.[138] But also domestic actors in the UK and Canada who have called for the event to be shut down.[139]

Nevertheless, it appears that, 7 years after the end of the war, there does exist a space not just for highly professionalised Tamil lobby groups to be taken seriously at the UNHRC, or Canadian-Tamil development entrepreneurs leading diaspora and development practice in Toronto, but also for the broader grassroots diaspora community to engage in collective memorialisation as a political practice. But this space for celebration and protest has been hard won and remains fraught and limited. A look at the broader global context – in which Tamil national mobilization is embedded - demonstrates this.

When I began my research at the end of 2015, diaspora Tamils across Europe - many of whom were recent refugees forging new lives - were being prosecuted and charged for crimes they had allegedly committed during the civil war, e.g. sending money transfers to organisation accused of fronting for the LTTE.[140] In January 2016, a Tamil man was on trial in Hamburg under suspicion of terrorist-financing charges. By March of 2019, when I had returned to London and was in the midst's of writing up my thesis, I was alerted to a news article that had appeared on the website of the Morning Star newspaper. It reported that two young Tamil men had been arrested whilst boarding a plane at Heathrow airport.[28] They had been apprehended by counter-terrorism police and held in the airport's detention facilities for several hours. Meanwhile, their bags had been searched, and one man's apartment raided. The article went on to report that the two men were on their way to Geneva to attend the 40th session of the UNHRC, which had just taken place. Specifically, they were planning to attend a protest calling for justice for Tamil victims of human rights abuses committed by the GOSL during the civil war. The article went on to report that one of the two men was a musician scheduled to perform with his drumming group at said protest. While they were released on bail later that night, they were unable to attend the Geneva session as they had planned, to say nothing of the extreme fear and stress caused by the wrongful arrest. Only a few months before, another important event made headlines in the UK diaspora. On 4th February 2018, a Sri Lankan defence attaché and former diplomat, Brigadier Fernando, was caught on camera outside the Sri Lankan Embassy in London visibly intimidating and threatening protestors.

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[138] Even prominent Tamil-Canadian journalist D.B.S. Jeyaraj points out the 'political hypocrisy of 'maaveerar naal', which is that 'Great Heroes Day has never been a day of Tamil mourning" and thus supports the GOSL's decision to ban the event in the North and East part of Sri Lanka in 2013, http://www.dailymirror.lk/dbs-jeyaraj-column/political-hypocrisy-of-maaveerar-naal-mourning/192-39878

[139] Hansard, Volume 757, November 24, 2014.

[140] See SHZ, *Prozess in Hamburg: Verdacht der 'LTTE' Mitgliedschaft*, https://www.shz.de/regionales/hamburg/prozess-in-hamburg-verdacht-der-ltte-terrormitgliedschaft-id12463871.html

Footage showed him "running his forefinger across his throat whilst maintaining eye contact with the protestors"[141] who had gathered outside the embassy to demonstrate.

Maveerar Naal event, as well as the report of the arrest of the two men at Heathrow airport, and the incident with Brigadier Fernando provide several entry points into understanding the political struggles that shape how the Tamil diaspora is governed, both globally and locally in places like London. Primarily, they reveal that the Tamil diaspora has been and continues to be the subject of security governance practices, such as proscription, and discursive delegitimization, but also counter-terrorism legislation and intimidation. Diaspora Tamils who are, by definition, territorially removed from their homeland and the island of Sri Lanka, are evidently not immune or safe from the long arm of the Sri Lankan state. This notion, that security governance or repression does not end when people enter into exile, having fled the state that was seeking to harm them in the first place, has received increased attention both in the media and the academic literature. Fresh in the memory of readers will be the state-sanctioned killing of Jamal Khashoggi inside the Saudi Arabian embassy in Turkey in October of 2018.[142] Khashoggi, a journalist who since 2017 was living in self-imposed exile in the United States, was considered a critic of the Saudi government. His assassination – now widely believed to have been ordered by the highest level of the Saudi government - presents an extreme example of what scholars have recently begun to refer to as transnational repression. Meanwhile, there have been numerous reports of arrests made of members of the Kurdish diaspora in Germany on account of their alleged affiliation with the proscribed PKK organisation.[143] Similarly, policies and strategies to secure diasporas by incorporating them into community policing programmes - an essential part of the UK terrorism prevention toolkit - are proliferating. While this security governance practice is now primarily aimed at Muslim neighbourhoods, its roots can be traced back to the Irish diaspora communities in the UK, suspected of supporting the IRA's terrorist endeavours.

This chapter is then perhaps about the 'flipside' of diaspora engagement, namely the governance practices that keep the diaspora from engaging, and which seek to discipline and manage diaspora not as partners in governance, but as security threats. Such governance practices are built on the assumption that diaspora present a security threat, in some shape or

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[141] Sri Lankan brigadier summoned to UK court for 'throat slit' gesture, Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka, 2019, http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/news-features/politics-a-current-affairs/846-sri-lankan-brigadier-summoned-to-uk-court-for-throat-slit-threat
[142] Jamal Khashoggi: All you need to know about Saudi journalist's death, BBC website https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45812399
[143] Germany Arrests Suspected Member of Kurdish Militant Group, https://apnews.com/article/c78c295fba14481fc15ae4da85a959fd

form. But what kind of threat? This has changed over time and across space and governance actors. What these examples, from the Tamil diaspora and beyond, illustrate is that diaspora individuals or populations are evidently considered threatening to some section of the international community, so much so that they are subjected to – sometimes violent – sanctions and disciplining from actors within this community. But in contrast to what the scholarship on extraterritorial authoritarianism has so far suggested, such sanctioning or repression does not only involve the sending state. After all, it wasn't just the Sri Lankan government that was seeking to keep the Tamil diaspora in check. Under the veneer of tolerance operates a network of governance actors for whom not much had changed since the official defeat of the LTTE in 2009. Even though UK parliamentarians make nice, this chapter will reveal that at a deeper level, more sinister networks of governance actors were still operating with a Tamil-threat perception in mind. But within this repressive security environment, Tamils have still managed to come together to celebrate their culture and nation, to honour their dead, and to mobilize politically. As I have shown, local (but globally connected) celebrations of Maveerar Naal can take place within a broader global space of diaspora securitization. While the preceding chapters have demonstrated that since the end of the civil war the Tamil diaspora has been invited to contribute as 'partners' to international development, and is at least tolerated when advocating for TJ, at the same time some parts of the global Tamil diaspora are still met with aggressive constraints by various governance actors. Space for Tamil agency, especially Tamil nationalist practices, is thus extremely limited and must be carefully and meticulously carved out, always entangled with the changing global security context. This chapter will show that the governance practices which counter the potential security threat posed by diasporas are embedded in a broader global security governance field, encompassing actors at the local, national and global level. The chapter will explore why different security governance actors are concerned with diasporas. It will ask: what understanding of diaspora do these actors have that makes them think of diasporas as threatening? And why do they choose particular policy responses and strategies to counter these threats? And where does this leave the Tamils diaspora?

This chapter will proceed as follows: I will begin with a discussion of the some of the historical security practices through which the Tamil diaspora has been governed, starting with the British colonial period until the end of the Sri Lankan civil war, weaving in early instances of mobilization and resistance to repression from the home and later the hoststate(s). I will then introduce original data from my fieldwork, which reveals a number of security practices that continue to discipline Tamils when they try to engage in collective and individual political

action. I will subsequently center a number of these practices and (dis)entangle them by looking more closely at a) the different power dimensions that make up security governance, and b) actors doing the governing. In doing this, I will show how security practices, like proscription and border policing never unfold or are rolled out globally and in linear fashion but are entangled with national policy contexts and localised push back from diaspora groups themselves.

5.1. A (Tangled) History of Tamil Diaspora Security Governance

What follows is a history of evolving diaspora governance practices in the security field; a genealogy of struggles that have shaped how diasporas, and the Tamil diaspora in particular, have been disciplined and managed by governance actors whose primary goal it is to secure either the empire, state, the nation, or the globe, depending on their governance realm.

5.1.1. Formation of an early Ceylonese diaspora under colonialism

As mentioned in chapter 2, Tamils first emigrated from Sri Lanka and settled in the UK during the British colonial period. However, unlike the majority of colonial subjects from the Indian subcontinent, who were sent in large numbers to other parts of the British empire as indentured labourers (Emmer 1986; Vertovec 1995), many Sri Lankan Tamils were trained as colonial administrators.[144] In general, they were considered good imperial citizens, who assimilated comparatively easily into life in the imperial metropolis. But while under British colonialism Tamils were perhaps less securitized than other imperial subjects, the colonial period was nevertheless hugely significant for how Tamils would be governed further down the line, i.e. when they did become a security issue for the British state. After all, the colonies, especially in South Asia and Africa acted as the testing ground for British security practices, both military and policing, that would later be applied to 'defend' domestic populations by

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[144] They exploited economic and cultural/religious conditions of Tamils in Jaffna, resulting in few economic prospects other than fishing and an expectation of large dowries and rigid caste structure (Gunasingam 2014).

institutions such as M15 and the London Metropolitan Police (Elliot-Cooper 2021). In the words of Foucault (Foucault and Cote 2004):

> while colonization, with its techniques and its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions, and techniques of power. A whole series of colonial models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself.

This dynamic of importing population control practices from the colonies to Europe has been termed the 'imperial boomerang'.[145]

By the time of Ceylonese independence in 1948, a diaspora had formed in the UK that still largely considered itself part of a unified Ceylonese state, rather than a Tamil national homeland, and was thus largely left alone by the increasingly nationalist Singhalese government, as well as the British state. The notion of a 'Tamil' diaspora or Tamil diaspora identity did not take hold until larger groups of Tamil nationalists were forced into political exile, having to flee the increasingly oppressive anti-Tamil policies of the Sri Lankan state.

5.1.2. *A conflict-generated diaspora arrives in the UK*

In the years immediately following WWII, the British government welcomed labour migrants and so immigration was not a large concern up until the 1960s. However, this changed with escalating anti-Tamil violence in Sri Lanka in the late 1970s and 80s. As people began to flee an increasingly oppressive home state, and the size of the UK Tamil diaspora started to grow, there were first instances of what might be called transnational repression (cf. Moss 2016). Interestingly, Nadarajah has argued that even before the onset of the civil war, Margaret Thatcher assured the Sri Lankan government in 1981 that the UK were "keeping a 'close eye' on Tamil diaspora activism" (2018: 287). This scrutiny first took the form of "the

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[145] The Imperial Boomerang: How colonial methods of repression migrate back to the metropolis, Verso Blog 2020, https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4383-the-imperial-boomerang-how-colonial-methods-of-repression-migrate-back-to-the-metropolis

threat of legal action to pressure Tamil groups into eschewing separatism" by Western governments (ibid.).

