Diasporic Media and Transcultural Journalism: a case study on OMNI TV Chinese News in Greater Vancouver

by

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Abstract

With the increasingly multicultural demography in Greater Vancouver, diasporic media have played an important role in addressing the needs and concerns of immigrants from all over the world. Diasporic media’s strong commitment to show positive recognitions to their intended ethnic community can, however, be seen as a double-edged sword. While their allegiance has, to a certain degree, fractured the “regime of objectivity” found mostly in mainstream media, it has not fully captured the diversity and transcultural interactions between and within ethnic groups. Diasporic broadcasting has accordingly consolidated ethnic enclaves and created the problem of reification. To remedy the situation and foster the transcultural communication in journalism, this paper calls for an establishment of a new regime – the regime of intersubjectivity – to replace the “regime of objectivity.” A three-dimensional model of in-group and out-group transcultural communication in journalism is thus proposed to conceptualize the new regime of intersubjectivity.

Keywords: Diasporic media; transcultural communication; transcultural journalism; regime of intersubjectivity; regime of objectivity; identity
Dedicated to my mom, dad, younger brother, relatives, friends, and to my sweetie pie, Shailen.

Thank you all for your love, support, inspirations, understanding and patience.
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List of Acronyms

BC British Columbia
CRTC Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC Stats</td>
<td>BC Stats is the central statistical agency of the Province of British Columbia, producing and interpreting statistical information relating to all facets of life in the province (BC Stats, 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diasporic media</td>
<td>Diasporic media are broadly defined as media produced for and by a particular group of diaspora and immigrants which is typically ethnically, racially, and/or linguistically distinct. They are also produced for and by the next generations of these diaspora and immigrants (Matsaganis, Katz, &amp; Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generations of immigrants</td>
<td>First generation immigrants are immigrants who were born in one country and relocated to another. Second generation immigrants are children of the first generation immigrants. Third generation immigrants are grandchildren of the first generation immigrants. 1.5 generation immigrants are those who arrived to the destination country before the age of fourteen (Lu, 2011, p. 10). Depending on numerous factors, such as the age of immigration, the places of origin, the extent of education received before immigration, their senses of belonging and community to the country of settlement and the home country vary from individual to individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMNI TV</td>
<td>OMNI TV, owned by Rogers, is a multicultural television station that serves a variety of ethno-cultural communities in more than 20 languages (Rogers, 2014). OMNI has two stations. They are located in Vancouver, BC and Toronto, Ontario. The station in BC (OMNI BC) produces half an hour regional newscasts in Mandarin and another half an hour in Cantonese on weekdays (Monday through Friday). OMNI BC airs newscasts produced by the Ontario station for the same length in these Chinese languages. OMNI BC also produces news in Punjabi, for an hour on weekdays. These news programs contain both Canadian news translated into specific languages and news feeds from the countries of origin broadcasted in audiences’ mother tongues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visible minorities</td>
<td>According to the Employment Equity Act, visible minorities are defined as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Justice Laws Website, 1995). They include Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, Visible minority, not included elsewhere (n.i.e.), and Multiple visible minority.</td>
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Chapter 1.

Introduction

Throughout history, people have been affected by push and pull factors to reside in cities outside their places of origin. Immigration flows have become more salient in today’s society, and arguably for the foreseeable future. These flows are no longer a new social phenomenon. Meeting people from different parts of the world is fairly common in today’s society. In the context of Greater Vancouver, British Columbia (BC), being the third largest metropolitan areas in Canada\(^1\), the urban condition has lately been characterized by difference, multiplicity, heterogeneity, hybridity, diversity, and plurality (Sandercock, 2003, p. 1).

Given the increasingly multicultural demography, the federal state’s commitment to multiculturalism since the 1970s, and the broadcasting policy changes made by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) since the mid-1980s, the mainstream media in Canada have begun to pay respect to these immigrants. Yet, immigrants still feel they are misrepresented, underrepresented and even discriminated in the mainstream media even today (Kong, 2014, pp. 7, 33; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005, p. 434). Owing to the misrepresentation of these immigrants in the mainstream media, members of the diasporic communities have perceived there is an urgent need to make sure their voices are heard in society (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 76). Diasporic media have thus emerged to serve and represent the ethnic community they belong to, to show positive recognition of their ethnic identities, and to raise awareness about issues that are not addressed in the mainstream media but of significant importance to the ethnic community (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 5, 17). Immigrants, as a result, tends to trust and rely heavily on these media (Frank

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\(^1\) The first largest metropolitan area in Canada is Greater Toronto Area, Ontario, followed by Greater Montreal, Quebec (Statistics Canada, 2014).
Herron in Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 264; Mousavi, 2006). They even treat the information provided as their main source of information (Georgiou, 2005, p. 494; Husband, 2005, p. 462). Diasporic media “are not alternative media;” for these populations, they are their media (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 477).

Diasporic media’s commitment to show positive recognition to their intended ethnic community can, however, be seen as a double-edged sword. On one hand, their commitment has begun to challenge what Hackett and Zhao (1996; 1997) call the “regime of objectivity” in journalism found mostly in mainstream media (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 462; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 236-41). On the other hand, due to their in-group commitment, they tend to show little, if any, attention to the coexistence of other ethnic groups in the increasingly multicultural context (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007). The misrecognition of others has not only reinforced segregation between groups, but also, most importantly, hindered transcultural communication across and within various ethnic groups (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007). This paper argues that diasporic media have overlooked the importance of fostering transcultural communication as one of their key roles in the progressively multiethnic environment.

By grounding this study on feedback collected from the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV in Greater Vancouver, a multicultural and multilingual TV broadcaster in Canada, this paper positions a potential demand for more transcultural components in newscasts and cultural programs (Kong, 2014). This paper further argues that diasporic media have already, to a certain extent, shaken the “regime of objectivity” in journalistic practices, but have not pushed forward to replace it with a new regime – a regime of intersubjectivity – to raise both out-group and in-group transcultural awareness. To conceptualize the regime of intersubjectivity, this paper proposes a three-dimensional model of transcultural communication.

This paper is organized into five parts. Chapter 2 is a literature review to explore the roles of diasporic media. It argues that being too committed to the diasporic market they serve can be a double-edged sword. It ends by identifying a potential role overlooked
by diasporic media, i.e., its role in facilitating transcultural communication across and within different ethnic groups. Chapter 3 contextualizes the potential need for more transcultural components in diasporic media in the context of Greater Vancouver. It begins with a brief discussion on how Canadian Multiculturalism policy of 1971, the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 and legislative changes in broadcasting policy since the mid-1980s have obscured the need for facilitating transcultural communication in journalism. The need for transcultural journalism is further supported by the diversity of the populations in Greater Vancouver using census data. Given the context outlined in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 qualifies the demand for more transcultural components in diasporic broadcasting based on feedback collected from the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV living in Greater Vancouver. This empirical analysis gestures at the need to establish a new regime of intersubjectivity to challenge and replace the “regime of objectivity” in journalistic practices.

Through critically thinking what transcultural communication is, Chapter 5 conceptualizes the regime of intersubjectivity by proposing a three-dimensional model of transcultural communication. The model conceptualizes transcultural communication across and within different ethnic groups and calls for a more extensive commitment to multiple ethnic groups (as opposed to singular) (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007, pp. 66, 77-8, 101, 110). This model is not only helpful for diasporic and mainstream broadcasting to raise out-group and in-group transcultural awareness, but also to challenge the border between the mainstream and non-mainstream. The final chapter, Chapter 6, briefly discusses the political challenges faced by diasporic media to establish this new regime of intersubjectivity and to produce programs that raise out-group and in-group transcultural awareness. These challenges are analyzed from economic and social perspectives.
Chapter 2.

Literature Review

Borrowing the definitions in Matasaganis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach’s book on *Understanding Ethnic Media* (2011), this paper defines diasporic media broadly as media produced for and by a particular group of diaspora and immigrants which typically is ethnically, racially, and/or linguistically distinct. They are also produced for and by the next generations of these diaspora and immigrants, such as 1.5, second and third generation immigrants.²

Following the definition of diasporic media, this paper defines mainstream media as media produced for and by the mainstream of society. Mainstream is, according to Alba and Nee (2003), “that part of society within which ethnic and racial origins have at most minor impacts on [one’s] life chances and opportunities” (2003, p. 12). For instance, one being a white English-speaker is less likely to be mistreated as a person by others and institutions in Canada, whereas a Chinese-Canadian even though their mother tongue is English is more likely (though not necessarily) to be mistreated simply because of his/her ethnic and racial origins. However, the boundaries of mainstream and non-mainstream are constantly being negotiated. They are fluid borders which may expand and shrink over time. Many second and third generation immigrants see themselves and are treated as part of the mainstream society in Canada, despite their ethnic and racial origins. Therefore, although the definitions of mainstream and non-mainstream are clearly defined, who is treated as the mainstream and who is not is contingent on a specific country at a particular point in time (Matasaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 11).

² First generation immigrants are immigrants who were born in one country and relocated to another. Second generation immigrants are children of the first generation immigrants. Third generation immigrants are grandchildren of the first generation immigrants. 1.5 generation immigrants are those who arrived to the destination country before the age of fourteen (Lu, 2011, p. 10). Depending on numerous factors, such as the age of immigration, the places of origin, the extent of education received before immigration, 1.5 generation immigrants’ senses of belonging and community to the country of settlement and the home country vary from individual to individual.
2.1. The Roles of Diasporic Media

Based on the definition of diasporic media outlined in contrast to that of mainstream media, and drawing upon literature, this section summarizes the roles specific to diasporic media in response to the needs and concerns of the diasporic audiences. The three main roles of diasporic media are: to reflect and transform ethnic identities of the target community; facilitate their settlement processes; and act as community advocates (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 15-6, 238-9). These roles are to a certain extent interrelated, as illustrated below.

2.1.1. Reflect and Transform Ethnic Identities

Diasporic media function to reflect and construct the ethnic identity and the culture of the community they are targeting (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 15, 65). This paper understands one’s ethnic identity to be constructed dialectically as a result of dynamic processes of interaction and communication with people who identify themselves as the same and different ethnic identity. Following the Hegelian logic of identity construction and the notion of intersubjectivity, one’s identity is constantly developed in relations with others and self. Although the definition of ‘ethnic identity’ is clearly defined, what constitutes one’s ethnic identity is nevertheless an ongoing social process. One’s identity is always evolving and subject to change in time and space.

The ethnic identity of many immigrants has changed and evolved as they immigrate and settle in a new country. They have developed transnational, hyphenated and/or hybrid identities, as they have lived in more than one culture and are raised in a mixed cultural environment. Transnational identities refer to an ethnic identity that has moved beyond the national boundary of a single country. Chinese populations residing outside China might have developed transnational identities that go beyond the national boundary of their country of residence and bridge back to their country of origin, for instance Mainland China. Hyphenated identities refer to two or more distinct ethnic identities a person has experienced and lived in. These multiple identities intersect within a single person (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 72). For instance, a Chinese descendant living in Canada may self-identify as a Chinese-Canadian who lives at the
intersection or “on the hyphen” (Perez-Firmat, 1994) between being a Chinese and a Canadian. Hybrid identities (Gilroy, 1993; Sandercock, 2003) refer to the mixing and synthesis of two or more identities, typically at least one from the ancestral country and another one from the country of settlement. The synthesized identity is something new that is not recognizably of any culture. It transcends the differences of those cultures that are synthesized. Following the logics of dialectics – through the meeting and fusion of two or more different cultures – a new, unique and hybridized identity is created.

