Iranian Community Media in Stockholm: Locality, Transnationality, and Multicultural Adaptation

by

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the

School of Communication

Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2016

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Abstract

This study of Iranian diasporic media is located in Stockholm which became an important intellectual centre for Iranian exilic political activities in the 1980s. Employing interviews, textual analysis and policy research methods, this dissertation finds that Iranian ethnic media (and particularly radio) in Stockholm have demonstrated resilience and managed to stay relevant despite threats from commercialization and multiplication of competition from new international satellite and internet information providers. Such outlets are stronger than ever, and in a population well into its second and third generations, on the precipice of generational change.

Very little about the Persian-language media in Stockholm studied suggests they channel a cosmopolitan or intercultural discourse, refuting Hamid Dabashi's simple account of "cosmopolitan dispositionality" of Iranians (2007). Instead, they foster an ethno-centric, nostalgic "Persianist" subjectivity because the language is exclusively Persian, with no minority languages represented; they exhibit intracultural marginalization, while largely excluding women, youth and religious minority voices; show little content or organizational outreach; do not tend to collaborate and rarely translate into Swedish to raise intercultural awareness. Nonetheless, while many have failed and others arisen, they continue to give voice and represent community and locality in ways that no Internet platform and satellite television can because they offer an important sounding board for orientations to identity as "Iranian" or "Persian" within the local socio-cultural context, proving crucial in the process of "onboarding" into the Swedish society.

The main argument is that the field of diasporic and ethnic media studies has to disrupt both celebratory and cosmopolitan tendencies, and victimization and minority discourses. Sweden proves a useful ground to explore the neoliberal turn and its disruptive impacts on universalist and social democratic civic ideals, to disclose the parlous circumstance of community media even amongst an allegedly advanced social welfare state under recent Conservative attack and the institutional failures of assimilative strategies in humanitarian and refugee immigration, and multicultural media infrastructure among diasporic peoples. Only through careful, non-media centric study of the multicultural communication infrastructure can researchers begin to grasp the symbolic and connective needs of different diasporic communities. This study concludes with suggestions for the concrete affirmative steps that can be taken to both strengthen the institutional capacity of immigrants in their chosen communities, and their ethnic media and expand its intercultural appeal in Stockholm.

Keywords: Persian-language media; diaspora; Sweden; ethnic media; radio; multiculturalism; media policy

Dedication

To Nazgol, Sasha, Zahra, and Sima

Acknowledgements

First and foremost my gratitude goes to the many interview participants who generously contributed to this dissertation by sharing their experiences with Persian-language media in Stockholm. I also like to thank my supervisory committee Prof. Karim H. Karim and Dr. Kirsten McAllister for their dedication to the project and their expert knowledge in the field of media research and migration studies. I am forever indebted to my Senior Supervisor, Prof. Catherine Murray for believing in me and in this project, and for her support and guidance throughout this long journey. Her graduate students have given her many nicknames over the years, including Saint Catherine, reflecting her generosity of spirit and kindness. She is to academia what Meryl Streep is to film: a true tour de force, principled, unparalleled, and full of passion for her work.

My thanks also go to the many people who have over the years played a formidable role in the shaping of this work. They include my professors at the School of Communication, including Alison Beale, Ellen Balka, Bob Hackett, Yuezhi Zhao, Gary McCarron, Peter Chow-White, Stuart Poyntz, and Jan Marontate. This work would not have been possible without the administrative support that I received from Lucie Menkveld, Neena Shahani, Denise Vanderwolf, Jill Baryluk, Amy Soo, and Jason Congdon.

To my friends: thank-you for the many conversations and exchanges we have had over the years. Without your expertise and emotional support this work would have been much more challenging. The list include Mirjam Gollmitzer, Ayaka Yoshimizu, Dorothy Christian, Ben Woo, Milan Singh, Marcos Moldes, Matthew Matsaganis, Vikky Katz, Babak Golkar, Ehsan Nojouki, and Masoud Ahmadi, and last but not least my con-conspirator and partner in crime Sherry Yu. A shout-out to the many students I have had the privilege to teach and supervise over the years. They remain a source of inspiration and always challenge me think about research and teaching in new and interesting ways.

Lastly, my eternal love and gratitude goes to my beautiful family: my loving wife Nazgol and my greater-than-life daughter Sahsa, my parents Zahra and Mehdi, my sister Narges, my aunt Sima, my uncle Yousef, my cousin Sara, and my mother and father in-law Mahnaz and Bahidad. Words cannot describe my depth of gratitude for your love, patience, and emotional support.

Daniel Ahadi
Vancouver, August 10, 2016

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Chapter One - Introduction

This dissertation focuses on the role of ethnic media in the lives of Iranian diasporic communities in Stockholm. The goal is to investigate the degrees to which Iranian communities are being accommodated through multicultural and communication policies to foster a sustainable and comprehensive communication infrastructure for them. I argue that such communication infrastructure provides important social, cultural, economic, and political support networks that can help community members to build a sense of belonging to the larger society. My research focuses mainly on a specific aspect of this communication infrastructure, namely, the *locally* produced Persian-language media rather than Persian-language media from elsewhere that these communities follow. This focus gives rise to a number of ontological and epistemological questions: why *Iranian*, why *ethnic*, why *media*, and why *local*?

Iran as a case study

In modern history (World War II and the post-war era) Iran has played a significant geopolitical role in the Middle East. Until the 1979 Islamic Revolution (*Enghelab-e Eslami-e Iran*) the country was an important ally of the West in the war against communism and played a significant role as a force against the influence of the Soviet Union in the region. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran's role as a regional super-power has diminished as the country turned its back on Western powers and froze all diplomatic relations with the USA. Since 1979, coverage of Iran and Iranians in Western media, particularly the news media, has been overwhelmingly negative. The Iranian

Revolution, the American hostage crisis, the war with Iraq, Iran's alleged terrorist activities and assassination of Iranian political dissidents in Europe, North America and other parts of the world, its support for Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon, and its government's nuclear ambitions have contributed to a portrayal of Iran as the grand enemy to the West and its liberal democratic principles. Subsequently, media reporting on these events and trends shapes the discourse that dominates the Western imagination of Iranians. The anti-American and anti-Israeli stance of the Iranian regime also adds fuel to the fire. As a consequence, the Iranian people are judged internationally by the conduct, beliefs and the ideologies of this regime.