Overall, this Tamil-specific development coincided with a broader shift in the UK domestic cultural and socio-political landscape towards increased conservatism. Thus, as immigrant numbers grew, the Tamil diaspora also had to contend with another form of securitization, namely by states who began to see Tamil immigration as a threat to their national sovereignty. The idea that international migration challenges territorial sovereignty (Adamson 2006: 175), is a story as old as modernity and has long formed a basis for security governance. Interestingly, some have argued that the Sri Lankan civil was a more direct cause of changes to British immigration policy during this period. For example, Steen highlights that "the British government, in the wake of the first waves of Tamil asylum seekers after 1983, required all Sri Lankan citizens to obtain visas before arrival in the UK. This was the first time that citizens of a Commonwealth country were required to do so" (in Cowley-Sathiakumar 2008: 35). This policy ultimately affected all Tamils migrating to the UK, not just individual, politically engaged diaspora members who were affiliated with the separatist cause. However, other than a threat to domestic security or social cohesion, the growing Tamil diaspora also began to present a different kind of threat, namely that of long-distance nationalism (Anderson 1992).

5.1.3. UK Tamils and the emerging diaspora peace-wrecker discourse

At the end of the Cold War, the narrative of long-distance nationalism had gained ground. When, by the early 1990s, New Wars were raging in close proximity to the Western core, the fear by European states of conflict spill-overs and transnational war-economies rapidly exacerbated. As part of this re-orientation in both scholarship and policymaking, diasporas were now placed firmly on the agenda of security professionals and peacebuilders as potential spoilers in peace-processes (Newman and Richmond 2006) and as sources of funding for insurgencies. Accordingly, new practices to govern potentially threatening diaspora began to emerge.

At this point the Sri Lankan civil war had been raging for almost a decade. Until then, the Tamil diaspora had featured on the radar of security governors only in the form of a few individuals known to be fervent long-distance nationalists. Governance practices were thus initially aimed at those that were openly in support of Tamil separatism, such as members of

the LTTE. But by this time the group had begun to eclipse most other militant groups in Sri Lanka and was gaining a firm hold also on other organisations in the diaspora (Amarasingam 2015). Diaspora governance practices changed over the course of the 1990s, in part due to dynamics that were specific to the Tamil diaspora, but also due to broader global political shifts alluded to above. On the one hand, as the size and extent of the global LTTE networks became gradually known;[4] it was precisely this network that became the target of security governance practices that sought to dismantle the LTTE threat. On the other hand, this move towards practices that target the LTTE network, was also located within a broader shift in global politics that now linked civil conflicts in the global South to transnational flows and international criminal networks. Accordingly, global security cooperation began to include the monitoring of global financial flows, especially migrant remittances. Tamils were then also increasingly brought into connection with global criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking and money laundering.

5.1.4. *London as a node in international and gang crime*

By the mid-1990s governments across the West were directing their attention to fighting transnational criminal networks at their root. This meant that, increasingly, cities emerged as sites of global security governance (Adamson 2016), specifically through the targeting of gang-related crime. A speech given by Bill Clinton in 1994, in which he linked small scale drug-peddling to international criminal networks, has been profoundly consequential in popularising this link and arguably 'brought home' America's long running War on Drugs.[146] Accordingly, by the late-1990s, Tamil diaspora mobilization started to be discussed as a more localised security threat due to the emergence of criminal gangs amongst the Tamil diaspora. News reports began to proliferate on intra-Tamil violence, and brutal clashes between gangs, especially in large cities such as London and Toronto. Orjuela reports on a young Tamil man whose gang "was involved in extortion of Tamil businesses, credit card fraud, violent clashes with rival Tamil gangs and murder." (2011: 12). Thus, beside repression by the Sri Lankan state at home; the Tamil diaspora now had to contend also with an emerging global anti-narcotics regime, enforced locally by police in their host countries. Within a short period, the Tamil diaspora became subjected to community policing measures, frequent police

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[146] Bill Clinton's crime bill destroyed lives, and there's no point denying it, The Guardian, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/15/bill-clinton-crime-bill-hillary-black-lives-thomas-frank

raids and increased surveillance and monitoring. The concern surrounding diasporic gangs elicited more local security governance responses and legitimated more intense monitoring of the (primarily poor and socio-spatially marginalised) London-based Tamil diaspora community, for example, through what Laffey and Nadarajah term 'aggressive policing' (2016). This issue carries on (and arguably matures/worsens) well into the early 2000s. For example, around 2004 the London Met "set up a special task force to deal with Tamil gang related violence", (Orjuela 2011: 13) titled Operation Enver.

Ultimately, this broadening out of the Tamil threat-conceptualization (beyond those immediately affiliated with the LTTE) has profound consequences for the entire diaspora, beyond those directly involved with gangs. Excessive news reporting on diaspora crime only further exacerbated urban inequalities, e.g. by criminalising already marginalised youth, and producing 'suspect communities'.[6] This in turn produced what Lee Bridges in the 1980s referred to as 'urban wastelands', through diverting funding away from investment in public goods and infrastructure development (1983). Interestingly, this is an aspect of the Tamil diaspora story that is less explored by International Relations scholars who focus on the overtly transnational and global dimension of Tamil diaspora securitization. That these are deeply interlinked with policies at the municipal level, remains often overlooked.[147] Where IR scholars have tuned into the phenomenon of gangs, it has been to link it back to the funding of global terrorism and insurgencies. For example, there exists plenty of research on the brutal extortion methods allegedly used by the LTTE to ensure continued financial support for the insurgency, which employed gangs to cultivate a 'culture of fear' amongst the Tamil diaspora.[148]

However, while the designation of Tamil diaspora violence as gang-related violence legitimated increased surveillance and policing practices in an urban context from the mid 1990s onwards, it was the designation of the LTTE as a 'terrorist organisation', which began to legitimate another host of governance practices that had an even bigger effect on the Tamil diaspora both in London and globally. The next section will now explore the historical events leading up to and following the official proscription of the LTTE as a terrorist organisation by the UK government.

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[147] My fieldwork revealed that increasingly attention is paid to mechanisms of diaspora radicalization, that relate to the negative impact of urban environments and spatial planning. At the 2018 UK Security Expo one conference was called 'Designing out Terrorism', https://counterterrorbusiness.com/features/international-security-expo-designing-out-terrorism
[148] Funding the Final War, Human Rights Watch, https://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/ltte0306/ltte0306webwcover.pdf

5.1.5. The proscription puzzle

Towards the late 1990s, the practice of proscription began to take centre stage in the story of Tamil diaspora security governance. Proscription emerged as a legal practice, which essentially criminalised the existence of certain organisations, as well as affiliation with them. The LTTE was proscribed first in the US in 1997, by Sri Lanka itself in 1998, and by the UK and Australia in 2001, but, importantly, prior to 9/11. Initially devised during the Irish Troubles, the UK ban followed the Terrorism Act 2000, which now extended the UK proscription regime in such a way that it could be applied to international and domestic organisations beyond the IRA.[9] Why (and how) did the LTTE proscription come about? The rationalist answer would be to say that the LTTE was proscribed because it started engaging in terrorism. However, as Nadarajah (2018) argues, the LTTE had already existed for several years before it was proscribed, and proscription was also not directly linked to the organisation becoming more violent. What changed?

Undeniably, the end of the 20th century saw an overall diffusion of the proscription practice in line with a loudening discourse on the proliferation of non-state actors that were engaging in terrorist activity. While earlier in the decade diaspora security governance practices were limited to going after explicitly criminal activities (such as money-laundering, narcotics smuggling, and human trafficking, see above), the linking of these crimes to terrorism, suddenly legitimised a whole host of activities to counter the potential diaspora threat. Nadarajah (2018) persuasively argues that proscription must primarily be understood as 'situated practice'. He suggests that proscription of Tamil diaspora organisations in the UK did not follow a linear process, but rather was connected to the West's quest for liberal order, specifically liberal peace-building in Sri Lanka: "(u)ntil the mid-1990s, negotiations with Tamil militants were considered unavoidable for stabilizing Sri Lanka" (Nadarajah 2018: 286).

While I find Nadarajah's claims convincing, I want to supplement his fairly macro-level analysis with some more micro detail. Interestingly, there seems to be a small community of security practitioners and researchers who are particularly fascinated with what they refer to as "the LTTE octopus" (Chalk 2000). Globally, the practice of designating the LTTE as a terrorist organisation, threatening not just liberal peace in Sri Lanka, but, indeed, global security, owes

much to Rohan Gunaratna[149] and Peter Chalk. Towards the end of the 1990s both individuals played a significant role in influencing Western governments and actors in the wider global security governance field to take more seriously the threat posed by the LTTE, but also the Tamil diaspora more broadly. For example, Rohan Gunaratna wrote extensively on the LTTE (1997; 2003) and managed to successfully link them to Al Qaida (2002), while Chalk published a report based on 'intelligence' which stated that "LTTE operations are global, they necessarily require a global response" (Chalk 2000: 7). Chalk's profile on the RAND Corporation's website states that he has "regularly testified before the U.S. Senate on issues pertaining to national and international terrorism".[150] While we cannot trace a definitive causal linkage between these two individuals' actions and the proscription of the LTTE, I find convincing the claim made by Gary Hughes, an Australian journalist, who in 2003 wrote that "Gunaratna was the right person in the right place at the right time".[151] This idea of 'being in the right place at the right time' describes then a spatio-temporal mechanism through which a local (to Sri Lanka) narrative was scaled up to have profound effects on global political developments, in this case, the designation of the LTTE as a *global* security threat. But, as Nadarajah highlights, despite the proscription regulation being put into place, it was not until the final stage of the civil war that the UK government started arresting Tamils on account of suspicion of terrorism charges.

In most studies of global security governance, the events of 9/11 are heralded as *the* critical juncture of the post-Cold War period. Is this diagnosis warranted also in the analysis of Tamil diaspora governance practices? After all, proscription was already in place in the UK prior to the 2001 attacks. Arguably, in the early 2000s cease-fire, the pressure on Tamil diaspora organisations in London seemed to subside as the LTTE was engaged in the Sri Lankan peace process (Nadarajah 2018). However, this very short reprieve was then followed by an overall crackdown on terrorism and terrorism-related activity as part of the GWOT. Thus, perhaps the most important impact of the 9/11 events for the UK Tamil diaspora was that, while proscriptions were already in place, the designation of an organisation as 'terrorist' derived new meaning (and power) in the new millennium. Crucially, the designation of diaspora activity as

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[149] Rohan Gunaratna is currently Professor of Security Studies at NTU in Singapore. In 2014 he was successfully sued by the Canadian Tamil Congress for claiming that the organisation was a front for the LTTE, https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/ctc-awarded-53000-in-successful-defamation-lawsuit-against-rohan-gunaratna/

[150] Peter Chalk is currently an adjunct senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation, (https://www.rand.org/about/people/c/chalk_peter.html)

[151] Article by Gary Hughes, 2003, The Age https://www.theage.com.au/world/analyse-this-20030720-gdw2tg.html

'supporting terrorism', now legitimated - even required - responses beyond national jurisdictions, both in terms of actors and spaces. The war on terror needed to be *global*.