One way in which immigrants’ identities are materialized is through the production of newscasts and other cultural programs. For instance, one typical way of reflecting these transnational, hyphenated and hybrid identities in diasporic media is to cover news from “here” (i.e., the country of settlement) and “there” (i.e., the country of origin). Adoni, Caspi, and Cohen’s book on *Media, Minorities and Hybrid* (2006) argues that diasporic media serve dual functions – orientation function and connective function. News reports in diasporic media *orient* the new comers “here” in their new community and country; and they *connect* immigrants to news and events happening “there” in their places of origin. In a larger sense, diasporic media serve as a carrier of the local culture and the culture of their places of origin.

Despite reflecting the ethnic identities of the target audience, diasporic media have the capacity to transform their identity by framing news from “here” (see Section 4.1.1. for examples of how identities of audience can be constructed and transformed). This transformative capacity could be leveraged to raise transcultural awareness in journalism which is discussed further in Chapter 5. Mainstream media, on the contrary, show less cultural sensitivity to the ongoing shifts in ethnic identities of the mainstream society, not to mention ethnic minorities themselves (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 15).

### 2.1.2. Facilitate Settlement Processes

Within the orientation function, diasporic media act as facilitators to assist immigrants’ processes of settlement and integration, by orienting them with their new community and resources (Murray, 2008, p. 63). For example, diaporic broadcasting may discuss the education systems, specifically, ways to enroll children in school (Valdés,
1996); banking and finance; health care service (Wilkin & Ball-Rokeach, 2006), particularly how to submit claims to insurance companies; job market; rights as a citizens, permanent residents, or temporary residents; and so on. They often have community calendars which list the time and venue of local events, cultural festivals, recreational activities and community meetings held by various hometown associations and religious organizations (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 58, 63). Diasporic media, accordingly, provide a one-stop access to a wide range of information useful for immigrants to ease their settlement processes, and to help them feel more socially connected, engaged and established in the local community.

Matsaganis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach (2011) further argue that diasporic media can be cultural ‘teachers’ to teach them social values of the settlement country, more subtle rules about socially acceptable behaviours, ways to communicate, and so on (pp. 15, 58). However, being ‘teachers’ can be patronizing as it implies a ‘melting pot’ model of multiculturalism where people are expected to assimilate, instead of being integrated respectfully into the new community. It assumes that certain socially acceptable behaviours can be well defined and should be followed. It also suggests that certain institutions in society have the credentials to ‘advise’ immigrants on which cultural practices to follow and which to abandon; and which social values to acquire and which to give up. In addition, it implies a self-denial of the past and the cultural traditions these immigrants had been practicing (Mohanty & Martin, 2003), and denies the integrative approach as more appropriate in terms of respectful encounter of different cultures.

Power relations entailed in these programs are often ignored and underplayed. A cultural hierarchy may be perpetuated, with an implication that the dominant culture in society occupies a higher status; leaving the rest as lower ‘class.’ These programs are highly dangerous, not only because it impedes an egalitarian mode of communication between ethnic groups and runs counter to the vision of living across differences, but also because it contradicts the Hegelian notions of intersubjectivity and dialectic transformation of an ethnic identity (Husband, 1994; Kymlicka, 1995). The Hegelian notions of intersubjectivity and dialectics encourage members of society to interact with each other for constructing and transforming one’s and others’ identities. However, with ‘teachers’ denouncing what is right or wrong, exchanges between members of society will be
inhibited, hindering the development and the transformation of the identities of all members in society.

Hence, care must be taken in the production of these ‘educational’ programs. Whether diasporic media should produce programs to ‘educate’ new immigrants has to be thought through carefully. Editorial stance involves deliberations and reflections on the hidden agendas and potential implications to society built right into these programs (Kong, 2014, p. 37).

2.1.3. Act as Community Advocates

Within the informative function, diasporic media function as community leaders to connect immigrants with similar interests and experiences, and raise awareness about issues not addressed in the mainstream media but of significant importance to the ethnic community (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 17, 63). They often act as mobilizing forces and community advocates to raise awareness among ethnic communities on issues, such as immigration reform, education reform, citizenship rights, and the role of diaspora in economy and society more broadly (Kong, 2014, p. 32; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 16-7, 62-3). Their awareness does not only initiate discussions among the diaspora, but could also set political agendas in the wider community including people in the mainstream society.

Besides, diasporic media are proactive in negotiating minority-majority or minority-dominant group relations (Riggins, 1992). They inform the audience about the past and present relationship between the ethnic community and the mainstream society, facilitate discussions and debates for the ethnic community to gain a better understanding of social issues, and explore options for a best course of action for mitigation and resolution (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 16). By empowering ethnic minorities to discuss public issues which concern them, diasporic media acknowledge that the boundary between the majority and the minority is fluid and can be negotiated, challenged and contested. Contingent on specific time and space, the border between them shifts. Ethnic identities are constructed dialectically under the notion of intersubjectivity. That means one’s identity can never be constructed and interpreted in one’s own terms, but
through engagements and interruptions of others with the sense of self (Fraser, 2000, p. 112; Georgiou, 2005, p. 487). Through negotiations and interactions, identities of the minorities could influence the majority, and vice versa. Hence, diasporic media’s mandate to negotiate minority-majority group relations could challenge and fracture dichotomies such as majority/minority and mainstream/non-mainstream.

2.2. Diasporic Media and the “Regime of Objectivity”

Diasporic media have long been overlooked in media studies due to their primary emphasis on mainstream media (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011; Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007; Thomas, 1992). Yet, the study of diasporic media has never been more pressing than today for the following two reasons. Firstly, since the demography of our cities has become increasingly multicultural and heterogeneous, there is an urgent need for capturing the plurality in media and responding to the needs and concerns of these populations which have historically been marginalized. Secondly, the study of diasporic media can illuminate new possible insights into journalistic practices to understand how identities are constructed and transformed, and how audiences’ transcultural awareness could be raised. Apart from capturing the increasingly multiethnic demography, these new insights can be effective in responding to the market demand, and posing challenges to the notion of segregation associated with diasporic media and the “regime of objectivity” that has long been the standard of professionalism in journalism.

2.2.1. How Is the “Regime of Objectivity” Fractured?

Due to diasporic media’s commitment to the ethnic community, these media have demonstrated an allegiance to the group they serve (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 462). This allegiance has, to a certain extent, enabled diasporic media to fracture the defensive carapace of ‘professionalism’ in journalism, namely the “regime of objectivity” (Hackett & Zhao, 1996; Hackett & Zhao, 1997; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 236-41). The “regime of objectivity,” according to Hackett and Zhao’s Journalistic objectivity and social change (1996), refers to objective reporting journalists are expected to comply with as the professional standard in journalism. Objective reporting is viewed “to allow citizens
to make independent and rational decisions” based on the provision of factual and impartial information by the news media (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 5). Due to diasporic media’s commitment and allegiance to their intended ethnic community, news in diasporic media is not only presented as facts, but is also framed and interpreted in ways which make sense to the community they are serving that can orient new comers and facilitate their settlement processes (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 236). This way of framing news is perceived to be more socially responsible by some scholars (Bates, 1995; Blanchard, 1977).

News objectivity has been called into question of its adequacy as a model for democratic communication since the 1970s (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 5; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 236). Media inevitably and inescapably make choices “over which events to report, sources to quote, language to describe, and frames to interpret in the daily routines of news reporting” (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 5). As these choices are made, consciously or otherwise, there is no point to strive for objectivity in journalism because it is practicably not feasible.

The failure of objective reporting does not lie only in the false claims media intend to achieve, but in the values by which these judgements are directed. These values are mostly profit-driven in the context of a highly commercialized and corporatized media environment (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 5). Consequently, programs and newscasts produced are geared toward the more affluent consumers. Interests of the genuinely poor, historically suppressed and contemporarily marginalized – for instance the ethnic minority – are usually ignored in objective reporting. Based on the underrepresentation of the ethnic minorities in mainstream media, diasporic media have emerged to make sure voices of the marginalized are heard. Interests of the minority ethnic groups are thus taken into account in diasporic broadcasting. To achieve this end, some diasporic media journalists have even questioned the boundary of objectivity reporting to challenge the norm and “the common perception about what is in the best interest of the country [one] lives in and works,” with respect to the interests of the intended ethnic community (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 237). While mainstream media professionals have unknowingly incorporated certain predominant societal perceptions – such as
ethnocentrism and individualism – in their news discourse, diasporic media professionals, according to Charles Husband (2005, p. 466), have reflexively challenged these values.

Diasporic media have further fractured the “regime of objectivity” by constantly negotiating their ethnic identity, the interest of the community they serve and that of the country they live in simultaneously (Husband, 2005, p. 462, 467; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 237). Since these interests do not always perfectly aligned, diasporic media journalists need to negotiate these interests in the daily routines of news framing. Unlike the case for the mainstream media professionals, they can easily render their own ethnicity and the community they target “invisible and unknowable,” portraying a sense of false objectivity (Husband, 2005, p. 467). As compared to mainstream media professionals, the ethnic identity of many diasporic media professionals is a routinely salient facet of their professional practice. The quest to be emotionally and physically detached from the ethnic community is almost impossible for them (Husband, 2005, p. 476). In other words, this so-called ‘professionalism’ which requires a segmentation of professional self from social self is fundamentally alien to diasporic media professionals’ personal ethnic identity and their commitment to the community (Husband, 2005, p. 473). Their professional practice may seem to generate a contradictory consciousness with journalists’ obligation to objective reporting. Therefore, to fully enable diasporic media to fulfil the social responsibility, perhaps the development and the conceptualization of a new regime is needed to replace the “regime of objectivity” (Husband, 2005, p. 473; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 237).

2.2.2. How Is the “Regime of Objectivity” Not Fractured?

There are certain aspects in the “regime of objectivity” which diasporic media have yet to fracture. Objective reporting favours “the (apparently) equal, balanced presentation of ‘both sides’ of an issue” (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 6). This way of framing simplifies complex issues to a for-or-against, a zero-sum game, or an either-or format (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 6; McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000). News are also framed in a closed space and close time; causes and exits are discussed in a specific spatial and temporal circumstances, undermining the causes and outcomes happened beyond the specific spatial and temporal boundaries (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). News pays little, if any,
attention to the history and culture embedded, ignoring the real dynamic and historical relationship between cultures. In the context of dynamic and dialectic transcultural interaction and communication, such a so-called ‘objective’ broadcasting does not only impede respectful interaction between members of a society, but in instances which involve racial confrontations and construction of ethnic identities, the relationship between different cultures and ethnicities may be unnecessarily and drastically simplified, essentialized, homogenized and even stereotyped. Instead of encouraging transcultural communication, it encourages separatisim and intolerance to differences and heterogeneity. This can be accelerated by the over-commitment of to the intended ethnic community and cause the problem of reification of group identity, as will be discussed more extensively later in this Chapter.

Objective reporting also serves to perpetuate undemocratic power relations unwittingly (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 5). It perpetuates existing power relations by drawing upon dominant social leaders and established officials as legitimate sources of public issues. The dominant, the established, the powerful and the voices of the elite are privileged as “primary definers” of public issues to define the limits of public debate (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 6). By stressing the dissemination of ‘facts’ from officials and expert opinions to their audience, voices deviated from them are basically ignored and even problematized. Broadcasting practice in diasporic media also tends to adhere to dominant political party leaders, established officials, experts and elite sources as sources to define the boundary of public issues among the ethnic community. It draws upon community leaders among the ethnic groups to present their comments and opinions. These leaders though may not have the chance to share their views on mainstream media perhaps for the ethnic origins or backgrounds, they are often invited by the diasporic media to share their opinions for their political and social sensitivity and their language proficiency in the language of broadcasting. Although these opinions are presented as if personal opinions, commentators with the ‘knowledge’ are privileged, diverting general audiences from formulating their own ideas and having discussions “as primary vehicles of democratic communication” (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, p. 9).