Members of the Iranian diaspora have been directly affected by the coverage of Iran in Western media. For example, after the release of the hugely controversial movie *Not Without my Daughter* (Ulfland & Gilbert, 1991) based on the life of an American woman, Betty Mahmoodi, many Iranians outside Iran felt that their national identity had been tarnished. The movie was based on the biography of an American woman who had married an Iranian surgeon in the USA and travelled back to Iran with her husband and daughter to visit with her husband's family. The husband's decision to stay in Iran instead of returning to the USA culminated in a series of events that portrayed the protagonist of the movie, Betty Mahmoodi played by Sally Field, as a captive of an oppressive and archaic Iranian culture, and framed the husband and his extended family as the dark, mysterious and dangerous 'Other'. At the time of its release, Caryn James of *The New York Times* wrote in a commentary that the film "exploits the stereotype of the demonic Iranian, it is an utter artistic failure, and its reliance on cultural stereotype is a major cause" (1991). Portrayals of this kind in both popular and news media have left the Iranian diaspora in a defensive mode. Iranians in the diaspora in Europe and North

America are constantly negotiating their place in the social fabric of liberal democracies that views and evaluates them against the backdrop of years of negative media portrayals.

In 2009 the widely covered protests in the aftermath of the June 19 Iranian presidential election began to change the decades-old image that the West had of Iranians as backward, anti-modern and fundamentalist people. In the days that followed the allegedly rigged re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, hundreds of thousands of Iranians took to the streets to demand a recount of the votes. After the government's refusal, the tone and focus of the protests changed to target the regime and the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. The regime decided to ban all foreign journalists and began a brutal crackdown on the protesters and the opposition movement. Despite the banning of foreign journalists, images from street protests and conflicts were captured by ordinary people equipped with cellular phones and cameras and soon went viral on the internet and global news networks. Diasporic Iranians played an important role in disseminating information about the uprising and the Green Movement not only to the rest of the world, but also to people inside Iran.

Ethnicity as an identity marker

The experience of mobility changes the meaning of home, belonging and nation. Members of an exilic community living with the trauma of displacement from home become more consciously ethnic than they were when they lived at home (hooks, 2009). bell hooks attributes this phenomenon partially to the continued racialization and exclusion of newcomers in receiving societies. For hooks, it was her accent, and 'strange' customs and habits as a black Kentuckian southerner that made her to stand out among white Californians at Stanford University during her university years. This turn to ethnic identity is mirrored in diasporic communities across the globe. To remedy this sense of exclusion, historically, newcomers have created a small version of their homelands by occupying sections of mainly urban areas to set up shops and services for their own ethnic community. The experience of having strong attachments to one's own ethnic origin in diaspora has also been attributed to language barriers that exist, especially in early years of settlement (Sanders, 2002; Min & Kim, 1999). For practical reasons, members from diasporic communities retain their cultural heritage and language and acquire day-to-day information about their community and their homeland through ethnic networks. The turn to ethnic identity is also discussed in James Clifford's (1994) influential essay entitled *Diasporas.* Clifford argues that members of diasporic communities, in order to maintain ties with the homeland and the ethnic community in new societies, retain their cultural heritage. Clifford goes on to argue that when faced with the experience of loss of homeland, culture and ethnic heritage is what binds people together in their shared experience of displacement. The fantasy of an eventual return to the homeland also strengthens one's desire to retain parts of the ethnic culture.

Whatever the cause may be for this 'turn to ethnic identity', ethnic "communication infrastructures" (Matei, Ball-Rokeach, Wilson, Gibbs, and Hoyt, 2000; Marques et al., 2004, p. 3) in the settlement countries play an important role in maintaining a sense of self, dignity and belonging. As the rate of settlement grows, the communication infrastructure grows too.

Media and representation of community

At the centres of this framework of 'ethnic communication infrastructure' rests the much-debated ability of media to foster collective consciousness, shared citizenship and sense of belonging among populations of specific geographic entities. What used to bond the Iranians in Stockholm, more than language, ethnicity or religion, was their shared distrust, even disgust, for the Islamic Republic. The vast majority had fled Iran to escape the regime. Today however, Iranians have a much more complex relationship to the regime and their country of origin. Many have over the years established financial and cultural ties with Iran-- an unimaginable undertaking in the early years of settlement. Furthermore, Iranian diaspora in Sweden is highly diverse along not only ethnic, but also religious, linguistic, and socio-economic lines. In these "imagined communities," to use Benedict Anderson's term (1991), members do not know each other, and do not form one homogenous community. Yet the media can assist in constructing a cohesive image of such community.

With the rise of global migration and the arrival of newcomers in immigrant-receiving countries, the notion of "we" has been subject to challenge in these countries (Schiller, 1997). Globalisation and advancements in communication technologies have enabled new opportunities for diasporic communities to connect with their homeland through, for example, ethnic media. Stuart Hall's work on encoding-decoding (1980) and Norman Fairclough's work on media discourse (1995) are key to the important task of analysing media's ability or inability to include audiences in the narrative of the nation and its cohesion. Traditional symbols and sentiments of national identity and shared citizenship as coded in media messages of mainstream receiving country's media are not decoded in the same way across audiences. Ethnic media therefore exist in parallel to fill this gap in the mainstream media (Karim, 2002a; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005, p. 434).

Browne (1996) points out that there are certain functions common to ethnic media despite variations in multicultural politics and policies: ethnic media (or "indigenous" media as he terms them): (1) rescue the language; (2) increase self-esteem; (3) combat negative images; (4) work for greater social cohesiveness, and through this for political influence; (5) provide a visible and audible symbol for the ethnic society; (6) provide an outlet for creative production; (7) and finally provide a source for employment for immigrant population.