The shift had an effect on diaspora governance practices. In the early 2000s there was a definitive move from governance practices that conceptualized diaspora as a threat to their homeland (targeting remittance sending and long-distance nationalism), or indeed themselves (criminalization of gang violence), to practices that made the Tamil diaspora out to be a threat to both broader *global* security (GWOT) and more *locally* to their new country of residence (preventing imported conflict and homegrown terrorism). Importantly, this period also saw the further expansion of the proscription practice, which had already had a devastating effect on the wider Tamil diaspora population and Tamils back home in Sri Lanka, especially in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Diaspora organisations, who had been active in the humanitarian sector but were operating in LTTE-controlled areas in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka - which were hardest hit by the natural disaster - had their assets frozen. All this despite lack of proof of definitive links existing to the LTTE.[152]

5.1.6. *Escalation of civil war*

As the Sri Lankan civil war neared its brutal end, other diaspora securitization practices began to emerge, always entangled with the shifting mobilisation patterns of Tamil diaspora communities. As the Sri Lankan government started decimating the remaining LTTE troops - with Tamil civilians caught in the middle - Tamils the world over were increasingly aware of the plight of their ethnic brethren and family members in the homeland. The inaction and non-interventionist stance of Western countries, in the face of what was increasingly likely to amount to war crimes, frustrated many Tamils. A large proportion of the diaspora, especially those in the UK and Canada, held voting rights and citizenship in their host-states, and thus tried to put pressure on their local political representatives to intervene on behalf on their families left behind in Sri Lanka, often to little or no avail. In response to inaction of host countries, many then began to take to the streets. From late 2008 all the way up until May 2009, massive demonstrations by Tamils took place across the globe, most notably in Switzerland,

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[152] BBC News, "Tamil Charities 'fail to monitor funds'", http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/6669165.stm

the UK[153] and Canada.[154] For example, in London, protestors gathered in Parliament Square first in January and then again in April 2009, in the lead up to the final defeat of the LTTE and as suspicions mounted that the Government of Sri Lanka was shelling Tamil civilians in what was supposed to be a no-fire zone. Although protests remained peaceful, they were heavily policed and there were reports of police violence[155] and attempted removal of Tamil flags.[156] In the aftermath, it emerged that the protests cost London Metropolitan police over GBP10million. The heavy police presence is indicative of both the expansive security apparatus coupled with (shrinking) space for public protest in Britain, but it also raises questions surrounding who is allowed to protest (voters/citizens) and who is not (immigrants/racialised minorities).

Despite heavy securitisation, these protests were remarkable for various reasons: They constituted an early sign that something was shifting also within the global Tamil diaspora. Whilst attended and, in some cases, still organised by the LTTE and its affiliated organisations, these protests were no longer *owned* by the LTTE. Tamils of every political persuasion, age and gender were represented. For many, this constituted their first open display of Tamil nationalism. At this point in time, there were many Tamils living in the UK and Canada who had never stepped foot on the Island from which their parents or grandparents had come. Many were highly integrated/assimilated into host societies, and thus less concerned with their Tamil-ness and even less so with any diaspora nationalist sentiment, as I explored in preceding chapters. The protests changed this. Across the globe, they led to a '(re)making' of the Tamil diaspora.

5.1.7. The end of the civil war: (re)examining a turning point

The brutal defeat of the LTTE by the GOSL in May 2009 naturally presented a turning point in Sri Lankan domestic politics, but also for the transnational connections between the Tamil diaspora and its home- and host state (Brun and van Hear 2012). As evidence emerged that implicated the GOSL in war crimes and human rights abuses, committed in the final phase

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[153] BBC News, 2009, 'Tamil demonstrators block streets', http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8007858.stm
[154] CBC news, 2009, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/tamil-protest-will-keep-part-of-toronto-s-university-avenue-closed-indefinitely-1.862265
[155] The Guardian, 2009, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/apr/20/sri-lanka-protests-parliament
[156] The Independent, 2009, "Tamils bring their fight to Westminster", https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/tamils-bring-their-fight-to-westminster-1665357.html

of the war against Tamils on the island,[157] Western media coverage shifted gradually away from the Tamil-diaspora-as-threat narrative. Western governments and public officials began condemning the actions of the GOSL and adopted a more sympathetic stance to their domestic Tamil diaspora populations. On the surface, it thus seemed that global public and elite opinion towards Tamils was turning a corner. Thus, the story we have commonly been told about the changes in relations between host-country governments and their Tamil populations after the end of the war is that they were triggered by 'the international community' changing its relationship with the Sri Lankan state, based on its own assessment on Sri Lankan adherence to international norms (e.g. human rights protection, rules of war etc.). But, as we already learnt in preceding chapters, any such shifts were not magically or universally diffused, or something that members of the international community (i.e. Western liberal states) come to entirely of their own accord. A closer reading of the 'turning point' of the formal end of the civil war is needed.

How did this ostensibly 'global' shift play out locally/nationally? For a start, not all Western governments responded in the same way to end of war and defeat of the LTTE. For example, while then-Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, stayed away from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2011, something which Tamils the world over had asked their host-governments to do, UK Prime minister David Cameron did not.[158] This is illustrative of the ways in which UK-Sri Lankan relations actually did not change much in the war's immediate aftermath. Any changes that did occur, between the UK and Sri Lanka, or between Tamils in the UK and their political representatives, were hard won and would not have occurred were it not for the tireless efforts of local (and global) Tamil activists, some of which predated the formal end of the war. So, while the end of the war did present a turning point, things were more entangled than conventionally argued.

As the LTTE lost its hold on the diaspora and new organisations started emerging after the end of the war, mobilization patters also underwent significant changes. First, as mentioned above, in the months leading up to the end of the civil war, there was an increase in protest actions at the global scale. Because these protests were no longer LTTE owned, there was now a space for Tamils to fly the Tamil national flag, something that would have been unthinkable not long before, and was still contested locally, e.g. by London Metropolitan Police forces. This moment of heightened political advocacy and highly visible public protest by the entire

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[157] For example, through the Channel 4 produced documentary 'Sri Lanka's Killing Fields', https://pulitzercenter.org/projects/sri-lanka-kilinochchi-civil-war-human-rights-justice-tamil-tigers

[158] Tamil Guardian, *Why I am attending CHOGM – David Cameron*, https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/why-i-am-attending-chogm-%E2%80%93-david-cameron

diaspora, did not last long, however. There was soon a shift away from public protest towards more formal/indirect political advocacy measures.

Before the war had ended, but as the LTTE was already losing its dominance both at home and abroad, a new set of organisation began to emerge claiming to represent the political interests of Tamils in their host countries (e.g. CTC and BTF), and globally (GTF and TGTE). In the UK, the British Tamils Forum (BTF) formed in 2006, and – before advocating in Geneva on human rights issues (as we explored in the preceding chapter) – they were already intensely engaged in national politics. Crucially, they successfully lobbied for the founding of an APPG for Tamils. To this day, no such parliamentary organisation exists in Canada, further demonstrating the contextual nature of Tamil mobilisation and governance. At the time of my fieldwork, a common practice of the BTF was the holding of highly formal events with elite members of the public and civil society. For example, one evening in the autumn of 2016, I made my way to Portcullis House in Westminster, a building, which since the beginning of the new millennium, contained the offices of a large portion of UK members of parliament and their staff. I had been invited to an event titled 'Proliferating Buddhist Structures', a book launch organised by the BTF and the APPG-T.[159] The event was attended by UK MPs from across the party spectrum, with many holding speeches and making pledges to advocate on behalf of Tamils at the upcoming UNHRC sessions, and in the UK parliament. The amount of lobbying and careful planning that had gone into this event, including sending invitations to interested academics and journalists, did not pass me by.

But another set of actors in the Tamil diaspora made the shift in Western government and media attitudes towards Tamils and towards Sri Lanka possible. This was the growing English-language and diaspora run press that were established whilst the war at home was still ongoing (Rasaratnam 2016). Outlets such as TamilNet and the Tamil Guardian were crucial for picking up and circulating globally, news from the Tamil homeland, where the situation was getting increasingly dire as the war progressed. Madura Rasaratnam has shed light on the role played by these new Tamil diaspora actors in the national struggle. She writes that '(t)he output of this professionally managed and sophisticated media framed Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis in nationalist terms, but also invoked the liberal tropes of human rights, humanitarian protection and rules of war that resonated' (2016, 232) with a new demographic of Tamils that were

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[159] The book that was being launched was meant to 'create awareness amongst Tamils' and to then 'be submitted to the international community' to offer *evidence* that the present Sri Lankan government, led by Maithripala Sirisena, remained guilty of ongoing Human Rights violations, e.g. in the form of land grabbing and Sinhala colonisation.

'internet-connected' and socially and politically conscious, but outside the party political system'. This emergent global network, then presented an alternative to that of the LTTE. With headquarters in London, writers for the Tamil Guardian come from all over the globe.

In sum, framing the end of the Sri Lankan civil war and the defeat of the LTTE as a turning point is useful, but not in the way traditional IR discourse has mandated. Any changes at the global or intergovernmental level that we see at the end of the Sri Lankan civil war, are entangled with and underpinned by other micro- and meso level shifts. Indeed, many of the changes that become visible after the end of the war, are reliant on historical connections made by and between Tamil activists. Beside Parliament Square and the halls of Westminster, publications like the Tamil Guardian have acted as spaces for (local) dissent, since before the end of the war. This re-evaluation of the 'turning point' also has an effect on how we understand security governance of the Tamil diaspora today. With this in mind, the next section will examine the ways in which the global Tamil diaspora has carved out space for resistance and national struggle beyond the LTTE. But importantly, rather than overestimate this space for mobilisation, it will show how various governance practices have continued to structure the Tamil diaspora experience since the end of the civil war. It will ask to what extent the Tamil diaspora remains 'securitized', i.e. governed as a potential security threat. As in previous chapters, I show how mobilisation is entangled with governance practices.

5.2. (Dis)Entangling Tamil Diaspora Security Governance

This section will now delve deeper into a number of the security governance practices that I encountered during my research and that structure the social and political lives of the Tamil diaspora in London. This will include (dis)entangling the governance practices such as divide and rule, proscription, counter-terrorism and border policing. As in the last chapters, I aim to tease out the different forms of power that structure security governance. In this chapter, I will also pay particular attention to the question of which actors are doing the governing and show that – contrary to some of the expectations in the diaspora literature – the diaspora sending state rarely acts alone when governing. Security governance of diaspora is the product of a series of entanglements, of home and host state, of global and local, and of domination and resistance.