Furthermore, questionable values that instead should be subjected to critical examination is promoted and naturalized. These values are embedded in the liberal
assumption of the duality between public and private, which has directed media to act as a public ‘watchdog’ towards the government. However, under the heavily commercialized media context, its ‘watchdog’ role should also be extended to the private sectors, such as global mega-corporations, financial institutions, and even themselves as embedded in the financial structure (Hackett & Zhao, 1996, pp. 8-9). Stimulated by the lack of public funding for diasporic media, economic sustainability has become one of the key criteria for survival. As advertisers began to see advertising and investing opportunities in diasporic media, diasporic media, for the sake of survival, have also disproportionately framed news and produced cultural programs which are more appealing to the affluent diaspora and immigrants, further marginalizing the poor within the ethnic minorities (Husband, 2005, p. 467). The duality of public and private might have obscured media, including diasporic media, from acting as a ‘private’ watchdog which is pivotal in today’s highly corporatized society.

Even though diasporic broadcasting has fractured the “regime of objectivity” to a certain extent, it has not profoundly challenged the regime, yet created a series of problems. One of the biggest problems is caused by their commitment to show positive recognition of and to advocate for the intended ethnic community. This commitment can accordingly be seen as a double-edged sword. While diasporic media’s allegiance helps to fracture the “regime of objectivity,” an in-group orientation in diasporic broadcasting is resulted (Ball-Rokeach & Lin, 2004; Lin & Song, 2006; Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007). Such an orientation tends to direct diasporic broadcasting to pay little, if any, attention to the coexistence of other ethnic groups in an increasingly multicultural context. Reifying their group identities takes priority over reflecting cities’ plurality and diversity. The misrecognition of others has not only reinforced segregation between groups, and ignored the power relations embedded in its in-group orientation, but also, and most importantly, impeded trans-cultural communication across and within groups (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007).

2.3. The Problem of Reification

As ethnic communities have become more vocal about their group identity, they tend to reinforce the “we-ness” and struggle for the recognition of difference of the
intended audience (Murray, 2008, p. 63; Fraser, 2000, p. 107). Diasporic media tends to produce newscasts and cultural programs that simply connect to the ethnic identity the audience self-identifies with. For example, most of the Chinese programs on OMNI TV connect to shared experiences and cultures of Chinese descendants or Chinese-Canadians, as reported by the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV (Kong, 2014). These programs do not encourage the audience to connect to other ethnic groups to develop a much broader sense of community. Furthermore, events shown in the community calendar often centre on those organized by and for the particular ethnic audience. Although this could create a sense of community and solidarity among the groups and help immigrants to better connect with people with similar experiences and backgrounds, studies show that diasporic broadcasting covers little about other ethnic groups (Murray, 2008, p. 64; Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007). The “we-ness” and in-group orientation may lower the incentives of diasporic media to produce programs which expand audiences’ compass to include others (Murray, 2008, p. 64). This programming inevitably strengthens the walls of ethnic enclaves, encourages separatism and segregation among different groups, and creates what Nancy Fraser (2000, p. 108) calls “the problem of reification.”

According to Fraser (2000, p. 112), reification of an identity stresses the need to elaborate and display an authentic, self-affirming and self-generated collective identity, it puts moral pressure on individual members to conform to a given group culture. Cultural dissidence and experimentation are accordingly discouraged […] the tendency […] is to brand such critique as ‘inauthentic.’ The overall effect is to impose a single, drastically simplified group-identity which denies the complexity of people’s lives, the multiplicity of their identifications and the cross-pulls of their various affiliations.

Reification of identity believes that an identity can solely be constructed by oneself and cannot be transformed through interactions with others. While it impedes communication between different individuals, it denies the need for dialectical and dynamic processes of encounters with others for identity construction and transformation. It, as a result, encourages separatism and segregation from others. Moreover, reification of group identity denies the heterogeneity exhibited within the groups, which is fractured by age, gender, class, and political affiliation (Fraser, 2000, p. 112; Husband, 2005, pp. 463, 468-9). This may suppress and conflate the diversity which might otherwise be flourished and
developed within the group. Worse still, group members may compete for the dominant culture, claiming which traditions ‘truly’ represent the ‘authentic’ identity. Intolerance of deviation within groups could be encouraged. Reifying group identity could ironically end by “obscuring the politics of cultural identification, the struggles within the group for the authority – and the power – to represent it” (Fraser, 2000, p. 112).

The word ‘essentialism’ shares similar ideas with the term ‘reification.’ They both regard identities as being stable entities using a reductionist approach, rejecting one’s identity could be transformed dialectically. Yet, their emphasis is different. ‘Reification’ refers to the reduction of an identity solely on one’s own (Fraser, 2000, p. 112), whereas an essentialist approach stresses how others reduce and simplify one’s culture into certain essential characteristics (Essentialism, 2001). The emphasis of ‘reification’ is on the self, while ‘essentialism’ is primarily on others. Owing to the differences in emphasis, the problem of reification is more applicable in describing the in-group orientation exhibited by diasporic media, since they incline to self-struggle for recognition of difference. In the process of emphasizing we-ness, diasporic media have a propensity to underline and reduce the uniqueness and distinctiveness of their own community rather than other ethnic communities.

To go beyond the problem of reifying differences, diasporic media have to rethink its role in dealing with differences and facilitating the coexistence of others who have different cultural backgrounds (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 15), so that people could live alongside others, learn from each other, and create new worlds collectively (Sandercock, 2003, p. 1), rather than strengthening the invisible walls of cultural enclaves.

2.4. The Overlooked Role of Diasporic Media

The current roles taken up by diasporic media have, to a certain degree, responded to the needs and concerns of their audience and have begun to fracture the “regime of objectivity” in journalism. Diasporic media have also problematized dichotomies such as majority/minority and mainstream/non-mainstream. However, the “problem of reification” remains overlooked. To remedy the situation, diasporic media
should begin to realize the importance of fostering transcultural communication across and within different ethnic groups as one of their key roles.

What is transcultural communication? According to Chakravartty and Zhao (2008), the term ‘transcultural’ can be divided into two parts. ‘Trans’ denotes transformation where changes of self and others can happen dialectically and dialogically. It rejects changes under the notions of imperialism, domination and subordination. ‘Cultural’ refers to cultivation and nurturing of a culture. By combining these two parts, ‘transcultural’ can be understood as ‘transculturation’ where “new social and cultural forms, styles or practices” are cultivated and nurtured through interactions and encounters of two or more cultures (Chakravartty & Zhao, 2008, p. 12). Although this form of encounter recognizes the political relations, specifically the unequal encounter, between the cultures – colonial and colonized, dominant and the suppressed – it believes that the underprivileged or the disadvantaged is not always the repressed (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 40; Chan & Ma, 2002); changes and, more accurately, transformations could happen to challenge and upset the unequal relationship.

Against arguments about categorical thinking about groupism, collectivism, and individualism, the transcultural approach demands a relational thinking that captures dynamic and dialectic historically processes of interactions and transformations. Relationships between cultures are mutually constitutive instead of one dominating another. Moreover, transcultural approaches do not equivalent to transculturalism. It is because the word ‘transculturalism’ would lock the transcultural relationship to a static and fixed relation rather than allowing mutual and dialectic interactions between cultures. Thus the adjective ‘transcultural’ is used for capturing the ongoing processes of fluid and dynamic encounters, instead of a noun denoting it as a doctrine.

Through transcultural journalism, i.e., the facilitation of the interaction and encounter of different cultures in media, this paper hopes to build what Benedict Anderson (1983) calls “imagined communities.” People in the “imagined communities” will have a much broader sense of community, which is wider than the community they racially belong to. The notion of “imagined communities” resonates with the model Iris Marion Young (2000) conceptualizes – of a “heterogeneous public” (pp. 12, 222). While members of the
“heterogeneous public” preserve and develop their own ethnic identities and cultures, they are encouraged to commit to a larger political order.

The notions of “imagined communities” and “heterogeneous public” are also consonant with what Will Kymlicka (2007) phrases as the “feelings of shared citizenship” (p. 33). This sense of “shared citizenship”
go beyond the sharing of citizenship in the formal legal sense (that is, a common passport) to include such things as: feelings of solidarity with co-citizens, and hence a willingness to listen to their claims, to respect their rights and to make sacrifices for them; feelings of trust in public institutions, and hence a willingness to comply with them (pay taxes, cooperate with police); feelings of democratic responsibility, and hence a willingness to monitor the behavior of the political elites who act in our name and hold them accountable; and feelings of belonging to a community of fate (that is, of sharing a political community) (p. 33).

People in this “imagined communities” or “heterogeneous public” will gradually develop “feelings of shared citizenship” with people of various ethnic backgrounds. They will develop Hollinger’s (1995) ideal of a postethnic identity which “prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiples identities, pushes for communities of wide scope, recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups, and accepts the formation of new groups as a part of the normal life of a democratic society” (p. 116). The construction of a postethnic identity can result in the “(re)invention of shared identity and community,” as argued by Geogious (2005, p. 483). People will develop what Brubaker calls (2002) “ethnicity without groups” that goes beyond “groupism” to respect the fluidity of ethnicity, race, and nation. Ethnicity, race and nation would be treated

not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events. It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization and nationalization as political, social, cultural and psychological processes (p. 167).

This sense of wider community, though imaginary, can lead to real social changes (Georgiou, 2005, p. 483). Building upon Martin and Nakayama’s (2007) framework of how an ethnic identity is developed, people in the “imagined communities” will have a feeling of belonging to the wider community from an affective dimension, and have the knowledge about members of other ethnic groups from a cognitive dimension. By creating media
forums that facilitate discussions about issues that encourage participants to extend their care and love to other ethnic communities, concrete actions could be converted to provide actual help to a wider community.

The problem of the “regime of objectivity” and “the problem of reification” in diasporic media outlined in this chapter reveal and identify a potential demand for enhancing transcultural communication in journalism. This form of communication includes out-group and in-group directions, which will be conceptualized as the regime of intersubjectivity later in this paper (see Chapter 5) to replace the “regime of objectivity.” There are four reasons why transcultural communication is more appropriate than following the “regime of objectivity” for diasporic media journalists. Firstly, as discussed in Section 2.2.1., a separation of professional self from social self is profoundly alien to diasporic media professionals. It is practically impossible to segregate their personal ethnic identity and their commitment to the community (Husband, 2005, p. 473). To fulfil their social responsibility as diasporic media journalists, they should probably abandon their compliance to objective reporting. Secondly, the transcultural approach allows diasporic media professionals to cultivate, nurture and transform ethnic identities of their intended audience to extend their love and care to others and avoid the problem of refrying group identity (Chakravartty & Zhao, 2008, p. 12). People will be able to stretch themselves to include others, expand the compass of their interests, and move beyond their parochial life experience (Barber, 1998, pp. 111-2). This form of identity construction also meets the Hegelian premises of dialectic construction of identity and intersubjectivity. Thirdly, this transcultural approach can effectively capture the diversity and plurality in response to the increasingly multiethnic demography in society (see Section 3.3). Fourthly and finally, this approach can address the market demand for more transcultural components in diasporic programming, as is requested by diasporic audiences (see Chapter 4).

The next chapter will position a need for affirmative obligation to produce programs which foster transcultural communication in journalism based on an analysis of the state’s policies regarding ethnic minorities, regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services in Canada and the ethnic composition in the context of Greater Vancouver.
Chapter 3.