Changes in the ethnic composition of nation-states, the flow of immigrants, global capital and communication models have shifted the geo-focus of struggles for social, political, cultural and economic recognition from just the nation to also the "global city" (Sassen, 2002 & 2005). Studies on global migration trends indicate that newcomers are more likely to settle in urban areas where communication infrastructures, commercial services, immigrant organisations, ethnic media, and so on are widely available for immigrant communities (Sassen, 2001; Marques & Santos, 2004). The city presents a far more concrete space for politics than the nation (Sassen, 2002). Since nationally politics need to operate within existing formal systems, whether the electoral political system or judiciary, non-formal political actors like members of the diaspora who have not yet received permanent resident status or are relatively new to the formal political networks of national governments are thereby more easily rendered invisible. The space in the city, however, accommodates a broad range of political activities and issues (e.g., gay rights, immigrant and refugee rights, rallies, gatherings, and community centres). As a consequence, much of local urban politics is concrete and enacted by people, rather than dependent on partisan, aligned or formal bureaucratic processes of the nation-state. Informal economies, participation in local political institutions such as municipal boards, commissions, and councils, as well as cultural productions and self-expressions are part of the so-called local, urban experience of being an immigrant (Marques et al., 2004). According to Sassen (2002) global cities with their transnational and cosmopolitan flow of culture and economy have become venues for traditionally 'unauthorized' segments of society to gain presence vis-à-vis institutions of power, and vis-à-vis each other. These unauthorized segments are those people who are disadvantaged and discriminated against because of their ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. This signals, Sassen argues, “the possibility of a new type of politics centred in new types of political actors” (2005). Based on this framework for *locally produced ethnic media* and my case study of the Iranian communities in Stockholm, I am asking the following the umbrella research questions in this dissertation: (1) does a cosmopolitan identity orientation manifest itself among Iranians in Stockholm, and if so, how, and (2) how do the socio-economic and cultural realities of a neoliberal policy regime condition such cosmopolitan identity formation? Based on these questions, I am proposing the following set of sub-questions:

1. What are the comparative profiles and settlement trends of Iranian communities in Stockholm, Sweden?
2. What are the historical trends in multicultural and communication policies in Sweden? How do these policies condition the existence and operation of ethnic media in Sweden?
3. What role do ethnic media play in the Iranian communities in Stockholm?
4. What do Iranian ethnic media cover, and under what conditions is content produced?
5. How do Iranian ethnic media reflect and represent the Iranian communities in Stockholm? Which voices from different groups in the community are reflected in the Iranian local media?
6. How are identity and community constructed through Iranian ethnic media?
7. What are some of the constraints or limitations in the Iranian ethnic media sector in Stockholm? What strategies should be employed to overcome the limitations and actualise opportunities?

There is a plethora of literature on ethnicity and race in media. The majority of this body of work focuses on how mainstream media represent ethno-cultural and racial minorities. For example, Nacos and Torres-Reyna (2007) argue that Muslims and Middle Easterners are far better represented in Western media than supposed, and in contrast

Pool (2002) and Richardson (2001; 2004) argue that the representation of these groups is far more negative than positive. While media representation of minority groups in mainstream media is an important aspect of critical media studies, I have decided to focus more on how minorities represent *themselves* and the "mainstream" through their own communication infrastructure and in their own language.

Equally so, there exists a large body of literature on ethnic or diasporic media (Karim, 2002a; Bailey, Georgiou & Harindranath, 2007; Matsaganis, Katz & Ball-Rokeach, 2010). However, there have been only a few studies on Iranian ethnic media in the U.S., the U.K. and continental Europe (Alghasi, 2009; Ghorashi & Boersma, 2009; Naficy, 1993; Sreberny, 2000). Traditionally there has been a tendency to focus on large media-hub cities, such as Los Angeles (Naficy, 1993) and London (Sreberny, 2000). Only recently have studies emerged on second tier cities, such as Stockholm (Ghorashi et al., 2009) and Oslo (Alghasi, 2009). This category of so called "second tier cities" (Markusen, Lee & DiGiovanna, 1999), to which Stockholm also belongs (Hutton, 1998, p. 166; Hodos, 2007, p. 330; The Globalisation and World City Research Network, 2008), attracts thousands of new immigrants each year. Iranians in Stockholm are among the largest immigrant groups in this city (Statistics Canada, 2006; European Union Monitoring and Advocacy Program, 2007; Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2009). Stockholm has a vibrant Iranian ethnic media landscape, covering print and broadcast media, but not as many online Persian-language media originate from there. While the emergence of transnational satellite media was initially seen as a threat to locally produced ethnic media, evidence from Stockholm suggests that, by contrast, the locally produced ethnic media sector has experienced a growth in the last decade. For example, the city has experienced a surge in Iranian radio programs. My research shows that compared to the early nineties, there is a rise in the number of radio programs in the city (see Chapter 5).

Much of the literature on ethnic media has concentrated on media consumption and audience research (including Georgiou, 2003; Sinclair, Yue, Hawkins, Kee Pookong & Fox, 2002; Tsagarousianou, 2001;). Currently, very few studies exist on the production of ethnic media (Sreberny, 2000; Naficy, 1993) or on ethnic media content (Lin & Song, 2006; Murray, Ahadi & Yu, 2007). Central to critical media studies is the recognition of the relations of production, the technical infrastructure and the institutional structures that condition and shape the practice and output of media workers (as illustrated in Figure 1 on p. 45; Hall, 1980; Fairclough, 1995, p. 59). My study looks into the areas of production and content, and provides a comprehensive analysis of the diverse ethnic media landscape in Stockholm by way of (a) policy analysis, (b) mapping of existing Persian-language media, (c) interviews with media stakeholders and (d) analysis of media content.

The diverse, complex and layered diasporic identity and media strategies that contemporary researchers in the field constantly refer to (see, e.g., Georgiou, 2003 and Karim, 2002a), in my view, has less to do with the variations in media consumption (for example, the quantity and types of ethnic media outlets), and more to do with the consciousness these practices foster among the Iranian community, and its journalistic practices and media representations. In part this reflects the approach I have taken to media studies which focuses on how media technologies are appropriated and incorporated in everyday life, and how people think about the world through these media technologies (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1994). Another component of this approach looks at the content of these media technologies in terms of how they communicate belonging, country, home and other immaterial aspects of diasporic life. In other words, the complexity is not simply defined by the different media types these communities consume on a day-to-day basis (satellite television, radio, print media, online sources, etc.) or whether the members of these communities identify themselves as "Canadian" "Iranian" or "Iranian-Canadian". Rather, the complexity becomes more interesting when one looks beyond how people decode media texts or how producers encode them. According to Couldry (2010), as a researcher, one should also consider and observe the range of contexts within which media practices takes place. With a context-bound approach to media and audience studies, it becomes increasingly difficult to measure the degree to which ethno-cultural media practices inhibit or promote civic and cultural adaptation. Rather, understanding civic and cultural adaptation comes down to examining who, under what condition, and with which identity orientation, consumes and engages with their media environment.