5.2.1. "Divide and rule" and governance by delegitimization

In the opening of this chapter, I explored how Maveerar Naal celebrations started to increasingly take place in the diaspora precisely at the time when the Sri Lankan government began cracking down on them in the North and East of Sri Lanka. These memory practices, whose political and social intricacies have been explored at length by scholars such as Camila Orjuela (2018, 2021) and Rachel Seoighe (2021), have thus become an important place for the community to remember and to sustain and advocate for their collective Tamil identity. Seoighe writes that "(w)hile Tamil diaspora politics were traditionally dominated by first generation Tamil men, Mullivaikkal prompted a younger generation of women and men to stage resistance and take ownership of the Tamil liberation struggle by leading and organizing marches, demonstrations and campaigns." (2021: 171). But, as explored earlier, although in 2016 Tamils in London were able to celebrate Maveerar Naal without major incidents, this has not always been the case. In 2011, it was reported by a Tamil journalist living in Toronto that two venues booked for Maveerar Naal in London had been cancelled by venue managers only days before the mega-events were to take place (Jeyaraj 2011). The news article seemed to suggest that the cause for these cancellations was competition between differing factions of the London-based Tamil diaspora. And while the article itself did not go as far as to suggest that these groups sabotaged each other's event plans, the comment section of the article became awash with the argument that infighting and leadership-contests within the Tamil diaspora were, in fact, the cause of the fiasco. Indeed, this argument, that the primary constraint to successful Tamil diaspora mobilization in the post-war period has been internal to the diaspora itself has a lot of clout even in the academic literature (Walton 2015; Amarasingam 2015; Guyot 2018). And it is an argument that was repeated to me countless times during my field research, both by members of the Tamil diaspora, including some of those leaders apparently embroiled in the disputes. But also, by my non-Tamil interlocutors, for example, civil society organisers or MPs who were working together closely with members of the Tamil diaspora. Even the most sympathetic of voices have suggested that the behaviour of current Tamil organisational leaders is to blame for mobilization constraints. Some of my interlocutors also mentioned that it was often frustrating to work with London-based Tamil organisations, as they had few female members and were seeped through with male-ego and macho behaviour. One of my interlocutors mentioned that, in London, Tamil organisations "have problems with individual

politics and personal egos" and suggests that some of these politics are about dividing the assets accumulated by the LTTE.[160]

That Tamil-diaspora infighting, leadership challenges and personal animosities are often given a lot of credence as explanations of failures of collective action is curious but not surprising. To Tamils - but also researchers immersed in Tamil mobilization and activism - it is perhaps the most immediately visible power struggle. This fits with the argument that the Tamil diaspora was at its most powerful during the war, when the LTTE maintained a firm grip on mobilization activities (Guyot 2018). But is this explanation a low hanging fruit? After all, it places all responsibility on Tamil diaspora individuals and none on the environment in which they find themselves, thus leaving unproblematised the other political struggles and power structures, which govern the Tamil diaspora and often stand in the way of collective action. What forms of power are at work here?

I want to argue that 'diaspora infighting' is best understood as a function of the governance practice of *divide and rule*. Indeed, one interlocutor working closely with a number of Tamil diaspora organisations in London mentioned to me that she thought that the Sri Lankan government was behind this divide and rule strategy.[161] She was suggesting that there were actors within the GOSL who were perhaps actively trying to maintain divisions amongst Tamil diaspora actors, because this was in their political interest. And indeed, ensuring that the Tamil diaspora remains without singular leadership is likely to be a major security concern of the Sri Lankan state, considering the threat presented by Tamils under the singular authoritarian leadership of the LTTE.[162]

Divide and rule today is primarily a practice of discursive delegitimization. But, of course, this governance practice has a much longer and more violent history, especially considering this particular case study. Crucially, it is a practice that was initially devised by the British colonial state to reign over its South Asian colonies. Indeed, it was a major factor in setting the scene for the emergence of hostilities between Tamils and Singhalese and the subsequent outbreak of the civil war. Today, even where not directly intended to incite violence, the 'divide and rule' governance practice has the function of delegitimizing Tamil diaspora voices and thus reducing the threat of domestic and international political organising for Western host-country

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[160] Interview with NGO worker, London, Autumn 2015.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Adamson (2020) has suggested that the efforts of the LTTE to assert control over all forms of Tamil transnational mobilization should be understood as a form of non-state authoritarianism.

governments. Evidently, this governance practice does not exclusively - or even primarily - originate from the origin country of the Tamil diaspora. Rather, it sheds light on the historical and contemporary entanglements between the two.

5.2.2. *Proscription: a multi-powered governance tool*

But let us return now to the Maveerar Naal vignette. Even if the 'divide and rule' governance practice was at play and Tamil-diaspora infighting did indeed create a barrier to successful political mobilization, we know that such mobilization does not occur in a vacuum. Scholars have noted that 'external-factors' have a role to play in determining the outcomes of Tamil diaspora politics and collective action. Tamil diaspora politics are embedded in a broader socio-political environment; they are – and have always been – structured by governance practices which extend beyond the Tamil case itself. A security governance practice that has played a key role structuring Tamil mobilization in the post-civil war period is that of *proscription*. As mentioned, proscription is, first and foremost, a legal practice, which criminalises the existence of certain organisations, as well as affiliation with them. As demonstrated in the previous section, proscription was a defining practice of Tamil diaspora governance during the war, employed to curb financial support for the LTTE. Importantly, however, the formal proscription of the LTTE never only affected the organisation alone.

Proscription criminalizes not only the activities of the proscribed organization but also anyone affiliated with it, and such affiliation can be (and has been) loosely interpreted. A financial link is perhaps the most common – and most easily traceable - affiliation. Due to the coercive fundraising practices of the LTTE, this basically made all diaspora Tamils affiliates at one point or another, if they could be found fundraising or sending money through LTTE channels (even if involuntarily). The proscription regime encompassed other governance practices: Diaspora assets were frozen, their charities suspended, and remittance channels blocked, not just for support of political efforts in the homeland but also for money transfers intended for community relief and economic development. Ultimately, proscription was therefore one of the most significant disciplining practices for the Tamil diaspora during the civil war. But how does proscription continue to affect the Tamil diaspora in the aftermath of the war? I will argue that it continues to cast a long shadow.

Tamils across the globe share the painful memory of seeing leaders of Western countries – countries, which many of them now called home - congratulate the GOSL at the UN days after the bloody defeat of the LTTE and what they perceived as genocidal killing of their brother sisters. The discourse brought forward by the GOSL at the time was that the LTTE had been militarily crushed and organisationally defeated.[163] However, while the GOSL basked in the glory of their victory, erecting statues and celebrating 'Victory Day', among SL-state actors the victory was considered merely a partial one. One interlocutor working for a humanitarian charity and think tank in Colombo recounts to me the "concept of the two mirrors" on which they thought the domestic Sri Lankan intelligence unit had based their analysis of the LTTE. According to this concept, as of May 2009, the "domestic mirror has been shattered" while "the international mirror remains".[164] The international mirror, so I was told, here refers primarily to the offshore financial regime, which allegedly continues to fuel the LTTE.

In a way, the end of the fight against terrorism in Sri Lanka has given way to an international fight whereby the Tamil diaspora has now become the primary enemy of the Sri Lankan state. The proscription regime, which criminalizes all links to the LTTE, remains in place to date. In fact, in 2014, 5 years after the end of the war, the GOSL went go on a proscription spree, listing many Tamil diaspora organisations. This, I was told, was in response to the advocacy successes the Tamil diaspora organisations had won at the UNHRC, demonstrating once again the reliance of governance practices on entanglements.

The proscription remains a powerful tool of domination not only in SL. Importantly, even as relations between the Sri Lankan and many Western governments deteriorated in the months following the end of the war, as details emerged of the human rights abuses committed by Sri Lankan military forces against Tamils, not a single Western power moved to have their LTTE proscription lifted. In fact, more recent attempts to un-proscribe the LTTE at the EU-level, based on Council of Europe recommendations, have fallen flat.[165] If anything, arrests of Tamils living in countries like Switzerland, Germany, or Malaysia - often as citizens of those countries - have picked up after the war, mostly based on financial links to the LTTE backdating to the war period.

But the proscription practice does not only have power as a legal governance tool. Like other forms of discourse, discussed above, it also functions to delegitimize the Tamil diaspora.

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[163] Sri Lanka declares end to war with Tamil Tigers, 2009,
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/18/tamil-tigers-killed-sri-lanka
[164] Interview with think tank director, Colombo, Sri Lanka in December 2015.
[165] EU advised to drop Hamas and Tamil Tigers from terror list, BBC news, 2016,
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-37437979

Its power thus lies not just in criminalization but also in the symbolic maintenance of the LTTE as a global security threat. Arguably, one indirect and yet far reaching consequence of the ongoing proscription of the LTTE is that it keeps the notion alive that the organisation still operates and continues to present a threat, both to Sri Lankan state security, and, by extension, global security. Ultimately, such discursive contestation or delegitimization acts as another power dimension of governance and places a limit on Tamil diaspora agency and ability to organise or engage in collective action.

As I have noted above, discourses that seek to delegitimize the Tamil diaspora do not just emanate from Sri Lankan state officials, or even from within the origin-country context. For example, in November 2014, on the occasions of both Maveerar Naal and Canadian Remembrance Day, a Canadian MP of Tamil descent appealed to the Canadian House of Commons to keep fallen soldiers in their thoughts.[166] As a consequence, she was widely criticised for likening LTTE fighters to WWI veterans - by members of the Singhalese online community[167] - but also by her Canadian peers inside the House. Indeed, conservative MP and then Minister of *Public Safety Canada,* Steven Blaney, asserted that Maveerar Naal was dedicated to the glorification of a proscribed terrorist group.[168] Similar statements about Maveerar Naal have also emanated from within the British political establishment. In that same month, indeed shortly after the UK had reaffirmed its commitment to keeping the LTTE on the list of proscribed organisations, the conservative Lord, Lord Naseby, suggested that the forthcoming Maveerar Naal proceedings at the Excel Centre in Newham should be prohibited in light of this continued proscription. He claimed that such commemorative events "celebrate the life and leader of the Tamil Tigers" and "raise money for Eelam" and should therefore be investigated by London Metropolitan police.[169]

Lord Naseby has been a key figure supporting the continued proscription of the LTTE and also advocating for further constraints on Tamil activism and mobilization in the UK. He is a long sitting member of the UK House of Lords and has held positions as president of the APPG for Sri Lanka. He has also been called an unabashed "apologist for the Rajapaksa

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[166] Canadian Parliament, Hansard 148, 2014-1—25
[167] See Lankaweb, http://www.lankaweb.com/news/items/2014/12/02/rathika-sitsabaesan-canadian-mp-puts-her-foot-in-her-mouth-re-ltte-heroes-day/
[168] The news story is written by Stewart Bell, a National Post journalist who has also published popular books on the domestic Canadian terrorism threat, e.g. *Cold Terror: How Canada Nurtures and Exports Terrorism Around the World* (2004).
[169] Hansard 757, 24.11.2014

regime".[170] He was most recently heard denying the extent of Tamil casualties at the end of the Sri Lankan civil, asking for the official reduction from a commonly accepted number ranging between 40 and 70,000 to a mere 8,000[171] – a statement from which the UK High Commissioner in Sri Lanka has since sought to distance himself. His vocal support of LTTE proscription and criticism of Tamil political engagement thus perhaps come as no surprise, especially considering his long history of engagement in Sri Lankan state affairs. An excerpt from the abstract of his recently published memoir (Naseby 2020) sheds some light on the nature of this engagement. It reads as follows:

> Marco Polo in 1298 described Seyllan as the most beautiful island of it size in the world. The Greeks and Romans praised Taprobane and 18th century travellers praised Serendip from which name comes the word serendipity - the luck of the unexpected. So, it was for Lord Naseby, then plain Michael Morris working in challenging Calcutta, to be told one Monday morning on 10 May1963 that he must go urgently to Colombo, Ceylon to handle a crisis. This book is a celebration of Lord Naseby s subsequent unique involvement with Sri Lanka, its people and its politics over the last fifty years.