Contextualization in Greater Vancouver, Canada

There are three major aspects that shape a diasporic media environment. They are state policies towards ethnic minorities, regulatory media frameworks, and market demand from an influx of new immigrants (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 45-6). The following briefly contextualizes the above three aspects in the Greater Vancouver, Canada, which will be helpful for contextualizing the discussions in Chapter 4. This chapter's analysis takes into account of the Multiculturalism policy of 1971, the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 and legislative changes in broadcasting policy since the mid-1980s to shed light on the need for more transcultural components in diasporic media in the context of Greater Vancouver. Based on the Census data of 1986 to 2011, and a study on projections of the diversity of the Canadian population conducted in 2006, this chapter confirms the increasingly multiethnic demography and signals the need for fostering transcultural communication in journalism.

3.1. State's Policies towards Ethnic Minorities

The announcement of the policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework in 1971 “affirmed the value and dignity of all Canadian citizens regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, their language, or their religious affiliation,” as well as the status of English and French as the two official languages (Government of Canada, 2012). This framework is consistent with the Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s announcement made to the House of Commons on October 8, 1971. Trudeau proclaimed that, “for although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly” (House of Commons, 1971). The policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework affirms to treat all individuals equally while recognizing English and French as the official languages. Given the close relationship between a language and a culture, there seems to be a disconnection between bilingualism and multiculturalism. This disconnection has implicitly privileged biculturalism under the guise of
multiculturalism. This Policy has reinforced the cultural hierarchy within the Canadian context and has consolidated a model of what John Porter (1965) calls a “vertical mosaic.”

The Government of Canada has conceptualized multiculturalism in the Canadian context as a mosaic, as a disapproval to the ‘melting-pot’ concept in the United States (Haque, 2012; Porter, 1965). However, through his study on Canadian citizens’ income, occupation and education, Porter (1965) reveals that social policies worked to the advantage of some ethnic groups (i.e., those of British origin, followed by French origin), and to the disadvantage of those of other European origins, then followed by other ethnic origins. He thus conveys that Canada is a mosaic of different ethnic groups with unequal status and power. This hierarchical arrangement is conceptualized as the “vertical mosaic” which has in some ways explained the disconnection between bilingualism and multiculturalism found in the policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework of 1971.

Reflecting on the multiculturalism policy of 1971, the English and French cultures are seen to occupy a higher status in the “vertical mosaic;” leaving the rest perceived as the lower ‘class.’ Eve Haque (2012), using a genealogical approach, further argues that the multiculturalism policy indeed has little to disrupt the agenda of the Royal Commission and the original bilingual and bicultural formulation of the white settler nation because the multiculturalism policy was developed from the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (see Haque, 2012). Referring back to the discussions in Section 2.1.2. about the problem of diasporic media being ‘teachers’, diasporic media should avoid any implications or reinforcement of the “vertical mosaic” when producing ‘educational’ programs in the context of Canada. Care must be taken for the potential patronizing nature.

In addition to the reinforcement of the “vertical mosaic,” Trudeau’s announcement has gestured at reifying group differences and identities. Trudeau proclaimed that,

National unity if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one’s own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence (House of Commons, 1971).
Although the announcement shows some resonance with the notions of “imagined communities,” “heterogeneous public” and “shared citizenship,” it suggests that the sense of a wider community is developed from one’s confidence of his/her identity. The policy narrowly assists the creation of the initial confidence, with no mention of how ideas, attitudes and assumptions could be shared nor how love and care could be extended to a broader society. Moreover, respect for others who are different and the willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions are developed on the basis of reification of one’s identity. This individualistic approach of identity construction fundamentally rejects the Hegelian notions of intersubjectivity and the dialectical construction of an ethnic identity through dynamic processes of in-group and out-group transcultural communication. In short, despite perpetuating the “vertical mosaic,” the multiculturalism policy encourages ethnic groups to emphasize their group difference, strengthening ethnic silos.

The announcement of the official status of multiculturalism as a part of the Canadian constitution in the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 was an attempt to go beyond the reification of differences and promote sincere and dialectic interactions across different ethnicities. As section 3(1)(g) states, the Act “is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to promote the understanding and creativity that arise from the interaction between individuals and communities of different origins” (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988). This line of thought has demonstrated the government’s intent to promote transcultural communication among Canadians. Yet, when compared with the role of the government in enacting bilingualism in the Official Languages Act (Justice Laws Website, 1985), few, if any, concrete actions and efforts are put into enforcing and monitoring multiculturalism. Relatively vague wordings, such as promote (ten times), assist (seven times), encourage (six times) and enhance (six times), are used throughout the Act (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988).

Despite the recognition of the plurality in cultures in the Multiculturalism Policy of 1971 and the Multiculturalism Act of 1988, the federal government has not taken any substantial responsibility to promote communication across different ethnic groups. Federal funding allocated through provincial governments, to local non-governmental settlement service agencies to serve legal immigrants is limited to social services. Very few, if any, advocacy groups receive federal funding to advocate the rights of the
immigrants or to promote transcultural communication across different ethnic groups (Yu, 2012, p. 43). Furthermore, many of the settlement service agencies are dedicated to facilitate the settlement processes of a particular ethnic community, instead of the integration of multiple groups, further strengthening the ethnic enclaves.

3.2. Regulatory Frameworks for Broadcasting Services

In spite of the ineffectiveness of enacting the ideal of multiculturalism, the Government of Canada’s commitment to multiculturalism and the recognition to the cultural and ethnic diversity in Canada have been translated and materialized to set directives for ethnic broadcasting (Thomas, 1992, para. 34; Yu, 2012, p. 23). These directives have played a key part in regulating broadcasting services in Canada. These regulatory directives could be analyzed in two chronological stages. In an earlier stage, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) set policy guidelines in broadcasting to raise the awareness of the co-existence of other ethnic group members in Canadian society and the need to capture the diversity, as reflected in the Public Notice 1985-139 and the Broadcasting Act of 1991. Later, it set out frameworks to make sure the portrayal of all minority groups is accurate, fair and non-stereotypical, as reflected in the Public Notice 1999-97 and the Equitable Portrayal Code (Public Notice 2008-23). However, the most pressing questions in today’s multicultural societies – such as, how to deal with differences? How to live across difference and co-exist with others? – remain unanswered and unaddressed.

CRTC identified the need to represent the cultural and linguistic plurality through the development of broadcasting services in the 1980s. A Broadcasting Policy Reflecting Canada’s Linguistic and Cultural Diversity of 1985 was thus come into effect. It acknowledged that Canadians represented “a diversity of cultures, religions, races and ethnic origins,” and the Canadian society was “ethnically and linguistically diverse” (Archived - Public Notice 1985-139). Building on this policy, the Broadcasting Act of 1991 (CRTC, 1991), which remains in effect today, outlines the duty of the Canadian broadcasting system. According to section 3(1)(d)(iii), the Canadian broadcasting system should:
through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations, of Canadian men, women, children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal people within that society (Broadcasting Act, 1991).

Hence, the Public Notice 1985-139 and the Broadcasting Act of 1991 have clearly reflected CRTC’s determination to reflect the diversity of Canadian society.

In addition to CRTC’s commitment to reflect the plurality across the country, the Public Notice 1999-97 made specific commitments to initiatives designed to prevent stereotyping and inaccurate depiction of ethnicity. Back in 1985, the CRTC was unwilling to devote resources to prevent negative depiction, even though concerns were raised by the public. It stated that it did not have “the resources nor the legislative mandate to closely and consistently monitor all on-air programming” (Archived - Public Notice 1985-139). The shift of CRTC’s mandate has directed it to ensure the representation and portrayal of all cultural and racial minorities was “accurate, fair and non-stereotypical” in 1997 (Archived - Public Notice 1997-97, para. 114). The Commission understood that “without accurate and sensitive portrayal, programming [would run] the risk of stereotypical representation” (Archived - Public Notice 1997-97, para. 121). CRTC has consequently approved the Equitable Portrayal Code in 2008 (Public Notice 2008-23) to set out standards for portrayals of visible minorities to avoid stereotyping, negative or inaccurate portrayal, stigmatization, victimization and the use of inappropriate language. The Code clearly states that broadcasters should ensure that their programming contains no stereotyping, negative or inaccurate portrayal, stigmatization, victimization and the use of inappropriate language based on matters such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, and religions. This Code remains in effect today.

From capturing the diversity, to setting guidelines to prevent stereotyping and negative or inaccurate reporting, the CRTC has not been aware of the role of the Canadian Broadcasting system in fostering transcultural communication and in encouraging ethnic identities to be constructed and transformed dialectically through dynamic processes of interactions. The closest directive which enhances transcultural communication is stated in the Ethnic Broadcasting Policy (Public Notice 1999-117), which remains applicable
today. Building on the section 3(1)(d)(iii) of the Broadcasting Act of 1991, as quoted above, the Ethnic Broadcasting Policy encourages broadcasters to promote full participation of all people in Canadian society to foster opportunities for greater “cross-cultural understanding” (Public Notice 1999-117, para. 5, 10, 21, 70).

Yet, the Ethnic Broadcasting Policy has not elaborated what “cross-cultural understanding” entails. The phrase seems to suggest that the Canadian culture is composed of different cultures which exist side by side (Bennett, 2001, p. 22; Murray, 2009, p. 678). This understanding may reinforce separatism, segregation and intolerance. The phrase also ignores the possibility of developing one’s identity through the dynamic processes of the intersections and inter-mixings, repudiating the Hegelian thought of intersubjectivity and the dialectic notion of identity construction. Promoting understanding across differences is important, yet insufficient to nurture a wider sense of community. Thus, this paper calls for an establishment of a more radical view of multiculturalism to treat differences as the core elements for developing one’s sense of community transculturally, and to avoid the reification of an identity.

In a larger sense, the analysis of the state policies towards ethnic minorities and the regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services in Canada has confirmed the problem of reinforcing the dominant cultures in the Canadian context and that of reification of ethnic identity in journalism (Murray, 2008, p. 64). These policies have overlooked the affirmative obligation of the Canadian broadcasting system to act as facilitators for transcultural communication, and to address some of the most pressing questions in today’s increasingly multicultural societies. Some scholars (Murray, 2009, p. 677) suggest that, instead of a self-monitoring and self-regulatory system, either an independent institute separated from CRTC or a new arm’s-length public institution can be established to provide effective media monitoring in Canada. This media-monitoring institution should centrally involve “representatives from [CRTC], independent citizens, creators, academics, policymakers, and a wide range of disinterested industry stakeholders” to formulate regulations to forge effective transcultural dialogue in Canadian TV (Murray, 2009, p. 693). As Murray (2009, p. 694) puts it most simply, “links to academics, unions, professional groups, industry bodies, and other civil society organization are needed to
broaden the lobby for change to the current system of closed self-regulation of media standards in this country.”

The analysis on state’s policies towards ethnic minorities and regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services in Canada has qualified the need for more transcultural components in media to avoid the reification of group identity. The following section confirms how progressively multiethnic Greater Vancouver has been and will be – based on the Census data from 1986 to 2011 and a study on projections – to signal an urgent need for transcultural journalism.

3.3. Demography

The increasingly multicultural and multiethnic demography in Greater Vancouver has shaped the need for the diasporic media to represent the diversity and plurality in the metropolitan area. In spite of their role in capturing the ethnic identity of the intended audience, diasporic media also have the responsibility to foster the transcultural communication across and within the group, as argued in Chapter 2.