Finally, in this dissertation ethnic media are not viewed through the lens of what Audrey Kobayashi calls "red boot multiculturalism" (1993, p. 205), that is the financing of various cultural events such as ethno-cultural festivals or art fairs for the sake of showcasing a multicultural façade. This study is, again, concerned with how members of "ethnic groups" represent themselves as politically engaged members of multiple communities, and in particular, the urban centres where they reside. This is based on the assumption that communication infrastructure, in this case ethnic media communication infrastructure, shapes the potential for political action and civic engagement (See Table 4, p. 26). Media, whether ethnic or mainstream, play an important role in fostering a political consciousness (Lecours, 2005). In this view, my project attempts to address the core issues in contemporary citizenship debates in the West, including issues concerning multicultural adaptation of immigrant communities, political agency and sense of belonging to greater public sphere.

An overview of Iranians in Stockholm

Ethnic distribution of Iranian immigrants based on a survey in Sweden in 1993 is 79.2% Fars (or Persian), 6.1% Azeri, 3.5% Kurd, 0.9% Turkmen, 9.6% Armenian, 0.4% Assyrians and 3% others (Naghdi, 2010). Conversely, the Iranian media sector is Stockholm reflect this demographic breakdown, offering programs exclusively in Persian language.

The Iranian diaspora, compared to other diaspora groups such as the Chinese diasporic community in Vancouver or the Jewish diasporic community in New York, is a fairly recent formation. After a short period of political freedom in early 1980s, Iranians soon realized that the Islamic Revolution of 1979 was not going to deliver on its promise of religious and political freedom and socio-economic equality (Amuzegar, 2003; Ghorashi et al., 2009). During the 1980s, Iranians experienced one of the most repressive periods in the recent history of the country, culminating in the famous 1988 execution of more than 4,000 political prisoners (Abrahamian, 1999, p. 209-228). The war with Iraq, which started in 1980 and lasted for eight years, combined with the political oppression of the regime resulted in the closing of national borders for a decade (Ghorashi et al., 2009), but did not prevent people from leaving Iran, who left mainly through smugglers and other illegal means. This was the first wave of mass immigration from Iran to Western Europe and North America. Tables 1 and 2 give a detailed breakdown of Iranian emigration to the West over time, and provide a comparison between the Swedish case with other immigrant-receiving countries of the West.

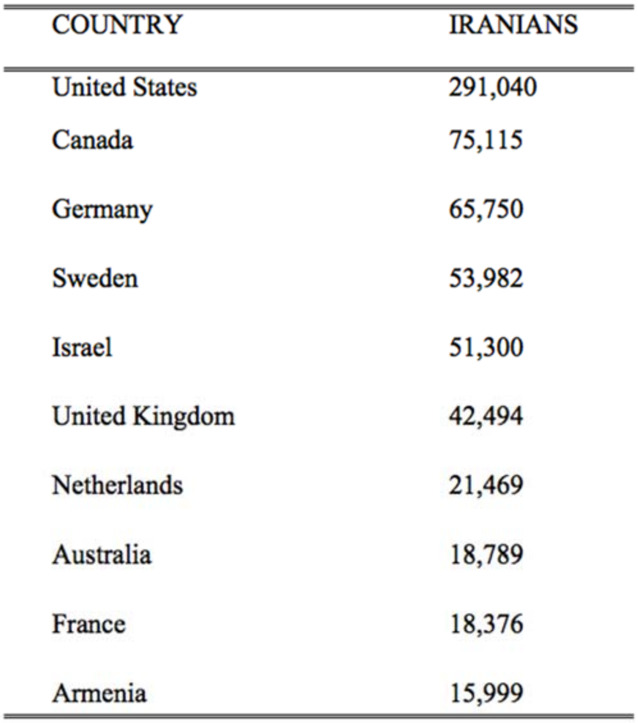
Census data from different countries indicate that most Iranians in the diaspora are highly educated. For example, in the USA, Iranians are among the most educated ethnic groups. One in four Iranians in the USA holds a graduate degree or above, ranked highest among 67 ethnic groups (Mostashari & Khodamhosseini 2004).

Table 1: ***Iranian immigrants admitted to the United States, Canada, Germany, the UK and Sweden: 1961 to 2005***

	1961-1970	**1971-1980**	**1981-1990**	**1991-2000**	**2001-2005**
USA	10,291	46,152	154,857	112,597	55,098
Germany	7,298	14,173	67,022	24,131	6,024
Canada	620	3,455	20,700	41,329	25,350
Sweden	384	3,249	38,167	16,804	6,086

Note: Modified from Hakimzadeh, 2006

Table 2: ***Top 10 Countries by size of Iranian-born population (government census data prior to 2006)***



COUNTRY	IRANIANS
United States	291,040
Canada	75,115
Germany	65,750
Sweden	53,982
Israel	51,300
United Kingdom	42,494
Netherlands	21,469
Australia	18,789
France	18,376
Armenia	15,999

Note. Modified from Hakimzadeh, 2006

Iranians in Canada are also a highly skilled immigrant group with relatively high levels of education. However, in contrast to the US community, most of Canada's Iranian immigrants were admitted between 1991 and 2001 (Table 1). In addition to the political refugees of the second wave in the 1990s, a growing number of Iranians took advantage of Canada's point-based immigration system, migrating there as entrepreneurs and investors.

Contrary to the Canadian experience, immigration flows to Sweden peaked in the second half of the 1980s (Table 1). Most Iranians came to Sweden as refugees, fleeing the Islamic regime and the 1980s Iran-Iraq war. Many of these people were granted asylum on humanitarian grounds. Once the war ended in 1988 and new conflicts gained momentum in other regions of the Middle East (the Gulf War) and in the Balkans, the refugee policy changed in favour of those fleeing these new conflicts. This shift in priority in the 1990s reduced the number of Iranian asylum seekers (Table 1). Since 2006, two consecutive centre-right governments in Sweden have resulted in the erosion of an immigration policy based on humanitarian needs. As a result, the majority of more recent immigrants to Sweden have come via family reunification, education and labour immigration.

In contrast to the diaspora groups in Canada and the United States, Iranians in Sweden suffer from a relatively high level of unemployment despite being highly educated and having a middle-class, urban background. According to a 1996 study, Iranians had the fourth-highest rate of unemployment among ethnic groups in Sweden, largely the result of the labour market undervaluing or not recognizing their education and credentials. According to a 2004 Swedish Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate among foreign-born Iranian population in Sweden was 20.4% compared to the national average of 6.3% in the same year (Hakimzadeh, 2006). As a result, many Iranians in Sweden have either turned to studying or self-employment. Discrimination in the labour market has been noted by the immigrants themselves as one of the greatest pushes towards immigrant self-employment in Sweden (Hakimzadeh, 2006).