Blatant colonial apologism and nostalgia ring forth from this text, but also from most of his parliamentary addresses. However, rather than view him as an eccentric individual, Lord Naseby is a stand-in for a larger faction of British establishment politicians who cannot seem to give up their longing for a return to colonial relations, whilst also insisting on the 'sovereignty' of these formerly colonised nations. During my fieldwork, I encountered several of such individuals, mostly well-dressed white male British or commonwealth citizens in their mid-to-late-70s - often former diplomats, UN or government attachés - who were considered 'experts' on Sri Lankan political and social affairs, based on their enduring involvement in the country's post-colonial governance. Such individuals could also be found on the liberal political spectrum, e.g. advising Tamil diaspora groups on their lobbying tactics at the UN, often in patronising - sometimes outright racist - ways, such as lamenting the fact that men from the global South tend to exhibit 'bullying' behaviour.[172] Ultimately, this

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[170] Tamil Guardian, 2019, https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/naseby-continues-sri-lanka%E2%80%99s-debunked-propaganda-campaign
[171] The Diplomat 2017, https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/why-is-sri-lanka-defying-the-united-nations/
[172] Interview with former UN attaché, spring 2017, Geneva.

phenomenon reveals the continued (and problematic) entanglement of the Sri Lankan and British state and how deeply members of the UK establishment are implicated in Sri Lankan history in the postcolonial period.[173]

This close connection between members of the British elite and Sri Lankan government is also illustrative of divergences between different Tamil diaspora 'host-states', and thus supportive of the overall argument made in this thesis that diaspora governance is never fully global. Rather, global diaspora securitization patterns are entangled with local – in this case national - historical dynamics, i.e. Britain's long history of diplomatic relations with SL, and it's exceptional status as both Tamil 'host-state' and former colonial power. Traversing these complexities has been difficult for Tamil activists, and has often led to careful avoidance of class or caste critique by the organisations trying to lobby the British government. Such critique, in turn, has then been relegated to the margins of Tamil advocacy. Ultimately, entanglements between the UK's and Sri Lanka's current governing elite shape if and how Tamils stand a chance at weakening these historical embedded ties.

But more immediately, what are the consequences of statements like the one made by Lord Naseby in parliament, which links Maveerar Naal to the LTTE and calls for its London-based iteration to be investigated by Metropolitan police forces? Sceptics might suggest that these statements by individual members of the Canadian and British political establishment are neither representative of broader national political interests or dynamics in the host country, nor do they have any real impact on the mobilization capacity of the Tamil diaspora. After all, the intervention by Naseby is quickly brushed off by the leader of the house. But this is not how discourse operates, especially if it is circulated from within UK parliament. The positionality and, thus, authority of the speaker matter and Naseby's discursive contestation - of Maveerar Naal, but also other Tamil-related issues - has very real consequences. For example, his statements in support of the Sri Lankan state regime are quickly taken up and circulated by news outlets in Sri Lanka, before they are subsequently *made global* through online news media. They then lend legitimacy to voices calling for more constraint or suspicion of the Tamil diaspora, e.g. through prohibition of Maveerar Naal and other forms of political organising or collective action. And ultimately, they also add fuel to the fire of those already engaged in online intimidation and harassment of the Tamil diaspora more broadly. The scale of this online war was recently made

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[173] Phil Miller's recently published book *Keenie Meenie* reveals the darkest side of this entanglement, by illuminating the implication of British mercenaries in war crimes committed in the early stages of the Sri Lankan civil war (2020).

visible in the Thusyian Nandakumar case, who became the victim of a Twitter harassment campaign, including death threats, after appearing on British news.[174] Thus, the proscription practice presents a severe constraint to Tamil diaspora actors, not only through prohibiting or limiting fundraising at diasporic events such as Maveerar Naal, but also, because it legitimizes certain damaging discursive practices that have a broader disciplining effect on the Tamil diaspora.

In sum, the vignette of Maveerar Naal in London in 2016, provided a starting point for (dis)entangling a number of governance practices that constrain Tamil diaspora political engagement and collective action in the post-civil war period. These include the employment of '*divide and rule' strategies* and *discursive tactics to delegitimize* the Tamil diaspora. It also includes the *practice of proscription*, which shapes both the legal and discursive environment within which the Tamil diaspora operates. Importantly, my analysis revealed that, while Sri Lanka is not formally considered an authoritarian state, constraints to Maveerar Naal celebrations held within the Tamil diasporic space, do emanate from the origin country. In its attempts to control historical memory and narratives,[175] the Sri Lankan government has cast the celebration of Maveerar Naal as an insurgent activity, banning it entirely within its borders. But actors within the Sri Lankan 'origin country' have also sought to repress or constrain the celebration of Maveerar Naal extraterritorially. Prominent critics of the event include, unsurprisingly, the Sri Lankan state, but also loyalists amongst the (online) Singhalese diaspora community and news outlets inside the origin country.[176] Evidently, it is difficult to attribute any practices to a singular authoritarian 'origin country' actor. This reveals that the 'country-of-origin' category proposed in the literature on extraterritorial authoritarianism (e.g. Chaudhary and Moss 2019; Schenkkan et al. 2020), and diaspora engagement more broadly, does not fully make sense in relation to the Tamil diaspora case. After all, a large proportion of Tamils living in the diaspora would not consider Sri Lanka their 'country of origin'.[177] On the flip side, there has never existed a linear state-diaspora relationship whereby the GOSL has considered diasporic Tamils as citizens or nationals to be either 'engaged' or kept out of the domestic political

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[174] The New York Times, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/29/world/asia/sri-lanka-attacks-death-threats.html; This has also been explored by Priya Kumar (2012, 2018)

[175] The politicisation of commemoration events, especially in the Tamil diaspora, has been explored in detail by other scholars, such as Camila Orjuela 2018.

[176] Even prominent Tamil-Canadian journalist D.B.S. Jeyaraj points out the 'political hypocrisy of 'maaveerar naal', which is that 'Great Heroes Day has never been a day of Tamil mourning" and thus supports the GOSL's decision to ban the event in the North and East part of Sri Lanka in 2013, http://www.dailymirror.lk/dbs-jeyaraj-column/political-hypocrisy-of-maaveerar-naal-mourning/192-39878

[177] Instead, they are more likely to refer to Ceylon, Tamil Eelam or the Island of Sri Lanka (rather than the state).

process to begin with. Rather, the same treatment has long extended to all Tamils, living both within the 'origin' state and outside of it.

What role does the diaspora host country play in the security practices that govern the Tamil diaspora? As mentioned in the introductory vignette, at first glance it appears that the context of reception - London, England - is a welcoming one. Maveerar Naal celebrations take place across the country, Tamils hold political events inside the House of Commons, and MPs speak at the UN on the behalf of their Tamil constituents.[178] Indeed, London prides itself on being a particularly 'inclusive environment' when it comes to allowing, even encouraging multicultural events, like Maraveer Naal. Indeed, one could argue that, for a city like London, whose image is that of a diverse cosmopolitan hub, Maveerar Naal event fulfils the function of portraying it in an investor friendly light, as it highlights the cities diversity and multiculturalism (Hadj Abdou 2019). But, as I have tried to make clear, underneath the façade of tolerance and liberal multiculturalism lies a multitude of evidence in line with arguments made my Chaudhary and Moss (2019), which suggests that Tamil (transnational) political action (TPA) is constrained because they face an exclusionary context of reception.[179] This includes hostile domestic political actors, such as Lord Naseby, who has called for the prohibition of Maveerar Naal and generally contests Tamil TPA. But it also includes the broader UK political environment of domestic laws, policies, and norms. After all, it is the UK's proscription regime that Naseby calls upon to legitimate his claim, not the Sri Lankan one.

Importantly, however, even when examining the UK's proscription regime, it becomes difficult to situate it clearly in either the 'origin country' or 'context of reception' category. Rather, it has always been situated in a broader global environment, which lends credibility to Chaudhary and Moss's suggestions that a further source of constraints to TPA are geopolitics and interstate relations. As mentioned, while the UK proscription regime emerged primarily as response to the domestic security threat presented by the IRA, the proscription of the LTTE has always been informed by interstate relations between the UK and Sri Lanka, which, as mentioned above are tightly interwoven and date back to colonial times. In geopolitical terms, the proscription of groups like the LTTE, advocating for national self-determination, must be understood as a practice to counter the threat to the status quo

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[178] Interview with UK MP, London, December 2016.
[179] The way in which Maveerar Naal is relegated to the very outskirts of London - the surrounding Olympic Village is virtually uninhabited at the time of my fieldwork - also suggests an urban security logic is at play, where the potential Tamil diaspora threat is countered by urban planning practice (cf. Danewid 2019).

of liberal internationalism, whereby the boundaries of a nation-state are deemed fixed and any efforts to challenge this are framed as a threat to international order and global security.

Ultimately, by centering the proscription practice, we gain insight into the interplay of various dimensions of power that come together in the governance of the Tamil diaspora. So, while the practice of proscription might be considered a straightforward legal procedure implemented by a state, it has local and global consequences and requires that multiple heterogeneous actors form relationships with one another. For example, arrests made on account of LTTE proscription almost always rely on international intelligence sharing. Further, proscription of the LTTE in many countries also was the result of diffusion of the norm from the EU level. And finally, on a more micro-level, banks and banking professionals who have to make sure that their clients are not channeling funds through proscribed organisations, the MPs passing proscription legislature, the international organisations through which proscription norms often diffuse.

In sum, by (dis)entangling the vignette of Maveerar Naal, I have shed light on some of the governance practices that structure Tamil diaspora mobilization and activism. It becomes evident that even in the post-war period the Tamil diaspora continues to be subjected to security governance practices. Chaudhary and Moss's typology of 'sources of constraint' (2019) has proven useful in shedding light on the actors and spaces implicated in these governance practices. My research reveals evidence for constraints emanating from the origin-country, the reception context, as well as geopolitical and interstate relations. Importantly, what this section has also shown is that by centering a practice, it becomes difficult to isolate the different actors doing the governing or the various 'sources' of a constraint. Actors in the origin country and actors in the host country always operate with geopolitical interests and interstate relations in mind. This becomes even more evident, when we consider other governance practices not yet explored in this vignette, namely those related to the countering of terrorism.

5.2.3. *Governance by counter terrorism and border policing*

In March 2019, newspapers reported that two young Tamil men had been arrested whilst boarding a plane at Heathrow airport.[180] They were apprehended by counter-terrorism police and held in the airport's detention facilities for several hours. Meanwhile, their

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[180] Tamil musician arrested by counter-terrorism police at Heathrow, 2019,
https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/tamil-musician-arrested-counter-terrorism-police-heathrow

bags were being searched, and one man's apartment raided. The articles went on to report that the two men were on their way to Geneva to attend the 40th session of the UNHRC, which was taking place at the time. Specifically, they were planning to attend a protest calling for justice for Tamil victims of human rights abuses committed by the GOSL during the civil war. It was later revealed that one of the two men was a musician scheduled to perform with his drumming group at said protest. While they were released on bail later that night, they were unable to attend the Geneva session as they had planned.