The population in Greater Vancouver has become increasingly diverse since 1986. The year of 1986 was a pivotal year because of the Expo ‘86. Many investors from overseas have begun to invest in Greater Vancouver since then. For instance, Li Ka Shing, a big investor from Hong Kong, started to expand his business to Vancouver in 1986. In addition, many people from Hong Kong and Mainland China immigrated to Greater Vancouver because of the political instability in the late 1980s and to pursue a better lifestyle. Therefore, the Chinese population in British Columbia increased most significantly among other ethnic origins between 1986 and 1991, in terms of both absolute number (+68,580) and percentage change (+60.9%). The following table (Table 3.1.) shows the top ten single response ethnic origins for BC in 1986 and 1991 Census, with the numbers for the Chinese population shaded.
Table 3.1. **Top Ten Single Response Ethnic Origins for BC, 1986 and 1991 Census**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origins</th>
<th>1986 Census</th>
<th>1991 Census</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>2,849,585</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3,247,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Response</td>
<td>1,759,810</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>1,952,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>112,605</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>181,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Indian</td>
<td>60,045</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>89,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>61,125</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>74,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>48,195</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>52,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>62,945</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>66,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>148,280</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>156,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>20,065</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>21,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>46,755</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>49,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>68,965</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>68,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>871,075</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>812,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>60,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Response</td>
<td>1,089,775</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>1,294,650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Note:** Data for “Canadian” in 1986 is not available as it was not one of the top ten single responses in 1986 Census. Although data for “Norwegian” in 1991 is available, “Norwegian” was not one of the top ten single responses in 1991 Census. The number for “Norwegian” is shown in the table for comparison purpose only.

As many people reported as “Canadian” as their ethnic origin in 1991 (Statistics Canada, 1998), a new question was introduced in 1996 Census to measure the visible minority population more directly (Statistics Canada, 2006b). According to the **Employment Equity Act**, visible minorities are defined as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Justice Laws Website, 1995). They include Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, Visible minority, not included elsewhere (n.i.e.), and Multiple visible minority.
Table 3.2. Visible Minorities for Greater Vancouver, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visible Minorities</th>
<th>1996 Census</th>
<th>2001 Census</th>
<th>2006 Census</th>
<th>2011 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>1,831,665</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1,967,475</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Visible Minorities</td>
<td>564,600</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>725,660</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>279,040</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>342,665</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>120,140</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>164,365</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>40,710</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>57,030</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>21,880</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>24,025</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>20,370</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>28,465</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16,400</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>18,405</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab/West Asian</td>
<td>18,155</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>5,905</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Asian</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>21,430</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>17,085</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>28,845</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American</td>
<td>13,830</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>18,715</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visible minority, n.i.e.</td>
<td>6,775</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3,320</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Response</td>
<td>10,210</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>12,495</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a Visible Minority</td>
<td>1,267,065</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>1,241,815</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Random rounding and percentage distributions: To ensure the confidentiality of responses collected for the Census in years of 1996 (Statistic Canada, 1996, p. 357), 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2001, p. 295), 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006a, para. 4), and 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2011), while maintaining the quality of the results, a random rounding process is used to alter the values reported in individual cells. As a result, when these data are summed or grouped, the total value may not match the sum of the individual values, since the total and subtotals are independently rounded. Similarly, percentage distributions, which are calculated on rounded data, may not necessarily add up to 100%.

The groups of “Arab” and “West Asian” were conflated to “Arab/West Asian” in 1996 Census, but not the case in later censuses.

“n.i.e.” = not included elsewhere

“Visible minority, n.i.e.” includes Pacific Islanders and other visible minority groups.

“Multiple Response” includes respondents who reported more than one visible minority group.
Table 3.2. shows the visible minorities for Greater Vancouver in 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011 Census, with the numbers of total visible minorities shaded. The visible minorities increase drastically from 564,600 in 1996 to 1,030,335 in 2011. They represented about one out of every three people (30.8%) in the total population of Greater Vancouver in 1996, and increased to almost one out of every two people (45.2%) in 2011. The populations of all the visible minority groups, except Visible minority, n.i.e., increase from 1996 to 2011 as well.

Table 3.1. shows the data of ethnic origins for BC and Table 3.2. is the data of visible minorities for Greater Vancouver. The question asking respondents to self-identify one’s visible minority status was first introduced in 1996. In other words, the data regarding the visible minorities before 1996 is not available. Also, no comparable data of ethnic origins for Greater Vancouver between 1986 and 2011 is accessible. Though the data in Table 3.1. and 3.2 cannot be compared explicitly for the differences in geographical regions and the method of collecting data (Statistics Canada, 2006b), it indicates that the populations in British Columbia and Greater Vancouver have become increasingly multicultural and multiethnic.

A study on projections of the diversity of the Canadian population conducted by the Government of Canada in 2006 indicates that Greater Vancouver will become more progressively multiethnic. The study shows that the number of visible minorities will continue to grow significantly over the next two decades (Statistics Canada, 2010b). Based on the reference scenario, by 2031, visible minority groups would account for nearly 60% of the population in Greater Vancouver. The visible minority population would be doubled by 2006 to just over two million (Statistics Canada, 2010a; Statistics Canada, 2010b). Of the two million visible minorities, two out of three would be foreign-born (Statistics Canada, 2010a).

3 According to Statistics Canada (2010a), these projections on Vancouver’s diversity are based on a ‘reference scenario’, i.e., the medium assumptions of how the population might evolve as determined by analyzing recent demographic trends. Other available scenarios are a low-growth scenario that assumes low fertility, life expectancy and immigration, and a high-growth scenario that assumes high levels of each.
The largest visible minority group in Greater Vancouver would be the Chinese, as was the case from 1996 to 2011. Their population would double from 381,535 to around 809,000. They would account for about 23% of Vancouver's population in 2031, up from 18.2% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2010a; Statistics Canada, 2010b). The South Asian group, which has ranked second since 1996, is likely to remain the second largest visible minority group. Their share of Vancouver's population would rise from 9.9% in 2006 to 14% in 2031 (Statistics Canada, 2010a).

These figures showing the numbers of visible minority populations for Greater Vancouver demonstrate a strong market demand for diasporic media and a need to reflect on the diversity. However, as illustrated in the next chapter, the newscasts and the cultural programs produced by diasporic media have not satisfied this need but have demonstrated an in-group propensity. For instance, Chinese diasporic media incline to cover news that is exclusive to the Chinese market. Hence, these figures illuminate not only the diversity of the metropolitan area and the coexistence of others, but also the need to capture the linkages, interactions and connections between members of different ethnic groups in diasporic broadcasting in the context of Greater Vancouver. Therefore, diasporic media, as argued in Chapter 2, do have the special responsibility to foster transcultural communication across ethnic groups.

A city is always multicultural and multiethnic in two facets. Apart from being diverse along the axis of ethnicity, as categorized in different groups of visible minority, a group itself is never homogeneous. An ethnic group, such as Chinese, is never a homogeneous entity but is fractured along many different axes (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 463), such as immigrant status, period of immigration, age at immigration, place of birth, generation status, ethnic origin, religion, sex, mother tongue, language used at home and at work, education, occupation, industry, living expenses, lifestyle, and so on (Statistics Canada, 2011). As a result, the transnationality, hyphenatality and/or hybridity of their identities may vary from member to member. An ethnic group can never be seen as a homogeneous group but instead heterogeneous. Thus, this paper argues that the role of diasporic media, in addition to fostering out-group transcultural communication, includes
the facilitation of in-group communication. The out-group and in-group modes of transcultural communication are conceptualized later in this paper (see Chapter 5).

This chapter has analyzed the state policies towards ethnic minorities, the regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services in Canada and the statistical data for visible minorities in the context of Greater Vancouver. This analysis has identified the need for affirmative obligation of the Canadian broadcasting system to act as facilitators for transcultural communication in today’s increasingly multicultural societies.
Chapter 4.

Feedback from Chinese Viewers of OMNI BC

Given the context outlined in Chapter 3, this chapter poses a potential demand for more transcultural components in diasporic programming empirically based on feedback collected from the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV living in Greater Vancouver. OMNI TV, owned by Rogers, is a multicultural television station that serves a variety of ethno-cultural communities in more than 20 languages (Rogers, 2014). OMNI has two stations. They are located in Vancouver, BC and Toronto, Ontario. The station in BC (OMNI BC) produces half an hour regional newscasts in Mandarin and another half an hour in Cantonese on weekdays (Monday through Friday). OMNI BC airs newscasts produced by the Ontario station for the same length in these Chinese languages. OMNI BC also produces news in Punjabi, for an hour on weekdays. These news programs contain both Canadian news translated into specific languages and news feeds from the countries of origin broadcasted in audiences’ mother tongues. As news programs on OMNI TV are produced by and for particular ethnic minority groups, it fits the definition of a diasporic media described in Chapter 2.

This paper builds on the findings collected for a study entitled OMNI BC Cantonese and Mandarin News Study (Kong, 2014), which this paper calls “the OMNI Study.” The aim of the OMNI Study is to understand the needs and preferences of the Chinese communities residing in Greater Vancouver in focus group settings. The target of the recruitment is those who have watched OMNI BC Cantonese or Mandarin news and speak the language. Eight focus groups were conducted – four for Cantonese and four for Mandarin. Sixteen and twenty-six participants were recruited for Cantonese and Mandarin groups respectively, for a total of forty-two respondents. During the focus group study, selected news clippings, which had been aired on OMNI BC during April 1 to 22, were played. Questions about their interests and preferences were probed. The focus group discussions were then transcribed for qualitative textual analysis.

For confidentiality purposes, the names of the focus group participants have been replaced by pseudonyms.
4.1. The Roles of OMNI TV

Based on feedback collected from these respondents, this section looks into how the roles of OMNI TV converged and diverged from the three main roles identified in Chapter 2. To recapitulate, these three main roles are: to reflect and transform the ethnic identities of the target community; facilitate their settlement processes; and act as community advocates. As will be clear by the end of this chapter, this case study is helpful for illuminating new possible insights into how audiences’ transcultural awareness could be raised in journalism by moving away from objective reporting.

4.1.1. Reflect and Transform Ethnic Identities

The transnational, hyphenated, and/or hybrid identities are, to a certain extent, captured in the production of OMNI’s newscasts and other cultural programs. OMNI covers issues which occur beyond a single national boundary, demonstrating transnationalism. Its newscasts include news from “here” (i.e., the place of settlement – BC, Canada) and “there” (i.e., their country of origin – Mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan), serving orientation and connective functions respectively (Adoni, Caspi, & Cohen, 2006). Both the coverages on local news and news from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan are well received (Kong, 2014, pp. 19-29).

As a diasporic media outlet, OMNI has a propensity to cover news that is not addressed in the mainstream media but of significant importance to their target audiences. While covering local news, issues involving the local Chinese communities tend to be one of its main foci. Examples are stories about Chinese-Canadian candidates participating in an election, their political platforms and contributions to the community (Kong, 2014, p. 33); analyses of the social impacts and influence of the candidates’ platforms from a perspective of the Chinese communities, i.e., impacts on the Chinese populations (Kong, 2014, pp. 21-2); local news stories which the Chinese community living in Canada is of interest to, e.g., Anson Chan and Martin Lee’s visit to Vancouver (Kong, 2014, p. 33).

In addition to the coverage of Chinese communities from “here,” news coverage for Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan is fairly substantial and well recognized. A respondent, Caden, expressed that the Chinese communities definitely needed OMNI
news to supplement the insufficiency and inefficiency of other mainstream media in covering news happening in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, as he considered this as OMNI’s strength (Caden in Kong, 2014, p. 34).

The coverages on local Chinese communities and that from their countries of origin seem to suggest that the Chinese diaspora is very in-group oriented. As suggested by many studies (Ball-Rokeach & Lin, 2004; Lin & Song, 2006; Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007), the Chinese diaspora prefers to remain isolated from the wider society of the country of settlement. Moreover, some scholars (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 149-51) even challenge that, instead of operating as builders of a global civil society, diasporic media act as forces of social fragmentation. Since their mandate is to cover news that is not addressed in the mainstream media but of significant importance to the ethnic community, their production inclines to demonstrate an in-group orientation.