The question of positioning: From ‘burden of representation’ to privilege of presentation

The gap between the need for accommodation of ethno-cultural differences and the increasing resistance by Western governments to implement multicultural policies has resulted in difficult times for multiculturalism and multicultural ideals of fostering diverse ethnically inclusive societies in many of the traditionally immigrant-receiving countries of the West, especially Europe. Anti-immigrant sentiments have been on the rise in many parts of the continent, especially against Muslim and Roma populations. In Britain a growing anti-Islam group known as the English Defence League holds frequent demonstrations in areas with high concentrations of Muslim immigrants (Treadwell & Garland, 2011). In Holland, Geert Wilders from the far-right anti-immigration party is the third largest party in the Dutch parliament, which subsequently holds the balance of power in that country (Carle, 2006). He is most famous for his comparison of the Koran to Adolf Hitler’s book *Mein Kampf*. The current German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, announced in late 2010 that multiculturalism in the country had utterly failed (Connoly, 2010). Current British Prime Minister David Cameron followed suit in early 2011 and declared the UK model of multiculturalism as a failure (Kuennsberg, 2011). The French and Italian governments have ordered the expulsion of undocumented Roma population (Traynor, 2011). In Sweden, the ultra-right wing Swedish-Democratic party (Sverigedemokraterna) was elected to the parliament in the 2010 general election (Mankell, 2010). While the situation in Canada is not as grave as the situation in parts of Europe, the growth of Muslim population, for example, has raised questions about accommodation after 9-11: to what degree should Canadians tolerate cultural difference in their communities? The 2007 controversies in Hérouxville, Quebec about whether Muslim women can wear headscarves when voting have triggered heated debates in the media and among academics on immigration and multiculturalism. The 2008 Quebec

Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008) also attests to the centrality of these debates in contemporary social politics.

Likewise questions concerning accommodation and multiculturalism are central to this dissertation. As outlined above, recent developments in the economic north pertaining to the management and accommodation of cultural difference, together with my personal experience with immigration and cultural adaptation, have instigated the development of this dissertation project. In this regard, I am aware that the positions that I as a researcher employ are central to how I construct the topic of my study (Bourdieu, 1984). In this research, my subjective positioning as an Iranian academic and a proponent of cultural pluralism (Ahadi, 2009; Ahadi & Murray, 2009) can be seen both as an asset and a constraint. Considering my background, I am equipped with cultural knowledge that is required to understand my research participants and the media material that I analyse. This "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6) may also be viewed as a possible "trap" leading to the construction of an "autobiographical work," meaning that the research runs the "danger" of becoming something that is partly academic and partly confessional (Geertz, 1973, p. 346; Alghasi, 2009, p. 29). As a response to this supposed "danger" I refer to the work of Edward Saïd. In *The Representation of the Intellectual* (1994), Saïd describes the exilic intellectual as someone who "takes pleasure in being surprised, never taking anything for granted and learning to make do in circumstances of shaky instability that would confound or terrify most people" (p. 59). Within this state of mind, Saïd argues, the exilic intellectual finds herself in a condition of restlessness and movement, constantly being unsettled, and unsettling others. Using this argument as a point of departure I navigate through my own experience as an exilic researcher conducting research with Iranians and their community media in Stockholm. In this journey, I tackle some of the ontological, epistemological and methodological challenges of doing research within the framework of what Saïd calls “defensive nationalism” (1994, p. 40), a framework that prompts the researcher to come to the ‘rescue’ of its own people in times of distress, such as migration and resettlement (like Frantz Fanon for Algerians, Albert Memmi for Tunisians, Stuart Hall for African-Caribbeans and Edward Saïd for Palestinians).

Another related issue is what Kobena Mercer calls “the burden of representation” (Mercer, 1990), to describe the situation of black film makers who “confronted with so few opportunities to create and produce films, feel they must use each and every opportunity to ‘represent’ black interests and viewpoints and counter dominant mainstream images” (Cottle, 2000, p. 106). Following this postcolonial tradition of criticism, in *Brown Skin, White Masks* Hamid Dabashi (2011) writes that the role of the exilic intellectual in Western academic discourse has been reduced to ‘a native informer’ in the manufacturing of “useful knowledge” about the culture, language and religion of the ‘Other’ (p. 42). How then do I relate to these arguments regarding positionality?

I have been asked at different conferences and presentations, quite critically, whether I would research Persian-language media and questions of ethnicity if it were not for my background. I am not convinced whether this is the right question to ask. Should we not be more interested in the positive impacts of researchers’ positionality on their field of study? As Minelle Mahtani argues, the issue at the forefront should be one of transparency rather than identity (2009). She writes that many scholars make their ethno-cultural origins and standpoints very clear. Specifically, she references Yasmin Jiwani (2006) and Faiza Hirji (2010), and to this list I can add Shahnaz Khan (2002), Jasmin Zine (2008), and Haideh Mighissi (1999b). I believe that subjectivity is present in every aspect of life, including the research environment (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). The goal is not to check my different positionalities at the door, but rather to acknowledge and build on them for a richer understanding of the research field, and above all to be transparent and upfront about them. In this regard, my dissertation project has not sprung out of a sense of burden or frustration to represent my own 'kind', as Mercer (1990) and Dabashi (2011) seem to imply. Rather, I see it as a privilege to be able to research and represent my ethnic and cultural heritage as I understand it from a city, Stockholm, where I lived between 1988 to 1999, and then again 2002 to 2004, and my experience and frustration with a at least two narratives of that society. One official narrative and international reputation of tolerance inclusion, and universal social-democratic values, and another of lived narrative based on cultural and geographical marginalization, and structural discrimination.

Conceptually this project is also informed by my onward experience with migration from Sweden to Canada in 1998. During the formative years of my late teenage years and early 20s I experienced a different "host society" in Canada where discourses of exclusion and structural racism in my experience were not as manifest as in the case of Sweden. Similarly, this project started as a comparative research between the Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm and in Vancouver but was developed into an in-depth case study of Stockholm, with the intent to carry out the Vancouver case study in the future. One of the key reasons for changing the scope of the study was my experience with fieldwork in Stockholm. Methodologically, researching ethnic media is an immersive experience. As I came to realise, one cannot rely on pre-formulated questionnaires to understand the field. Instead, I had to revise my approach several times during my fieldwork. This allowed me to engage with my interview participants and their stories, rather than letting my questions frame the interview process. Also, while in the field, the corpus of the study extends beyond pre-identified artefacts and informants to include emerging encounters with newly found sources of information. There is no media headquarter, there is no press kit, there is no flashy annual report, there is no media directory, there is no measurement of audiences, there is no professional organization for media workers. These are artefacts, practices, and information that are taken for granted and our methods literature refer to these as "matter of facts" when they discuss strategies for data gathering and interpretation. Often these artefacts do not exist. When dealing with the ethnic, the researcher needs to create these from scratch. For these reasons, the Stockholm case study proved to be much more complex and resource-draining than anticipated. Despite the formal exclusion of Vancouver from this study, Canada is occasionally referred to in this dissertation as an immigrant-receiving country with comparable experiences with global Iranian resettlement.