This incident suggests that there is another category of governance practices that has significantly impeded upon the Tamil diaspora's political activism and collective action, in the post-war period. These revolve around the concept of 'terrorism' and include practices such as *labelling a group or individual as 'terrorists'*, *arresting/detaining people on 'suspicion of terrorism' charges*, which forms part of a repertoire of *counter-terrorism measures deployed at borders*. This section will illustrate how such practices have disciplined the Tamil diaspora. Expanding on the findings outlined above, I will show how these practices have both constitutive and constraining effects on Tamil diaspora mobilization. I will subsequently show which actors and spaces are implicated in the practices and think through the typology of 'sources of constraints' proposed by Chaudhary and Moss (2019).

The concept of terrorism holds particular power in global politics, and therefore warrants analysis separate from the proscription practice. Notoriously hard to define, the power of counter-terrorism-related governance practices can be wielded fairly indiscriminately, and often violently. And although the effects of these practices on Tamil diaspora politics are maybe harder to pin down – especially in the post-war period - they are still highly consequential and can be felt broadly across the diaspora. Returning once again to the vignette of Maveerar Naal, while it has perhaps been difficult for authorities to prove a definite legal or financial link between diasporic celebrations of Maveerar Naal and activities classed as 'terrorism', this link has been repeatedly constructed in speech acts/discourse. Importantly, the actors implicated in creating this discursive link extend beyond hostile origin country representatives. For example, that Maveerar Naal was 'an exercise in terrorist fundraising'[181] was a statement written by D.B.S Jeyaraj, an influential Tamil journalist living in Toronto. Host-country parliamentarians such as Lord Naseby and Steven Blaney also make an explicitly link between Maveerar Naal and terrorism, in suggesting that the event glorifies what they understand to be a terrorist organisation. As

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[181] D.B.S. Jeyaraj 2013

already discussed above, the immediate consequences of such 'terrorism' accusations may seem negligible – after all, Maveerar Naal events continue to take place across the globe, even if they are perhaps more tolerated than encouraged. But this obscures the real impact of this practice, which is more cumulative. Ultimately, it does not matter whether the statement 'Maveerar Naal is an exercise in terrorist fundraising' can be verified or not. Indeed, the very concept of terrorism is so fluid that anything could fall under it; there exists no universal definition, no 'truth'. What matters instead, is that this simple speech act has immense causal power (Appleby 2010; Barrinha 2011). It sets in motion a very real/material governance apparatus built with the intention to eliminate the threat posed by terrorism. So, even if the direct involvement of Tamils in terrorist activity, i.e. committing acts of political violence, or financing these, cannot be proven on paper, the mere practice of implying the Tamil diaspora's involvement in terrorism has (constraining) effects on TPA. For example, one consequence that has been widely explored is that of 'delegitimization' (Bartolucci 2010). Throughout the civil war the terrorism accusations made against the LTTE have delegitimized and constrained broader Tamil diaspora claims-making and political activism (Nadarajah and Sriskandarajah 2005). Such 'delegitimization' of Tamil diaspora politics has been maintained in the post-war period, as mentioned above. Meanwhile, as we can see in the introduction to this section, the concept of terrorism does not just delegitimize groups or claims. It also has more immediate, embodied consequences. The two Tamil men detained at Heathrow airport are not being constrained discursively, but physically. Evidently, even in the post-war period the Tamil diaspora is governed by practices related to the concept of terrorism, and with violent consequences. This is because by rendering the LTTE - and by extension the entire Tamil diaspora - as a terrorist threat, Tamils have been made governable under UK Counter Terrorism legislation. They become subject to a set of governance practices that go beyond proscription and policing of organisations with links to the LTTE. What are the conditions that have made these sort of governance practices possible? What 'sources of constraint' can we identify when we center these terrorism-related governance practices?

In responding to news of excessive policing and arrest of Tamils engaging in anti-government protest, when they are within their full democratic right to do so, mainstream UK-based Tamil diaspora organisations have tended to point the finger at the GOSL or Sri Lankan state loyalists. They suggest that the GOSL is responsible for tipping off London Metropolitan police, even supplying them with false information about Tamils engaging in terrorist activity inside UK borders. Few Tamil commentators tend to direct blame for false

arrests to UK police, home office officials, or other host state actors.[182] And indeed, the argument, that the GOSL orchestrated these false arrests, suggesting that 'origin country authoritarianism' is indeed a primary 'source of constraint' to Tamil diaspora activism, is credible, considering other violent or repressive practices recently displayed by representatives of the GOSL towards members of the Tamil diaspora in the UK. For example, in October 2018, a prominent member of the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), a Tamil diaspora organisation with chapters all across the globe, was arrested by Thames Valley Police in Oxford. He was part of a group of protestors who had gathered to peacefully demonstrate the visit of Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Sri Lankan Independence Day. The arrest could be made because the police were allegedly tipped off by Sri Lankan high commission staff. Further, in the introduction to this article, I briefly referred to an incident that occurred in London in February 2018, where Sri Lankan defence attaché and former diplomat, Brigadier Fernando, was caught on camera outside the Sri Lankan Embassy in London visibly intimidating and threatening protestors. Footage showed him "running his forefinger across his throat whilst maintaining eye contact with the protestors"[183] who had gathered outside the embassy to demonstrate. Afterwards he was summoned back to Sri Lanka but without facing any disciplinary action, on grounds of diplomatic immunity. That constraints to Tamil diaspora political activism emanate from the Sri Lankan state in the form of intimidation and harassment thus supports the 'origin-country authoritarianism' argument.

On the other hand, there is also reason to believe that the arrests of the Tamil men at Heathrow airport were not made purely at the behest of the Sri Lankan government; that the incidents cited above are not just examples of purely extraterritorial authoritarian practice. If anything, they are extraterritorial authoritarian practices executed with the help of foreign police forces or border guards. Indeed, in the case of the threats made by Brigadier Fernando, it was later reported by news outlets that evidence had emerged to suggest that his official diplomatic responsibilities included safeguarding the embassy, countering protests against the Sri Lankan government, and maintaining close relations with British intelligence agencies.[184] The possibility must at least be entertained that the British government is implicated in repressive practices constraining Tamil diaspora mobilization within its borders.

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[182] For exceptions, see reporting done by more anti-imperialist news outlets such as the Tamil guardian or world socialism website.

[183] See Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka 2019.

[184] The Morning Star, 'Death Threats were part of Sri Lankan Diplomat's Job Description', https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/death-threats-were-part-sri-lankan-diplomat-job-description-court-told

With this in mind, let us return to the Heathrow incident. What factors led to the arrest of the two Tamil activists, beside an alleged tip-off by GOSL loyalists? The news articles suggest that the suspects were initially apprehended by airport counter-terrorism police on 'suspicion of terrorism'-charges. The reasons for the arrest, it was later claimed, was that they were understood to be carrying a Tamil national flag, misidentified as the LTTE flag, which would have symbolised their affiliation with a proscribed organisation. That their link to terrorism was thus tenuous and evidence would likely not have held up in court, does not matter here. 'Suspicion' by the airport police officers was enough to warrant the arrest under current UK counter-terrorism law. The specific piece of legislation legitimizing this governance practice is Schedule 7 of the UK Terrorism Act, which grants exceptional rights to police in border areas (section 13). The passing of this act in the year 2000 - granting sweeping powers to airport police, who could now arrest individuals on mere grounds of 'suspicion' - gives some indication of the threat perceived to emanate from beyond the UK's national borders at the time, e.g. by transnationally operating insurgent groups such as the IRA, but also the LTTE. This strongly suggests that the 'exclusionary receiving country context' plays a big part in constraining the Tamil diaspora. It also means that the UK response to Tamil diaspora politics is somewhat decoupled from the sending-state context. Governance practices related to securing the UK border are – naturally – not a perfect mirror of Sri Lankan domestic developments. The formal end of the civil war in Sri Lanka may have provided some openings for Tamil diaspora activism in the UK but it does not by any means imply an end to scrutiny of Tamil diaspora members at the UK border.

Ultimately, practices of counter-terrorism policing at borders, have very clearly structured how a receiving country, such as the UK, responds to migration and transnational political mobilization and vice-versa. The threat potential emanating from such mobilities is considered so severe that in fighting it, the infringement of human rights and civil liberties is justified. But, as much as these domestic security governance practices seem to indicate that the UK is going it alone, this is far from the case. The country might have been a first-mover in implementing counter-terrorism practices and also in proscribing the LTTE, but these practices are deeply embedded in a broader global security environment.

After all, beside the terrorist attacks in London on 7/7, it is largely the events of 9/11 that transform both domestic and global threat perceptions around migrants and mobilities. Changes in the global security environment, entailing cooperation around the Global War on Terror, translated into a massive expansion of the UK counter-terrorism apparatus, whereby airports, ports and land border crossings became new battlegrounds in this global

war. This transformation responded to an emerging fear inside liberal Western states of 'homegrown terrorism', suggesting that the enemy was already within, and that this enemy was likely to be racialised and Muslim. This fear then translated into racial and religious bias by UK border guards or police officers (Shantz 2020; Graffin and Blesa 2019), and consequently also the wider application of Schedule 7. But this development, whereby CT governance practices have shifted in such a way that they are decidedly biased towards racialised immigrants, securitizing their border-crossing practices, cannot be solely attributed to the events of 9/11, or even 7/7. [185] The migration governance crisis is the Mediterranean, which gripped Europe in the 2010s, also played – and continues to play - a crucial role in the securitization of migration.[186] Especially, the outbreak of civil war in Syria, and the ensuing increase of foreign fighters and supposedly radicalized returnees has transformed the ways in which diaspora are perceived and governed in their receiving country. Evidently, a closer look at the conditions surrounding the arrests of the two Tamil men at Heathrow airport, shows that geopolitics and interstate relations also played a crucial role in determining the transnational political mobilization capacity of the Tamil diaspora in the UK.

In this grim narrative of overwhelming domination and securitization, let us not forget, however, that there has been dissent. Newspapers such as the Morning Star and Tamil Guardian, which gather and publicise such instances of police harassment and malpractice present a challenge to the global roll out of security governance. In recent years, Twitter has also become a powerful tool, especially in the UK context, where over the last 18 months criticism of the state, and its violent protest policing[187] has grown louder, opening up opportunities for resistance also for Tamils. For example, early in 2021, Tamil activists in London, who had until then performed on mainstream UK and Tamil social media as good immigrants, and liberal young professionals, circulated graphic images of police violence at the 2009 Tamil protests on Twitter, calling for solidarity in the face of excessive police force. Finally, other forms of localised pushback exist against global over-policing of 'terrorism' exist, e.g. in litigation against police malpractice against Tamils in London.

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[185] In my thesis, I elaborate on security-migration nexus and how it precedes 9/11 and Arab spring migrations (Huysmans 2000).

[186] Although some argue that the change was more strongly felt in continental Europe (Boswell 2007), partly because the 'five-eyes-community' was already more attuned to the 'homegrown terrorism' threat.