While the Chinese communities may wish to maintain cultural and ethnic ties to their countries of origin, they show strong intent to adapt to their new country and environment (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 58; Kong, 2014). Based on the OMNI Study, it is surprising to learn that nearly 70% of the respondents preferred watching local news from “here” over that from their countries of origin. They showed greater appreciation of the coverage about BC governance and politics than news from “there” because they found local news more relevant to their residency. A respondent, Matthew, expressed that local news reports were closely related to him as a resident in BC (Matthew in Kong, 2014, p. 19). Another respondent, Ava, thought it was important to know what was happening in BC, and changes in policy that may affect her life (Ava in Kong, 2014, p. 19). News from “here,” as reported by the viewers, helps diasporic audiences to be more socially connected and established in the new community, and facilitates their process of settlement (see Section 4.1.2.).

Respondents’ interest in local news has provided evidence counter to previous studies about diaspora’s in-group tendency. The disjuncture between the findings of the previous studies and the OMNI Study could be attributed to the difference in methodological approach. While content analysis was used in previous studies (Lin & Song, 2006; Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007), focus groups were conducted for collecting
feedback from Chinese viewers in the OMNI Study. This study was approached from a consumption end, whereas previous works were approached mostly from a production side. When diasporic media research is approached from a production side, the actual needs of the audiences can easily be obscured. Conclusions about the audiences are drawn based on the understanding of the producers and the journalists. According to this line of thought, the in-group orientation of diasporic media does not necessarily equate to the in-group tendency of their audience, though the production of in-group news could shape the audiences' ways of thinking and their sense of community. On the contrary, conducting diasporic media research from a consumption end informs the study about the actual needs of the audiences, the unmet demands, and how their preferences could potentially be satisfied. Based on audience's weaker interest in news from "there," this paper argues that there is a need to make connections and establish reciprocal relationships between the news from "there" to "here," so to frame news in relevance to the audiences.

Despite covering news from "here" and "there" to reflect the transnational, hyphenated, and/or hybrid ethnic identities of the viewers, OMNI is effective in constructing and transforming their identity through the coverage of news from "here." Three Chinese viewers (Amelia, Jackson, and Kaylee) who had lived in BC a relatively short period of time (four to five years) reported that they had gradually become more interested in local news for the relevance to their lives in the places of settlement (Kong, 2014, pp. 20, 26). They reported that they were not interested in news from "here" and would not even self-identify as Chinese-Canadians earlier upon their arrival. Yet their identities had shifted over time and they recently would self-identify as members of Canadian society. Their ethnic identities had become more transnational, hyphenated and/or hybrid through the processes of being immersed in a new country and culture. This implies that newscasts of diasporic media, not only could capture and reflect their identities, but also have the transformative capacity. This transformative capacity could be leveraged to raise transcultural awareness in journalism as discussed in Chapter 5.
4.1.2. Facilitate Settlement Processes

Viewers had an impression that OMNI news puts slightly more emphasis on local news to orient viewers (Kong, 2014, pp. 5, 27). Such an orientation has directed OMNI to cover more local news, such as BC governance and politics, over news from their places of origin. Respondents reported that this emphasis on local news has effectively helped them as new comers to integrate and settle in BC, Canada (Kong, 2014, pp. 5, 20), fulfilling the function of diaspora media as facilitators to provide the required information.

The coverage on local news is highly appreciated. In particularly, respondents expressed that the coverage at the time of election on candidates’ political views, political platforms, past achievements and contributions to the community, and the electoral system has better informed them on how to cast their ballot (Kong, 2014, pp. 20-1). Other news stories about banking and finance, e.g., tips about personal financial management (Kong, 2014, pp. 48-50), communal activities and cultural events (Kong, 2014, p. 21) have provided a wide range of information to ease their settlement processes and to help them to be more socially connected, engaged and established in the local community.

It appears that OMNI has not reinforced the cultural hierarchy or the “vertical mosaic.” Although a few long-standing immigrants (Nathan and Samuel) demanded OMNI to teach new comers about subtle social norms (Kong, 2014, pp. 135-41), the OMNI Study perceives the media outlet to be conscious of not playing the role of ‘teachers’ for the potential patronizing nature of such a programming.

4.1.3. Act as Community Advocates

OMNI Chinese news functions as a community leader to make sure voices of the Chinese communities are heard in society. Most of the Chinese respondents (90%) had an impression that the mainstream media had not sufficiently covered news stories about the Chinese community. A respondent, Gabriel, recalled that the coverage about the Chinese community in mainstream media was systemically less than that about the mainstream society (Gabriel in Kong, 2014, p. 33). Some respondents felt the Chinese community was underrepresented or misrepresented in the mainstream media (Kong, 2014; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005, p. 434). Some even had an impression that the
mainstream media discriminated against Chinese community because most of the news coverage was typically negative (from Monster homes in the 80s to empty condos and murders in the 2000s) (Kong, 2014, pp. 7, 33).

OMNI Chinese news has thus emerged to serve and represent the Chinese communities accurately and positively, and to make sure their stories and voices are heard in the mainstream society, not merely internally resonated among the Chinese populations. Respondents suggested that OMNI could raise awareness on issues which are of greater interest to the Chinese audiences, such as policy changes, immigration and economic policies, how do changes in policies affect certain populations, the school strike, gasoline prices, and job opportunities (Kong, 2014, p. 32), to initiate public discussions with the mainstream society. Through the process of setting public agendas and negotiating the relationship between majority and minority, the boundary between them could be challenged and becomes more porous and permeable. This can be achieved through running bilingual programs in an effort to attract audiences of different linguistic backgrounds, to raise their transcultural awareness, and to bridge the intergenerational gap for 1.5 and second generation youths to connect with diasporic media (Clyne & Kipp, 1999). Besides, diasporic media could initiate partnerships with mainstream media to have the voices of the ethnic minorities to be heard.

In brief, OMNI has fulfilled the role of a diasporic broadcaster to reflect and transform the ethnic identities of the target ethnic communities, facilitate settlement processes for new comers, and act as community advocates to negotiate the relationship between the mainstream and the minority. However, based on audiences’ weaker interest in news from “there,” this paper would like to draw readers’ attention to why audiences demonstrated a relatively low interest in news from “there,” and what is missing in framing news from “there.” The following section sheds light on possible linkages and reciprocal relationships between the news from “there” to “here” that diasporic media could establish for capturing the transnational, hyphenated, and/or hybrid identities of the audiences more adequately (Georgiou, 2005, p. 491).
4.2. Linkages between “Here” and “There”

The main reason why the majority (nearly 70%) of the respondents is more interested in watching local news is because of the stories relevance to the audience. The ability of the diasporic media to draw linkages and connections to the audiences’ real lives is the key to successful broadcasting and to keep its viewership. OMNI’s current newscasts only report news happening “here” and “there,” but have not substantially drawn linkages of news between “here” and “there.” Figuratively speaking, the current newscasts have captured the dots from “here” and “there” (see Figure 4.1.), but have yet to draw arrows to connect the dots – to establish linkages and reciprocal relationships between news from “there” to “here” (see Figure 4.2.) (Georgiou, 2005, p. 491). Therefore, the transnational, hyphenated and hybrid identities of the audiences have not been fully reflected in diasporic broadcasting.

![Figure 4.1. The Current Newscast Capturing the News from “Here” and “There”]

![Figure 4.2. The Ideal Newscast Capturing the Linkage between the News from “Here” and “There”]

There are three types of linkages that diasporic media could draw when framing news. They are spatial, temporal and cultural linkages.

4.2.1. Spatial Linkages

Nearly 70% of the audience did not appreciate news from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan as much as they did for local news. They felt that news from “there” was less relevant to them. To frame news from “there” in relevance to the audiences,
OMNI, as suggested in the Study, should think through ways and perspectives to capture spatial linkages, the interconnectivity and the reciprocal relationship between news from “there” to “here,” e.g., between Canada and China. Simply reporting news happening in audiences’ places of origin does not provide a solid foundation for its coverage nor stimulate their interest to watch these stories (Kong, 2014, p. 28).

Drawing spatial linkages between countries can capture the close relationship between the two countries. Particularly in our interconnected and transnational era, the relationship between countries is mutually constitutive, rather than isolated and separated. A respondent, Isaac, put it most simply that Canada and China have been closely related to each other. News happening in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China would inevitably affect Canada. The political, economic and social stability in Mainland China would affect other places like Canada. It is impossible to escape from their interrelationship – their inseparable relationship (Isaac in Kong, 2014, p. 28).

The idea of capturing the interconnectivity between spaces can also be effective in bridging the intergenerational gap, since OMNI Chinese News is also produced for the next generations, e.g., 1.5, second and third generation immigrants. According to Yonah Martin of the Corean Canadian Coactive Society in Vancouver (in Murray, 2008, p. 65), young immigrants look forward to watching programs that facilitate interactions across different cultures. Reflecting upon the interest of these youths, the OMNI Study recommends OMNI TV to frame stories about other places using a compare and contrast method. This approach allows the next generations to compare their daily lives in Vancouver with other places. Some topics suggested by the respondents were to compare education systems, how weddings are conducted, and how Chinese festivals are celebrated elsewhere (Kong, 2014, pp. 10, 52). This way of framing could nurture the next generations in Vancouver to be more connected to the rest of the world and fulfil their desire of knowing their relationships with other cultures.

Apart from capturing linkages across national boundaries, spatial linkages could also be drawn when framing news within Canada but outside the local community of where the audiences reside, in this case, BC. 85% of the respondents were interested in watching news stories about the Chinese community in Canada outside BC. However,
they found the newscasts on Ontario’s OMNI aired in the afternoon on weekdays irrelevant to their lives in BC. A respondent, Matthew, suggested that connections with BC residents had to be made when covering news stories about other Chinese communities outside BC. If the audiences in BC could not relate to stories outside BC, they would simply not be interested in watching the newscasts (Matthew in Kong, 2014, p. 39).

Respondents also found the news stories on Ontario could only enrich their knowledge about things happening in Ontario but could hardly be helpful to compare their lives in BC with those outside BC, understand the lives of their friends and family residing there, learn about the opportunities for personal and professional development, cultural activities and community events organized by those Chinese communities. News from “there” (i.e., outside the community of settlement – Ontario in this case) is reported but no arrows between their news and audiences’ lives are clearly spelt out. While covering news stories outside their community of settlement, it is pivotal to illustrate spatial linkages so that local audiences could resonate with them.

4.2.2. Temporal Linkages

Besides emphasizing the spatial linkage between places, news broadcasting could be more effective if temporal linkages are identified as well. For instance, how the history and contributions of Chinese Canadian pioneers had contributed to Chinese Canadians’ contemporary lives and the Canadian society. The history of Chinese-Canadians can also be effective in bridging the intergenerational gap so that the next generations could learn about their history. It could help them to understand their role as Chinese-Canadians in the contemporary society from a historical perspective. A respondent, Zoe, thought programs informing her next generation about their past was very important so that her next generation could serve as a carrier of the history and culture of Chinese-Canadians (Zoe in Kong, 2014, p. 54). Respondents felt that, despite informing the next generations about their past, OMNI Chinese news also has a special responsibility to discuss the relationship between the Chinese community and other groups, such as the First Nations, in particular, how the First Nations helped the Chinese Canadians pioneers to settle in Canada (Kong, 2014, p. 38).
4.2.3. Cultural Linkages

News could also be framed in a way which is relevant to the cultures and environments the audiences were raised, spelling out cultural linkages. The OMNI Study found that 90% of the respondents were interested in knowing more about other ethnic groups and multiculturalism. They showed particular interest in traditions and festivals celebrated by Indian, Korean and Japanese, demonstrating an intra-Asian orientation. A possible reason for the intra-Asian orientation of Chinese viewers is that there are many practices found in these cultures similar to Chinese cultures, yet different in many interesting ways.