Positioning the research: Diasporic cosmopolitanism?

As discussed above, on a very personal level I am focusing on research involving Iranians in diaspora because of my own Iranian heritage and experience with diasporic life. I have the linguistic and cultural capital to research the Iranian communities in diaspora and their media. However, what is interesting about Iran and Iranian diasporic communities for an academic study, and where is this research positioned vis-à-vis the broader field of knowledge about (1) Iranian diaspora and identity construction and (2) the condition of 'diasporicity', hybridity and citizenship in general?

Hamid Dabashi, one of the more influential contemporary Iranian political thinkers, notes that Iran's current political system is the result of a political culture that over the last two hundred years has been in continual crisis (2007, p. 27). For an Iranian, it is difficult to not talk and think about politics when every generation in the past two hundred years in Iran has witnessed and experienced major political events: the constitutional wars of the nineteenth century and the revolution of the Western-educated bourgeoisie that led to the constitutional reform in 1906 to 1909 the abolition of the Qajar ruling dynasty in 1925 and the British-aided accession of Reza Shah Pahlavi to the Peacock Throne[1]; the American, British and Russian invasion of Iran in 1941 and the forced abdication of Reza Shah in favour of his son, Crown Prince Mohammad Reza Pahlavi; the Nationalisation of Iranian oil in 1951 by the nationalist Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddiq and the end of the British monopoly over Iranian oil revenues; the subsequent CIA-orchestrated coup d'état in 1953 that toppled Mosaddiq's government and reinstalled the absolute rule of Mohammad Reza Shah; and finally the 1979 Islamic Revolution which put an end to 2500 years of monarchy and brought with it a religious theocracy (Cleveland, 1994, Chapters 8, 10 & 20). All are examples of 'the crises in the political history of Iran' that Dabashi (2007) refers to in his writing.

These crises originated in the early nineteenth century with the commencement of the Iranian encounter with colonialism[2] (Dabashi, 2007, p. 27). Iran, due to its geopolitical significance and possession of vast oil reserves (third in the world after Saudi Arabia and Iraq) has historically played an important role in the colonial domination of the region. For instance, during the two World Wars Iran was proclaimed the "corridor to victory" because of its proximity to European colonies in Africa, the Middle East and Asia (Coakley, 1959). Iran's position as an officially autonomous nation during the colonial era[2] did not exempt it from being regarded with a colonial gaze, based on what Dabashi labels as a "colonial modernity" (Dabashi, 2007, p. 251). This modernity is understood as a regime of domination that regarded European knowledge and progress as the model to be followed by the rest of the world (Dabashi). This type of "governmentality" (Foucault, 1991) depended on a system of knowledge based on fictive binaries between "modernity" and "tradition", the "Occident" and the "Orient", the "civilized" and the "savage", or, more to the point, as Hall writes, "the West and the

Rest" (Saïd, 1978; Hall, 1996; Dabashi, 2007). In his essay "Governmentality" (1991) and in his book *Power/Knowledge* (1980) Foucault discusses the mechanisms involved in efficiently governing a group of people through non-coercive measures: "there is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints, just a gaze" (Foucault, 1980, p. 155). He argues that the governing apparatus of any given state operates not through forced measures, but rather through employing tactics to arrange things in such a way that "through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved" (1991, p. 95). The instruments of government, Foucault argues, instead of being laws, come to be a range of multiform tactics. These tactics give way to the creation of discourses in society (Ibid.). Discourses are the practices through which people reproduce relationships of power--both subjugation and domination. They are "complexes of signs and practices which organize social existence and social reproduction" (Lindstrom, 1990, p. 20). According to this reading of power, colonialism, in the age of Empire, no longer has to be thought of simply an imposition of power-relations on a passive indigenous people, but can be enacted through the production of knowledge and information between and about the colonised and their territories (Mills, 2003, p. 30). It is through these discourses that the colonized understands their own existence and their relation to the rest of the world. In other words, reality is only experienced through the discourses created by the regime of truth, which in turn is the product of accumulated knowledge about the colonized subject: the Other.

Bhabha refers to this categorisation of (former) colonized societies as the "fixity" in the ideological construction of otherness (1994, p. 66). Dabashi takes issue with the continuous lingering of this ideological fixity of otherness in both the Western and Iranian imagination: "Anytime any Iranian public intellectual begins a singsong oscillation between 'Islam' and the 'West' or 'tradition' and 'modernity' he [or she] is playing into the hands of Bernard Lewis [(1990)] and disregarding the very cosmopolitan culture that has made Iranian intellectuals possible" (Dabashi, 2007, p. 228). This process of "self-othering" that Dabashi refers to extends the shelf life of the "West and the rest" discourse. Instead, Dabashi engages in an alternative historicity that rejects the comparison of Iranian culture to European modernity to argue that Iranian culture has been and continues to be influenced by other cultures and territories of the world, such as the Arab, Indian, Chinese and Japanese (for a detailed discussion refer to pages 28-31 in Dabashi, 2007). Dabashi refers to this as the "cosmopolitan disposition of Iranians" (2007, p. 254), to some extent conditioned by geographical location.

Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel Huntington's (1993) predictions of a "clash of civilisations," based on the same logic as the discourse of the "West and the rest," has not yet been realized. Given the mounting evidence that the political views of predominantly Muslim societies are not very different from those of the Western societies, twenty years after it was first published, the "Clash of Civilisation" thesis remains a naïve trajectory (see for example Karim, 2000).

Evolving from the statistical data from their World Value Surveys (Inglehart, 1994), Inglehart and Norris (2003), provide convincing evidence that Muslim-majority countries, such as Iran, do view democracy and political freedom in the same way as Western democratic countries[3] (Inglehart et al., 2003, p. 64). Contrary to the Western image of Iranians as being anti-democratic and hyper-religious, studies focusing solely on Iran provide significant evidence for the claim that Iranians, compared to other Muslim-majority communities, are predominantly non-religious, secular, liberal and cosmopolitan in their worldview (Varzi, 2006, p. 197; Ladjevardi, 2007; Moghissi, Rahnema and Goodman, 2009; Moaddel, 2009; and Khiabani, 2010).