[187] See reports on the Guardian and the BBC: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/mar/13/as-the-sun-set-they-came-in-solidarity-and-to-pay-tribute-to-sarah-everard or https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53031072

Overall, this section has shown that the Tamil diaspora is constrained by governance practices that relate to terrorism. These practices include the *labelling* of groups and individuals as terrorist, as well as counter-terrorism practices such as *border policing.* Returning then to the typology proposed by Chaudhary and Moss, what are the social and political conditions that make these constraining practices possible? And from what sources do they emanate? While it might be reasonable to believe that the arrests of the two Tamil men at Heathrow airport was driven by Sri Lankan state forces engaging in practices that resonate with the category of 'origin country authoritarianism' (such as *surveillance* and *intimidation*), a closer look at the conditions surrounding the arrest make clear that sources of constraint are as much located in an 'exclusionary receiving country context' as they depend on 'geopolitics and interstate relations'.

5.2.4. *The spatial politics of security governance*

As the preceding sections have demonstrated, airports and border areas are spaces in which different socio-legal governance power operates. But, as I have already explored in other chapters, space also has a material and geographical dimension.

First, as the transnational repression literature suggests, the spaces of national security governance have recently shifted beyond national borders, reaching diasporas and populations in exile. But the historical exploration of Tamil security governance has shown that this targeting of the diaspora (the diaspora as a site of war) is actually nothing new. It has characterised diaspora-state relations from the get-go. What I have explored in the preceding pages is the entangled nature of this governance. Geographically, security governance is no longer just emanating from host-state: the host-state and global actors are always implicated.

With this in mind, Tamils have nevertheless managed to carve out space for resistance in the diaspora, both against the home and the host state. For a brief moment in 2009 Tamils occupy space outside the UK parliament, something that would not have been possible before or after this event. In 2016, Tamils are no longer meeting in Parliament Square outside the Houses of Parliament. In part, this is because space for political resistance in contemporary Britain is shrinking, the public square has become the latest battle ground in the Global War on Terror. Further, Maveerar Naal, with its open displays of Tamil nationalism, the collective mourning and memorialisation of fallen Tamil war heroes, is different from the kind of subtle professional networking practices or lobbying on human and minority rights issues that I

explored in the last chapter. Due to its politically contentious nature, it is a global and local practice of Tamil resistance. It shows that within an environment that is still highly securitized, Tamils in the diaspora have managed to carve out spaces for nationalist practices, albeit notably further away from centers of power than UNHRC advocacy. That Maveerar Naal is relegated to the very outskirts of London - the surrounding Olympic Village is virtually uninhabited at the time of my fieldwork, suggests there might be an urban security governance logic is at play, whereby the potential Tamil diaspora threat is countered by urban planning practice. This echoes colonial governance practices that sought to insure the metropolis from the threat of the racialised colonial 'other' (cf. Danewid 2019). Indeed, "Designing Out Terrorism", through urban planning practices has become a – or continues to be - a mantra in the security governance field.[188] Thus material-spatial power, which has been explored in more detail in the preceding chapters, also plays a key role in the security practices that govern the Tamil diaspora and is worth exploring in more detail in future research.

But another reading of the gradual movement of Tamil resistance out of the city center, is that Tamils are increasingly carving out spaces for everyday contestation and national memory practices nearer to the places where they live, as well as online. Examples here are the Tamil Community Center that is currently under construction in Scarborough, in the Greater Toronto Area,[189] and the ground-breaking commemoration event on Tamils of Lanka: A Timeless Heritage organised by the Tamil Information Centre in the suburbs of Kingston, in South-West London, of which Seoighe (2021) has written so beautifully. Ultimately, most Tamils exist in the metaphorical and literal margins of global politics. But from there they have agitated tirelessly against efforts at repressive governance and domination, changing the shape of these practices in the process.

5.3. Summary and Conclusion: Colonial Continuities

Chapter 5. explored the politics of diaspora governance by centering diaspora governance practices in the security field. It made the argument that in this field diaspora are rendered governable primarily as 'threats' to both global and national security. However, over time there are significant changes and challenges to this security governance – sometimes brought

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[188] International Security Expo: Designing Out Terrorism,
https://counterterrorbusiness.com/features/international-security-expo-designing-out-terrorism.
[189] https://www.tamilcentre.ca/en/

about by changes in (local and and global) Tamil diaspora mobilization and resistance, sometimes in line with broader global political dynamics. Ultimately, diasporas resist *in spite of* the repression and securitization that characterises the environment in which they find themselves.

The chapter began by offering a historical exploration of the emergence of a range of security practices that have in some way or other governed (disciplined, or repressed) diaspora populations, from the British colonial period and until the beginning of the 21st century. In each section, the chapter then demonstrated how global ideas about the potential threat posed by diaspora populations played out in the Tamil diaspora case, but also how the diaspora mobilized in the face of, or pushed back against governance/attempts at domination. It first discussed how the treatment of Tamils during the British colonial period meant that early emigrants to the UK were quick to assimilate into the new host country and not yet perceived as a security threat by either the home or the host state. This changed when in the 1970s ethnic tensions in Sri Lanka intensified and more Tamils started arriving as political exiles in the UK. At the same time, growing domestic concerns about national security and migration across the Western world meant that the UK immigration regime began to tighten. By the mid-1980s, large numbers of Tamils were fleeing the violence committed by both Tamil militants and the GOSL and settling as refugees in the UK and other countries across the Western world. The chapter showed that during the same period, we saw the emergence of increased global security cooperation, as state governments attempt to counter transnational or 'global' security threats that transcend beyond their territories. The chapter showed that, during this period, the Tamil diaspora was perceived as a threat for its involvement in the Sri Lankan war economy. It then showed how, in the 1990s, discursive interventions and shifts in policy by the Clinton administration in the US War on Drugs shift the global security focus towards combatting inner-city crime. In the UK, these international or global ideas became entangled with domestic security concerns and a local governance environment, characterised by heightened sensitivity towards urban warfare, and a powerful proscription regime, developed over decades of conflict with the IRA, but also dating back to the colonial period. Meanwhile, in the late 1990s, localised ideas about the domestic threat posed by the LTTE (and its international funding arm) to Sri Lankan state unity were elevated to the global scale by a small number of powerful actors with networks in the global security field. By the turn of the millennium, the assumption that the LTTE was a terrorist organisation that needed to be proscribed had diffused globally, affecting the Tamil diaspora across the globe by criminalizing most forms of transnational political action. The chapter then showed that while the end of the Sri Lankan civil war brought about a change in rhetoric by some Western state actors towards the Tamil diaspora community, the underlying security

practices that had governed the Tamil diaspora, repressing their ability to organize remained. In fact, as many Western states, including the turned their security gaze inwards, in an effort to combat home-grown terrorism, borders and cities have become the new battleground for the Global War on Terror. In sum, the first section of the chapter demonstrated how Tamil diaspora governance shifted in line with changes in the threat perceptions of global and domestic security actors, i.e. from transnational criminal networks to global war on terror, from punitive to preventative approaches to security, and how these shifts relied on the de-and reterritorialisation of ideas about security and the Tamil diaspora. It also explored the role that the Tamil diaspora itself played in shaping and/or resisting this securitization.

The second section of the chapter then untangled a number of security governance practices that continue to affect the Tamil diaspora community in London during the time of my fieldwork. By disentangling these governance practices, which include "divide and rule" tactics, discursive delegitimization, proscription, counter terrorism practices and border policing, the chapter showed how all of these governance practices implicate an assemblage of governance actors, spaces, scales, and objects in order to operate. Importantly, the process of disentanglement also showed that some of these governance practices, reveal continuities with colonial forms of governance by the British Empire, namely in how they continue to structure discourse and physical space in the (former) imperial metropolis. This echoes Laffey and Nadarajah's (2012) suggestion that diaspora governance helps to maintain liberal order across the globe, albeit a liberal order that rests on the select use of violence against those who present as 'other'. Ultimately, the diaspora perspective shows that global security governance is located wherever 'difference' needs to be managed, from international borders, and the benches of the Houses of Parliament, to the online comments sections of blogs, and the inner-city street.

Nevertheless, the chapter also took note of the space that Tamils have carved out for mobilization *in-spite-of* these enduring security governance practices. Ultimately, it showed that the story of 'diaspora repression' is always more complicated than expected, security governance and resistance to such governance exist side by side and shape each other. Processes of governance are never complete – always relational and entangled. But, in giving space to agency and practices of resistance, what needs to be remembered, is that the governed and the governor are often not equally powerful. As this chapter showed, space for resistance is limited and under constant negotiation. The security governance assemblage that challengers to the global (neo)liberal order encounter is a relentless, smart and a many-headed beast, with deep historical roots, one not to be underestimated.

This final empirical chapter also brings home, what is sometimes alluded to in the other chapters: that in the eyes of many dominant global governance actors, the Tamil diaspora should not exist. And yet, it does. Throughout the course of my research for this project, I encountered instances where the Tamil diaspora category – and with it the legitimacy of a Tamil diaspora community - was challenged, by actors across the liberal-authoritarian spectrum and across governance fields.

For example, in the spaces of development governance that I entered in Toronto, development actors like Cuso and OCIC operated exclusively with notions of state-based diasporas, e.g., 'the Philipino diaspora, 'the Sri Lankan diaspora', with little interest in or knowledge of local histories of conflict that might complicate these associations. Meanwhile, my wider experience in Toronto was also that many young Tamil professionals who were working in the development and peacebuilding field, or were employed as Canadian civil servants, were actively trying to eschew what they described as an exclusive Tamil-diaspora identity. Indeed, this tension between identification with a Tamil and Sri Lankan diaspora identity was raised explicitly by many of my interlocutors. Importantly, a few very specific local events were of central importance in this, namely efforts of the Mosaic Institute to address 'imported conflict' among diaspora youth. One of its flagship programmes was the Young Canadian's Peace Dialogue on Sri Lanka, which aimed at building bridges between Tamils and Singhalese communities in Toronto. This programme eventually culminated in the founding of an organisation titled 'Sri Lankan's Without Borders', which, in the long run rather unsuccessfully, tried to engage a younger generation of Tamil and Singhalese Sri Lankans in liberal peacebuilding from the space of the hoststate.

What is illustrated by this data, and what we largely already know, is that global liberal governance remains state-centric, especially in its assumptions around what forms of communities (diaspora or otherwise) are able and allowed to exist in the world. While global liberal governance actors are slowly accepting diaspora as an actor of importance (hence the proliferation of 'diaspora engagement') this holds only if the group directly corresponds with a nation-state. The notion of an ethnic diaspora remains highly problematic, if not threatening. Evidently, the Tamil diaspora category is continuously challenged, e.g., by governance actors asserting expectations around what a state-diaspora relationship should look like, but also reasserted/strengthened, often precisely in defiance/resistance to dominant assumptions about state-linkages.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has provided a practice-centric analysis of diaspora governance, whereby practices were used as a nexus from which complex entanglements of actors, forms of power, spaces, buildings, and objects were then traced. In doing so, has shown how to locate politics in the global.