These programs could be framed in a way that relates to the audience's daily lives or cultures they are familiar with as hooks to stimulate their interest. A respondent, Oliver, pointed out that he had begun to see a wide variety of Indian products and food at grocery stores in April. He wondered what festival the Indians were celebrating. Cultures of other ethnic groups could be discussed by relating their cultures and festivals with things audiences observe in their real lives (Oliver in Kong, 2014, p. 42). Another respondent, Chloe, was trying to understand Indian culture from a Chinese perspective. She expressed that she wanted to know more about Indian tradition; and specifically, why Indians would prepare food on the streets for the general public, as it is quite different from how Chinese celebrates Chinese New Year. Chinese people typically prepare food for their own family only, not to the public (Chloe in Kong, 2014, p. 42-3). Based on their feedback, diasporic media could talk about cultures in a way that the Chinese audience could understand themselves and make sense of the world from an interconnected and mutually constitutive perspective, rather than seeing Chinese cultures as distinct, isolated and separated.

Chinese viewers’ interest in other cultures and traditions signal their out-group interest and reject the conclusions drawn from previous studies analyzed from a production end. Since most of the diasporic media are not aware of the need to identify these linkages, their strategies in news gathering and reporting tend to “play safe” by producing in-group oriented news.
These programs which identify the cultural linkages could also serve as a platform to dismantle stereotypes and discuss the heterogeneity, variation, diversity and richness of different cultures, instead of fixing or essentializing any culture as a certain set of customs, traditions and practices. A respondent, Nathan, suggested when introducing Chinese culture to other ethnic groups, Chinese cuisine could be one of the topics, but should not limit to this dimension for the diversity and heterogeneity Chinese cultures exhibit (Nathan in Kong, 2014, p. 141). OMNI could discuss the variations of different cultural practices in various geographical locations and time frames. It could also highlight how other cultures have influenced Chinese cultures in a series of dynamic interactions throughout history. These programs could probably be appealing to the next generation of immigrants as well, as they have been longing for programs with transcultural elements (Yonah Martin in Murray, 2008, p. 65).

Respondents’ interest in local news, and news which involves the Chinese communities within BC, outside BC and worldwide, suggests that diasporic audiences have a much broader sense of community. However, there are signs that their interest is fairly in-group focused. Despite respondents’ interest in other cultural groups, they thought the emphasis on cultural programs should still be on Chinese (Kong, 2014, p. 46). They stressed the importance of learning about the local Chinese communities, such as news about Chinese-Canadian candidates participating in elections. They also expected their diasporic media to analyze social issues from a Chinese perspective. Though the Chinese populations are not in-group extremists to an extent that they only prefer accessing and spending most of their time with satellite and online media that bring them closer to their countries of origin, they nonetheless show some degrees of concern to the ethnic group they self-identify themselves as, which are understandable and fairly reasonable.

4.3. Call for a New Regime

Based on the Chinese viewers’ feedback, OMNI BC’s newscasts have, to a certain degree, fractured the “regime of objectivity.” They have not only presented local news stories as facts, but have also framed and interpreted in ways which are relevant to the Chinese audiences, orienting them and assisting their settlement processes. OMNI BC
Chinese news has taken the interest of the minorities in society, i.e., the Chinese populations in BC, into consideration when producing news. It acts as community advocates for the Chinese community by analyzing issues from the perspective of the Chinese community, raising awareness to issues that are of interest to them to the mainstream society, and negotiating their interest and that of the country they live in simultaneously. Such an orientation has also mediated the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of the Chinese community in the mainstream media. By covering news from “here” and “there,” OMNI BC’s newscasts have effectively reflected and transformed their transnational, hyphenated, and/or hybrid ethnic identities. However, OMNI BC newscasts have not completely challenged the “regime of objectivity” for the heavy reliance on experts as sources, the continuous perpetuation of the duality of public and private, and the confined role of a public ‘watchdog.’

OMNI BC Chinese News has showed signs of fracturing the “regime of objectivity.” Simply capturing news “objectively” as facts can no longer arouse audiences’ awareness about news stories. For more effective broadcasting, diasporic media need to capture linkages – either spatial, temporal, and/or cultural – to stimulate audiences’ interest in news about other ethnic groups and that outside their places of settlement. The importance of capturing these linkages and the interconnectivity between “here” and “there” also informs the need to call for a new regime in journalistic practices. This new regime, called the regime of intersubjectivity, is arguably more beneficial to diasporic broadcasting than the “regime of objectivity.” The news and cultural programs produced under this new regime could better reflect the plurality of the demography in society, respond to the need for both out-group and in-group transcultural communication demanded by the diasporic audiences, facilitate the transformative encounters of different cultures and practices (Chakravartty & Zhao, 2008, p. 12), and address the gap overlooked by the state’s policies towards ethnic minorities and the regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services in Canada. Most importantly, this regime could avoid the problem of reifying group identities in its news and cultural programs production.

Given the progressively multiethnic demography, the market demand, the deficiency in multicultural policy and media regulation, and the problem of reification in diasporic programming, the need to establish the new regime of intersubjectivity has never
been more pressing than today. The establishment of this new regime to replace the “regime of objectivity” in journalism will mark the beginning of “developing a more inclusive and dialectical form” of transcultural communication to deal with differences, live across difference, and co-exist with others (Georgiou, 2005, p. 493).
Chapter 5.

The New Regime of Intersubjectivity

To conceptualize the regime of intersubjectivity, this paper proposes a three-dimensional model of transcultural communication. The first dimension is out-group transcultural communication; the second dimension is in-group transcultural communication, and the third dimension combines the first and the second to challenge the homogeneity of the mainstream society. This model calls for the need to raise in-group and out-group transcultural awareness, and the urgency to nurture a sense of “imagined communities” in society. This model also advocates for a pan-ethnic movement to develop people’s “feelings of shared citizenship” which go “beyond groupism.” Given the increasingly multiethnic context and the fact that diasporic media have already shaken the “regime of objectivity,” it is high time for these media to take the initiative in cultivating global citizens who would think and act beyond their parochial identities and show love and care to others. This model is not only helpful for diasporic media to raise out-group and in-group transcultural awareness, but also for mainstream media, as will be illustrated below.

5.1. First Dimension: Out-group Transcultural Communication

The first dimension of the model addresses communication across different ethnic groups. In diasporic media study, transnationalism refers to the linkage between “here” (i.e., the country of settlement) and “there” (i.e., the places of origin) (Levitt & Waters, 2002; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 18, 64). Borrowing the definition of transnationalism, this paper extends it to a cultural sense in journalism and argues that transcultural journalism should not be only limited to drawing linkages between “here” and “there,” but should also be stretched to connect “there,” “there” and “there,” i.e., other ethnic groups residing in the same city and elsewhere. By capturing the spatial, temporal and cultural linkages as illustrated in Chapter 4, diasporic media have the responsibility to break through the walls of cultural and ethnic enclaves. By leveraging media’s capacity
to construct and transform viewers’ identity, diasporic media can even challenge viewers to pursue a pan-ethnic identity.

For example, in the context of Greater Vancouver, issues and difficulties of other ethnic communities, such as Korean, could be covered in Chinese news to prompt discussions of common ground among Korean-Canadians and Chinese-Canadians. These programs could urge Chinese-Canadians to extend their care to Korean-Canadians, and reveal connections between different ethnic groups that are usually marginalized in diasporic media. Based on feedback of Chinese viewers of OMNI BC, 90% of the respondents were interested in knowing about multiculturalism and other ethnic groups, such as Indian, Korean, and Japanese. Programs establishing common ground among ethnic minorities to foster out-group transcultural communication are in great demand yet currently not available on Chinese programs of OMNI BC. Programs about multiculturalism, addressing their conglomerate identity as Asians (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 73-4), could be useful for enhancing their transcultural awareness of Indian, Korean and Japanese (Kong, 2014).

These programs can encourage solidarity in the communities to rally in support of each other (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 81-2), regardless of their ethnicity, but simply based on humanity. It is important to nurture this characteristic in the “imagined communities” so that people can live alongside those who are different, and potentially create new worlds together (Sandercock, 2003, p. 1). The following diagram (Figure 5.1.) illustrates the first dimension of the transcultural linkages (indicated by the blue arrows) across different ethnic groups A, B, C and D.
The study on conglomerate identities observes that there has been a shift away from identifying oneself with a particular country of origin toward acknowledging a larger shared experience with people (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, pp. 73-4). Instead of self-identifying as a Chinese-Canadian, some of them identify themselves as Asian-Canadians and see themselves sharing similar cultural experiences with Japanese-Canadians, Korean-Canadians and so on. This shift to conglomerate identities may advance transcultural communication across different ethnic groups. However, it is important to note that this paper takes on a transformationalist view of globalization (Appadurai, 1996; Georgiou, 2005). The transformationalist view sees “globalization trends as spreading unevenly across continents and regions, classes, and age groups” (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 151). While this view conceptualizes globalization as a set of processes that is altering the social, political, and economic map of the world, it theorizes the pace of change experienced by each member of society in non-uniform ways. Accordingly, while some members of the groups developed conglomerate identities, some may wish to remain insular and disconnected from people around them (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 151).

This first dimension describes an out-group transcultural communication to capture encounters across different ethnic groups for the transformation of one’s culture and identity.


5.2. Second Dimension: In-group Transcultural Communication

The second dimension of the model addresses transcultural communication within ethnic groups. Many diasporic media emerge from a community which has the urgent desire for a voice of their own (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 76). Many ethnic minorities have an impression that the mainstream media have not sufficiently covered news stories about their communities (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007), as reported by the 90% of the Chinese respondents watching OMNI TV (Kong, 2014). Some think the Chinese communities are negatively portrayed in the mainstream media, and even discriminated against even today (Kong, 2014). In such a context, many diasporic media distinguish themselves from the mainstream media to positively represent the ethnic community they are serving (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 64). The usual approach they take to struggle for recognition, however, often generalizes, reifies, and simplifies their own group identities as certain fixed sets of practices and customs, marginalizing the heterogeneity and differences within the group. This form of recognition is further accelerated by commercial and market imperatives. A more generalized description of a culture is typically more appealing to advertisers because of the size of the audience this program seems to attract. As a result, diasporic media practitioners are less encouraged to explore the deviations within the group, being wary about the reduced viewership of such an orientation.

Without doubt, emphasizing the identity of an ethnic community could show positive recognitions of the ethnic group. Yet equating the politics of recognition with identity politics is politically problematic. The equation impedes mutual respect within the increasingly pluralistic groups and misrecognizes the differences and heterogeneity within them. Identities within a group are always fragmented along the axes of gender, sexuality, class, age and lived experiences. Equating the politics of recognition with identity politics encourages the reification of group identities and ironically serves as a vehicle for marginalizing differences and heterogeneity within the group (Fraser, 2000).

The second dimension calls for capturing the heterogeneity and deviation within a group, so that oneself need not be marginalized nor self-denied (Mohanty & Martin, 2003).
Members of the group are treated the same (equally) but also differently (as equals), following the notion of intersubjectivity (Augie Fleras in Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 262). All members in society exists as real, total and “qua” (Arendt, 1998, pp. 175-6, 193) in which no (self-)denials nor exclusions are required (Mohanty & Martin, 2003, pp. 93-4, 104). The following figure (Figure 5.2.) illustrates that culture A is diverse and multiple, as indicated by the Bouquet texture, denoting heterogeneity (as opposed to block colours which suggest homogeneity). It too illustrates the linkages of transcultural communication in red arrows within the ethnic group A.