Iranians are also well connected to the rest of the world. If connectivity would be a measure for democracy and civil society in a country, then Iran would be considered a relatively democratic country. Figures for literacy, internet usage, computer and mobile phone ownership, number of blogs, satellite ownership, newspaper circulation, number of publications, and so on are comparable with democratic countries like Sweden and Canada. It should, however, be added that Iran lags behind in domains such as number of internet service providers, internet hosts, and internet bandwidth (World Bank, 2011).

Nonetheless, one of the surprising elements of the popular uprising in 2009 against the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was the amount of footage and information that circulated via new information and communication technologies such as satellite television, cellular phones, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook outside and inside Iran. Consider the mind-boggling flourishing of the younger generation of Iranians' presence on the Web, with an estimated 700,000 blogs (Dabashi, 2007, p. 563). Persian is the fourth most popular language for keeping online journals (Alavi, 2005). If connectivity through communication is a measure of cosmopolitanism, as Norris and Inglehart seem to suggest (2009, p. 197), then the politically non-violent uprising in Iran in 2009, known as the 'Green Movement', and the on-going fight for political change in the country through non-violent means, as well as the high connectivity of Iranians to the rest of the world, are testaments to the "cosmopolitan disposition" (Dabashi, 2007, p. 254) of Iranians.

Based on this assumption, one of the important underlying questions for my dissertation project is then, how does this "cosmopolitan disposition" play out among groups of migrants, in this case Iranians, in diaspora? Is this rather essentialist view of "the cosmopolitan disposition of Iranians" reflective of the Iranian communities in Stockholm? Although a more comprehensive discussion of cosmopolitanism as a form of citizenship is provided in Chapter 2, a working definition of cosmopolitanism is needed here in order to operationalize the concept: What does cosmopolitan identity mean according to some of our political thinkers and what are the indicators of such identity in diaspora and how does it change?

Recently there has been a revival in studies of cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2002a, 2002b, 2007; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002; Sandercock, 2003; Held, 2006; Karim, 2006; Georgiou, 2010). A keyword-search for "cosmopolitan" in book titles in the Simon Fraser University library catalogue returns 709 hits. Out of these, 628, or 88%, were written since 2000. Considering that cosmopolitanism is often closely related to the various processes that exemplify globalisation, migration and transnationalism (Binnie, Halloway, Millington, and Young, 2006, p. 5), it is not surprising that most literature on the topic of cosmopolitanism has emerged in the past decade. Vertovec and Cohen (2002) argue that "it is the new politics of the left, embodying the middle-path alternatives between ethnocentric nationalism and particularistic multiculturalism," that account for the emergence of contemporary debates of cosmopolitanism (p. 1). For some, cosmopolitanism refers to a vision of global democracy and world citizenship (see for example, Held, 2006, Chapter 11; Walzer, 2003, Chapter 1); for others it points to the possibilities for shaping new transnational frameworks for making links between social movements (see for example, Cohen and Rai, 2000; Tarrow, 2005, Chapter 3); and a third group invoke cosmopolitanism to advocate a post-essentialist politics, based on overlapping interests and hybrid sense of belonging in order to challenge the conventional notions of belonging, identity and citizenship (see for example, Beck, 2002b, Marques and Santos, 2004; Karim, 2006; Georgiou, 2010). As a result of these different conceptual frameworks, it is difficult to construct a universal definition of the concept.

For the purpose of this dissertation, I am adopting a definition that is based on Ulrich Beck’s (2002a; 2002b; and 2007) and Myria Georgiou’s (2010) works. The reason for this is twofold: a definition derived from Beck and Georgiou is closer to the third conceptual framework as presented above, and it is within this framework that I see my greatest contribution. Second, a definition based on the third “post identity” framework presents distinct opportunities for media to play a role as symbolic mediators of the cosmopolitan condition.

On a collective level the cosmopolitan perspective, argues Beck, “is an alternative imagination, an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities, which include the otherness of the other. It puts the negotiation of contradictory cultural experiences into the centre of activities: in the political, the economic, the scientific and the social” (2002a, p. 18). In other words, it is a globalisation from within the society or as Beck puts it, “a cosmopolitanisation of nation-state societies” (2002a, p. 23). At the centre of this cosmopolitan regime is a state of global consciousness that values the sense of awareness of global conditions and risks that stretches beyond the political, cultural, social and economic borders of the nation-state (Beck, 2002a; 2002b; 2007), but grounded in local material production. Beck (2002b) suggests the following as indicators of this cosmopolitanism:

Table 3: Indicators of cosmopolitanisation

1. Cultural commodities: developments in the import and export of cultural commodities, transnationalisation of the book trade, developments in the import and export of periodicals, in the number proportion of local and foreign productions in the cinema, in the proportion of local and foreign productions in television, corresponding radio broadcasts and so on.

2. Dual citizenship: legal basis and of social practice in dealing with migrants, asylum seekers; how are 'foreigners' defined statistically, in the media and in everyday (administrative) practice?

3. Political intensities: to what extent are various ethnic groups represented and present in the centres of national power - parties, parliaments, governments, trade unions?

4. Languages: who speaks how many languages?

5. Mobility: permanent immigration, development of immigration, development of labour migration; temporary immigration, development of refugee numbers, development in the number of foreign students;

6. Routes of communication: development of items sent by letter post, nation-ally and internationally; development of telephone conversations, nationally and internationally, of the corresponding data exchange through the electronic network and so on;

7. International travel: development of international passenger air travel, development of international tourism, the number and proportion of journeys abroad;

8. Activity in transnational initiatives and organizations: short or long-term involvement in campaigns by Greenpeace, Amnesty International, NGOs, etc., participation in international collections of signatures, consumer boycotts and so on;

9. Criminal activity: development of international (organized) criminality, development of politically motivated acts and/or acts of violence by transnational terrorism;

10. Transnational ways of life: diaspora communities and their cross-border private and public networks and decision-making structures;

11. Transnational news coverage: for example of wars on television to what extent is a change in perspectives taking place?

12. National identities: what is the relationship of the number and kind of national identities to citizenship identity?

13. Ecological crisis development in the (stratospheric) ozone layer, development of world climate, development of world-wide fish resources, development of cross-border air and water pollution, development of attitudes to local, national and global world crises, environmental legislation, environmental jurisdiction, environmental markets, environmental jobs.