The introductory chapter introduced the reader to the phenomenon under investigation, namely the empirical proliferation and diversification of so-called 'diaspora engagement' strategies. It then laid out the primary research question for this thesis, namely "what are the "politics of diaspora governance"?, before outlining what is at stake in answering it, exploring its empirical, theoretical, and global political significance. The chapter then diagnosed a liberal bias in the existing literature on diaspora engagement, which has led to the following interrelated analytical gaps: state centrism and the problem of accounting for and locating global politics. To date, existing accounts of diaspora engagement either locate power with the state or assume non-hierarchical governance. The chapter then suggested that liberal literatures are also plagued by essentialist understandings of diaspora. It then introduced critical literature, which has tried to make sense of diaspora engagement. This critical literature has ultimately informed this study's definition of governance (as mode of power) as well as its definition of diaspora (as relational). However, it was revealed that these critical approaches were still caught in the levels of analysis problem, and therefore did not shed adequate light on how to actually 'locate politics in the global' (rather than the international). Drawing on existing literature on global-local relations, this thesis made the argument that we should locate global politics in 'entanglements'. It also suggested that it was worth considering that these entanglements would have a material dimension, and to place emphasis not just on the de- but also the reterritorialisation of global diaspora politics. In the second chapter, I then laid out my practice-methodology for studying these entanglements, which encompassed an abductive research design and a multi-sited ethnography of entanglements. Through the lens of the Tamil diaspora, the process of empirical (dis)entanglement then unfolded across three chapters, each centering practices in a difference governance field, first development, then transitional justice, then security.

In conclusion, what are the (global) politics of diaspora governance? And where are the politics of 'global' diaspora governance located? This thesis has shown that the politics of diaspora governance are located in entanglements, entanglements between the global and the

local, the universal and the particular, between agents and structures, the material and the immaterial. While rules, regulations, norms, and expectations about diaspora and diaspora governance exist at a global level (in *practice*, see below), seemingly deterritorialised and thus able to travel freely across the globe, they are always eventually reterritorialised, where they become entangled with local political struggles. Overall, in cross-fertilizing advances on practices in diaspora studies with IR practice theory, this thesis has made original contributions to knowledge in IR, by furthering debates in the subfields of global IR, diaspora studies, governance, and the practice-turn, including debates on how to use practice theory to generate data.

First and foremost, this thesis has made a contribution to the study of the 'Global' in IR. This thesis has demonstrated that the global is made and unmade in practice. For example, the global is made by the process of actors framing things as universal or international (Tsing 2011). For example, the 'Global Citizen's Forum' at which members of the DENG in Toronto organised a panel discussion, is a very local event, attended mostly by Torontonians, as illustrated by my field data. However, in naming it global, a scale or a sense of universality is invoked. Also, by inviting speakers from 'international' or global level institutions, the global is present in the local event. Similarly, the 'Global Tamil Forum', one of the organisations involved in advocacy at the UNHRC, invokes universal representativeness, when in actuality it comprises a very small selection of local actors spread out in a transnational network.

In this thesis, assemblage thinking's explicitly 'flat ontology' has been useful for thinking about the relationships and interactions between actors representing different scales, e.g. a local Toronto diaspora organisation, a Canadian federal government official, and a UN representative occupy a room together, sharing ideas, information, and experiences, while in a static scalar ontology they are separate, and can never be thought about as entangled. This thesis has revealed what happens when global ideas about diaspora hit the ground, namely that they collide or become entangled with local or national contexts. On the one hand, global ideas or assumptions about diaspora collide with 'global governance fields' (e.g. demonstrated here as development, TJ, security). They are then appropriated by professionals in these fields in a way that fits their existing modes and categories of governance. Importantly, this thesis has offered empirical support for the argument that global politics are reterritorialised, and that material space matters in an analysis of global politics. Each chapter has shown that the 'ground' is not just social or ideational but material, made up of built environments. The Robertson Building shapes how global ideas about diaspora reach local diaspora populations in Toronto, while in

Geneva the spatial separation between the UN compound and the spaces designated for protest preserve a hierarchical international structure of politics.

This thesis has also made significant contributions to migration and diaspora studies. It has offered original empirical data on Tamil diaspora politics from multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork. It has also shed light on the ways in which the Tamil diaspora has historically been entangled in governance, by the sending state, in countries of settlement, and in other spaces that do not fit into this binary category. More specifically, this thesis has offered empirical data on the relationship between the Tamil diaspora and different modes of governance. It has shown that the Tamil diaspora and their transnational practices present a 'problem' or challenge for governance actors. They defy state boundaries; appear in different roles, some threatening to global liberal actors, some less so. As a result, diasporas are then 'rendered governable' in multiple ways. In the absence of definite and clear-cut understandings of what diaspora are, this usually means that they are made to fit into already existing categories familiar to the governance actor, e.g. terrorist, NGO, constituent, activist, or lawyer. Importantly, this 'rendering governable' of diaspora takes place in spaces where diaspora research has so far not tended to look, with some exceptions. In the field of diaspora studies, what has the practice perspective added to the conversation about diaspora governance? While practices have been employed as a theoretical device in the study of diaspora (see Brubaker 2005; Glasius 2019) this thesis has offered a deeper theorization of practices by cross-fertilizing work on diaspora engagement with scholarship from the practice turn in IR. Specifically, the conceptualization of practices as entanglements has made way for a closer engagement with Bourdieusian and pragmatist practice theoretical concepts in the analysis of diaspora governance.

This thesis also offers a new contribution to governance research. A key question in the literature on governance under conditions of globalization remains: Who actually governs? The answer in the liberal literature has usually been 'the state' or 'non-hierarchical actor networks'. Meanwhile critical scholarship tends to answer this question with 'discourse' or 'structures', which obscures the very real actors and objects through which these discourses rule. Meanwhile, a practice centric 'ethnography of entanglements' approach has revealed that diaspora are governed by constellations of people, places, networks, rules, norms, laws, objects, etc. But it also reveals how different forms of power (e.g. discursive, material state, bureaucratic) are interconnected. In doing so, it has also complicated the way that power functions in governance and how different forms of power come together and are 'entangled'. Crucially, this thesis has provided empirical data on the role of the state in governance. While the state does not act as the primary container for my multi-sited ethnography, the state appears

in this study through its practices. For example, in some instances, we see the Canadian (host) state enter into the governance assemblage by acting as a sponsor of diaspora engagement in development initiatives. At other times, the diaspora home state rear its head when Sri Lankan government employees are tasked with surveilling and threatening the Tamil diaspora outside the Sri Lankan Embassy in London. One key observation made by the author is that even the best efforts to decenter the state in IR are complicated by the need to first center the state to been begin any form critique, revealing disciplinary boundary maintenance. But the practice approach also fulfils an important function of not underestimating the power of the state. It reveals, without doubt, that states do still play a large role in shaping diaspora governance, however the prominence or immediacy of state power is relative to the governance area in question, e.g. in the development field the state exerts softer power and thus hides from sight, more so than in the security field. Meanwhile, the UNHRC process is very clearly still dominated by state power, high politics, and diplomats, with civil society actors playing a secondary role. This debate on the role of the state on governance is far from over and goes to the very heart of the discipline of IR.

This thesis has also made a contribution to literature on the practice turn in IR by offering original data on practices of (global) governance. Through an abductive research design, this study has managed to bridge the gap between practice theory and data collection. I have shown how the 'global' can be made accessible through studying practices. The thesis has furthered attempts to combine critical and pragmatist practice approaches, by using both the thinking tools offered by Bourdieusian practice as well as assemblages, to analyse my empirical data. What analytical leverage has the combination of the two approaches given me in the study of the politics of diaspora governance? Bourdieu places practices in "dynamic configurations of fields" (Bueger and Gadinger 2015: 455), which are hierarchically organised and have a *tendency* to reproduce themselves, giving some sense of order and stability to global politics. Meanwhile, pragmatists place more emphasis on the "hybrid relations between subjects and objects, and humans and non-humans" (ibid.), which are also of crucial importance in the analysis of diaspora governance practices, as they may reveal spontaneous and spatially contingent outcomes. I thus agree with Bueger and Gadinger who suggests that we should perhaps not rely entirely on Bourdieu for our analysis of diaspora governance practices. While a useful to concept think from, in this empirical setting it is unlikely that we find a discrete 'field' (in the IR and in the Bourdieusian sense). I build on the suggestion that "The dual nature of practices requires attention to the interaction between both the emergent, innovative and the repetitive, reproducing sides of practice" (Bueger and Gadinger 2015: 456). On the one hand,

assemblage thinking helped reveal complex entanglements in practices better than Bourdieu's concepts could. While Bourdieu's theory of embodiment proposes a materialist ontology, assemblage thinking takes the agency on the non-human world perhaps even more seriously. Human agents are not just bound up in social and cultural relations with each other or with discursive structures, but they form relations with the material things around them. This means we can explicitly centre physical objects and material space in our untangling of a diaspora governance practice. For example, we can problematize how the physical properties of buildings or cities shape governance, much like Dittmer (2017) has done in his analysis. Diaspora governance plays out differently when it is geographically removed from sites of formal political power. Practices of governance may move from physical restraint of diaspora demonstrators to using digital technologies and cameras for mass surveillance. This centering of the relations – the entanglements - between human and non-human agents also means we can seriously conceptualize "governance beyond the state" – not just in a shallow way by adding non-state actors. Assemblage theory can thus help us move more explicitly beyond state-centrism and lets us imagine the world as made up of complex configurations, in which the state becomes only one of many possible configurations. By thinking about governance as working through an assemblage (of different actors, spaces, objects etc.) we decenter the ontological primacy of the state. As mentioned, this is one of the primary gaps in the literature on diaspora engagement and governance. This does not mean that the state is no longer a powerful agent. What it does mean is that, whether and how the state (as an assemblage) has power to act, is now an empirical question. Similarly, we open up the possibility of including diaspora themselves in the group of actors who govern. And, we can take it even further and include buildings and infrastructures (e.g. fences, cameras, borders) as 'governance actors'. Evidently, there is much room for further theorization on the relationship and practical use of practice theory in IR.

Naturally, there exist other limitations to this study. For example, it has been beyond the scope of this thesis to theorise precisely how different forms of capital or power are exchangeable, although it has offered some tentative suggestions by demonstrating that diaspora actors may compensate for geographical distance from sites of power with financial assets. A future study may want to zoom in on individual governance practices even more closely, to allow for an even more detailed analytical (dis)entanglement. Another avenue for future research would be to build a comprehensive typology of diaspora governance practices within or across different governance fields, or issue areas. While this study has abductively generated an overview of the key practices through which Tamil diaspora actors are governed,

a more systematic analysis could then be used to study governance practices across other diaspora cases. Future research could also look into disentangling governance practices in other governance issue areas, e.g. humanitarian assistance, or environmental governance. Or it could centre examples of diaspora governance in 'global cities' of the global South, such as Singapore, or Nairobi. Indeed, if, as this thesis has demonstrated, the global politics of diaspora governance are always 'reterritorialised', then we should aim to see how such reterritorialisation plays out across different locales across the globe.

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