![Figure 5.2.
The Second Dimension of Transcultural Communication within the Ethnic Group A](image)

This dimension to foster transcultural communication within ethnic groups is in demand, but currently not met by the diasporic programming. The empirical findings collected from the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV suggest that cultural programs could serve as a platform to dismantle stereotypes and discuss the heterogeneity, variation, diversity and richness of different cultures. As mentioned in Section 4.2.3., a respondent, Nathan, suggested that when introducing Chinese culture, not only Chinese cuisine should be introduced, but also other aspects of the culture which are probably less well known to others (Nathan in Kong, 2014, p. 141). The programs could also discuss how cultures and traditions evolve with time and space, and have adapted to contemporary society. Instead of reifying the group identity for struggle for recognition, diasporic media could reflect and capture the fluidity and diversity of cultures, especially those which are historically marginalized and socially suppressed, as a more equitable form of recognition.
5.3. Third Dimension: Challenge to the Mainstream Society

The third and final dimension combines and extends the first and second dimensions to challenge the homogeneity of the mainstream society, which is rarely questioned in media (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 466) and postcolonial studies (Shome, 2012). This assumption runs counter to the dialectic view regarding the construction of an identity, and ends by valorizing that one could define one’s identity on his/her own terms (Fraser, 2000, p. 112; Husband, 2005, p. 466). This paper understands identity to be constructed dialectically through processes of mutual recognition, denoting intersubjectivity. One becomes a subject by virtue of recognizing, and being recognized by, other subjects. Recognition from others is essential to the development of a sense of self. The identity of the mainstream society, however, is often conceptualized as a subject not contingent to any influence from the ethnic minorities. It presupposes that the dominant group has the right to be understood solely in its own terms (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 466). No one is ever justified in viewing the identity of the mainstream society from an external perspective (Fraser, 2000, p. 112). This mistaken assumption, apart from running against the dialectic view, is theoretically and politically deficient to overcome the oppression imposed by the dominant culture within the mainstream society.

Instead of conceptualizing the mainstream society being permanent, homogeneous and undistorted, the third dimension model of transcultural communication proposes to conceptualize communicative flows within the mainstream society, as well as those between the ethnic minorities and mainstream society. The following diagram (Figure 5.3.) illustrates the new regime of intersubjectivity, combing the first, second and third dimensions of transcultural communication. The communicative linkages within ethnic groups A, B, C and D are indicated in red arrows; those across ethnic groups are in blue; those within mainstream society are in black; and those between ethnic groups and mainstream society are in yellow. Once again, all these groups are themselves diverse and hybrid, indicated by the texture, as opposed to block colours.
This three-dimensional model of transcultural communication theorizes how the interconnectedness of news stories could be framed, and how subjects could be linked spatially, temporally and culturally. This paper argues that by linking these stories, audiences, instead of seeing their cultures as distinct, isolated and separated, could understand themselves and make sense of the world from an interconnected, interdependent and mutually constitutive perspective while being distinct and unique (Kong, 2014). The “co-existence of multiple flows of communication” can eventually reflect “the possibility for developing a more inclusive and dialectical form of multiculturalism” (Georgiou, 2005, p. 493) – which this paper phrases it as transcultural communication in a three-dimensional model.
This model with multiple flows of transcultural communication also challenges the existence of the boundary between the majority and the minority; or the mainstream and the non-mainstream. As the regime of intersubjectivity advocates for an extensive commitment to multiple ethnic groups (as opposed to singular), these communicative flows could, to a certain extent, shift and even breakthrough the boundary between the majority and the minority. In addition, if Statistics Canada is right in saying that minority populations will continue to grow over the next two decades, and by 2031, visible minority groups will account for nearly 60% of Greater Vancouver’s population (i.e., nearly two-third), the ‘visible minorities’ may no longer be the ‘minority,’ as is the case with the ‘majority.’ While the production of diasporic programming and that of other media outlets will still have a group of intended audiences, what their production is really at stake is their ability to capture and reflect the inter-mixings of differences in relevance to their target audiences.

As diasporic media have already shaken the “regime of objectivity,” they can perhaps be a role model in the media industry to establish the new regime of intersubjectivity to foster both in-group and out-group transcultural communication in journalism, develop people’s sense of shared identities and push forward for a pan-ethnic movement. By identifying the spatial, temporal, and cultural linkages (discussed in Chapter 4), this regime can be beneficial to multiple ways. It can facilitate the transformative interactions between members of society (discussed in Chapter 2), refrain from the problem of reifying group identity (discussed in Chapter 2), fill the transcultural gap neglected by the multicultural policy and the regulatory frameworks for broadcasters in Canada (discussed in Chapter 3), capture the increasingly diverse communities (discussed in Chapter 3), and address what diasporic audiences have longed for (discussed in Chapter 4).
Chapter 6.

Political Challenges

This final chapter briefly talks about the political challenges faced by diasporic media when establishing the regime of intersubjectivity. These challenges are analyzed from political economic and social perspectives.

6.1. Economic Challenges

Almost without exception, all media – including diasporic media – is affected by the harsh discipline of political economic viability (Gandy, 1998). Issues of revenue and profitability are parameters that could hardly be detached from any media operations (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 462). An escalation of hypercommercialism with the rise of neoliberalism leads to more competition and ‘lighter’ media regulatory frameworks (McChesney & Hackett, 2005, p. 228; Murray, 2009, p. 678). This highly deregulated and heavily commercialized media landscape threatens the survival and sustainability of diasporic media to attract large audience size for profitable advertising revenues (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 200). To optimize the return, many media conglomerates choose to produce programs which could maximize the number of their audiences (Husband, 2005, p. 468). This has led to a decline of a public service ethos to improve civic virtues in journalism (McChesney & Hackett, 2005, pp. 226, 228). Robert McChesney (2005, p. 226) explained:

Increasingly, doing what is traditionally regarded as high-quality journalism that improves civic discourse is clearly lousy for business: it costs money, it doesn’t bring in a lot of revenue, the benefits go not to the company but to the whole society.

As accelerated by the scarcity of the actual resources to support the operation of diasporic media (Public Notice 1999-117; Yu, 2012, p. 49), many of their business model are basically profit driven. These diasporic media “may de facto find themselves required to service generic audiences defined in broad ethnic terms” (Husband, Minority ethnic
media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 463). They show little, if any, intention to explore and cover the heterogeneity and differences exhibited within the intended audiences, being wary about the reduced viewership. They rarely question the homogeneity of the audience, but generalize and simplify their characteristics and identities for audience maximization.

Despite the Chinese viewers’ strong interest in their relationship with other ethnic groups, commercial imperatives have informed diasporic media to limit their coverage to cultures directly related to the intended audience, and not to risk the resources to make interconnectivity with other ‘unintended’ ethnic audiences. The commercial imperatives have in turn encouraged separatism and segregation in diasporic broadcasting and disregarded media’s capacity to transform and expand audiences’ compassion to the wider “imagined communities.” In short, political economic viability, apart from setting obstacles for diasporic broadcasting to raise in-group transcultural awareness, impedes it from facilitating out-group transcultural communication.

Furthering to the question of finance in the operation of diasporic media (Husband, 1994; Molnar & Meadows, 2001), the revenue-generating capacity of the intended audience determines the survival and sustainability of a media company (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 467). This has become an important market imperative that directs programming rationale (Husband, Minority ethnic media as communities of practice: Professionalism and identity politics in interaction, 2005, p. 467). According to this line of thought, audiences with high disposable income are really their ‘target’ audience, further perpetuating economic inequality and discrimination.

### 6.2. Social Challenges

Audiences, like the Chinese viewers of OMNI TV, may have expressed their interest in knowing more about other ethnic groups. However, due to self-reporting, they may have shown interest in knowing their relationship with other ethnic groups, even though they do not necessarily do. They may also be pressured to express their interest in others because being respectful to and inclusive of other cultures, especially in an
increasingly multicultural society like Greater Vancouver, is deemed as more socially acceptable than being disinterested in people around them.

Owing to the limitations (self-reporting and societal pressure) caused by the nature of the focus group study, a question about the emphasis on the cultural programs was asked in the focus group study for verification of their interest. All respondents reported the emphasis should still be on Chinese, and then followed by other cultures in Canadian society (Kong, 2014, p. 46). Their opinion on the emphasis reflects their actual interest in other cultures relative to a culture they attach to and is most familiar with. Caution is needed when drawing conclusions about respondents' interest in other cultures (Kong, 2014, p. 62). Although this seems to suggest that diasporic audiences are not as interested in other cultures as in theirs, it is important to note that if spatial, temporal and/or cultural linkages are developed, programs with transcultural components will still be appealing to them.

Another potential challenge is language barrier. Many diasporic media insist to remain distinct and exclusive to their target ethnic community by using a language which is exclusive to the group (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 88). The extent of enhancing out-group transcultural communication may not only be restricted by the language these media use, but also the mentality in production. Keeping the language exclusive is also a statement of ‘authenticity’ that sets a bar for who is included and excluded on the basis of their language proficiency (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011, p. 89). As a result, the choice of language can be a barrier to out-group transcultural communication.

Yet, even if the language used in many diasporic media is exclusive to certain communities, the content of the program could still be helpful for promoting transcultural communications and representing other ethnic groups sincerely. Language is important in portraying an ethnic identity accurately and fairly, but not a necessary condition. When languages are no longer seen as the necessary medium for understanding cultures, opportunities for diasporic media to foster out-group transcultural communication in the regime of intersubjectivity are opened up. Besides, if resource allows, diasporic media could develop bilingual or separate English editions for young audiences, audiences of
other ethnic groups and the mainstream society (PEJ, 2009). It is a point of intervention where diasporic media could bridge the intergenerational gap, foster transcultural communication, and further negotiate the boundary between majorities and minorities.
Chapter 7.

Conclusions

By illustrating the limitations of the “regime of objectivity,” this paper calls for the need to replace it with the new one to nurture people’s sense of “imagined communities.” As diasporic media have already, to a certain degree, fractured the “regime of objectivity,” this paper thinks they are thus far in a better position, as compared to mainstream media, to take the initiative to establish the regime of intersubjectivity for replacement.

This paper has proposed a three-dimensional model to conceptualize the regime of intersubjectivity. This model is designed with attempts to foster transcultural encounters across and within ethnic groups, avoid the problem of reification, address the transcultural role overlooked by the Canadian multicultural policy and the regulatory frameworks for broadcasting services, reflect the progressively heterogeneous demography, and respond to the market demand of the diasporic audiences. The model also hopes to serve a framework for scholars in the field of media studies and cultural studies, as well as diasporic media practitioners, to conceptualize and visualize how transcultural communication could be operated. This model looks forward to steering discussions on ways to implement it in journalistic practices, newsrooms and media companies. Future research on how political challenges can be overcome and how this regime could be taught in schools for training future journalists is needed.

Diasporic media studies typically revolve around the question of whether they should pursue professionalism or act as community advocates. The studies question if diasporic journalists should speak for the ethnic group they belong to or should they be disinterested as professional journalists (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005, p. 437). This paper repudiates the mutual exclusivity of being committed to ethnic communities and professional. The framework offered in this paper rejects this false dichotomy. Professionalism no longer refers to the adherence to objective reporting, but the ability to draw linkages between news stories to foster transcultural communication. Acting as community advocates no longer refers to the commitment exclusively to a single ethnic group a diasporic broadcaster or publisher
serves, but an extensive commitment to multiple ethnic groups, including the mainstream society. In short, being disinterested is no more professional; being committed is no more committed to only one ethnic group. Future journalists are professional for their capacity to capture the intersubjectivity and interconnectivity of news stories and real people, as well as their commitment to facilitate transcultural communication in an increasingly multiethnic society.
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