Note: Modified from Beck, 2002b, pp. 79-80

The quantitative measurement of these indicators, Beck argues, is difficult simply because of the variable statistics and the immense problems of comparability. However surveys of different categories of these indicators suggest that cosmopolitanisation can be understood and represented empirically (see Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton, 1999; Norris et al., 2009).

On the question of ‘how to best understand cosmopolitanisation’, Georgiou suggests that “thinking through diaspora” is the way forward (2010). She defines cosmopolitanism within the framework of diaspora studies:

> As an analytical concept, cosmopolitanism is a category that captures the complexities of multiple forms of belonging and of heterogeneous and fragmented publics by challenging essentialist interpretations of identity and bounded communities, as well as assumptions about stable and ever present hierarchies that have indiscriminately defined social relations, politics and culture for more than a century (e.g. social and geographical divisions, meanings of citizenship, key elements of identity). Cosmopolitanism as a category, since its original formation, has recognised the importance of human mobility, boundary crossing and close encounters of difference for the production of meaning, identity and political action (Georgiou, 2010, p. 19).

Georgiou (2010) goes on to argue that in no other case is the close relationship between immigration, space, identity and cosmopolitanism more obvious than in the case of diaspora and their media. How may we conceptualise this space? This dissertation argues that what facilitates the multi-layered identity orientation and adaptation of immigrants in Western societies are the “institutional arenas” and the “institutional levels” (Marques et al., 2004) of diasporic communities that both operate within and transcend urban settings. The institutional arenas of these communities are composed of immigrant or ethnic minority organisations and local diasporic networks, as well as civil society associations and local political institutions, all of which give the diasporic community member increased access to their society of settlement through civic engagement (p. 105). The institutional levels extend from the neighbourhood to the supranational (Table 4).

This framework is useful for mapping the various players in different arenas, on different levels. However, when conducting research on communities in general, and in this case diasporic communities, one has to take into account that the “Arenas” in the above model can further be segmented into smaller and overlapping units, accounting for a much more flexible associational life. In this more segmented model, there are possibilities for crossover between, for example, political organisations, immigrant associations and media organisations (as it was frequently observed in my case study of Stockholm’s Iranian community media).

Table 4: Institutional arenas levels: a two-dimensional participation space

	ARENAS			
LEVELS	Immigrant Groups	Immigrant Associations	Civil Society	Political Institutions
Supranational	Diasporas; transnational networks	International federations	Political parties in sending countries; international religious organizations, international NGOs **TRANS-NATIONAL MEDIA**	UN; EU; consultative bodies (EU Forum); political institutions in sending countries
National	Immigrant communities and networks	Immigrant associations and federations; **IMMIGRANT MEDIA**; religious organizations	Political parties; human rights, anti-racist, etc. organizations; Church; trade unions; **NATIONAL MEDIA**	Political institutions; consultative council
Municipal	Immigrant communities	Immigrant associations; **IMMIGRANT MEDIA**;	Voluntary, entrepreneurial & school associations (pupil, parents) **CITY MEDIA**	Municipal and parish political institutions; municipal advisory council
Neighbourhood	Immigrant communities	Immigrant associations **IMMIGRANT MEDIA**	Residents, school, voluntary associations **COMMUNITY MEDIA**	Neighbour-hood associations

Note: Modified from Marques et al., 2004

Critical intervention: Diasporic nationalism?

As outlined above, recent research on diasporic identity and media suggest that diasporic consciousness and practices should be understood as an extension of transnational and cosmopolitan conditions, characterized by fluid or hybrid identities, with promises of transnational mobility, global cultural flow, and new platforms for dialogue and civic engagement (Beck, 2007; Held, 2006). As a result, communication practices of diasporic communities in the West have largely been analysed and celebrated as symbolic mediators of the cosmopolitan condition (Georgiou, 2010; Karim, 2011). While critically engaging with existing arguments, my research attempts to avoid 'romanticisation' of the cosmopolitan identity and transnational media practices. While I argue that the establishment of a multicultural communication infrastructure is an integral part of the adaptation process of immigrant communities in their new countries of settlement, I also argue that the tendency to celebrate transnational identity and cosmopolitan mobility is often disconnected from the everyday reality and disguises actual conditions and experiences of immigrant communities. Instead, I am critically examining cosmopolitanism from the perspective of globalisation and neoliberal policy regimes and therefore ask the following question: is cosmopolitan identity conditioned by the neoliberal regime of globalisation of capital, culture and human mobility? In academic literature cosmopolitanism is theorised as the antithesis to neoliberalism; its contra-nationalistic tendency celebrates new forms of civic engagement based on cross-territorial and inter-cultural solidarities, and flow of culture, free from national regulatory apparatus. But as I discuss in Chapter 3, this claim of post-nationality is remarkably close to the ideals of neoliberalism as an ideological framework that also celebrates cross-border economic investitures and "free flows" in general, and seeks to destabilise the power of the nation-state in favour of individual freedom and upward economic mobility (see Couldry, 2010 for discussion of neoliberalism). Subsequently, throughout my dissertation I engage in a careful examination of current trends in globalization research, with less valorising tendencies for transnational and cosmopolitan conditions, in order to move towards a more critical understanding of these trends.

I also distance myself from Dabashi's (2007) account of the cosmopolitan predispositionality of Iranians (p. 254) in order to allow for alternative interpretations of identity; interpretations that are not imbedded in primordial understanding of identity, citizenship, culture and belonging, but rather those that are open to alternative ways of seeing the Iranian subject outside an essentialist lens. In this quest I am suggesting that Iranians, contrary to what Dabashi and other scholars have claimed, may very well deviate from the image of the 'non-religious, secular, liberal, cosmopolitan and trans-nationally minded Iranian'. While there may be traces of cosmopolitanism among Iranians in diaspora, this research hypothesises that there are equally significant nationalistic tendencies among these groups that could result in a citizenship model of 'diasporic nationalism' rather than 'diasporic cosmopolitanism'. As I demonstrate in this dissertation, the Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm is an important playground for these orientations to belonging, citizenship and (multi)culturalism to manifest themselves.

Chapter Two - Theory and Research Design

Media: From Public Sphere and to public sphericules

The theoretical backdrop to this research is the increasing discomfiture with the public sphere thesis as originally developed by Jürgen Habermas (1989). The historical foundation of the public sphere goes back to mid-eighteenth century Europe where ordinary citizens (white, middle class men) were allowed to become involved in discussing issues in public forums (McKee, 2005, p. 8). One of the most important aspects of the public sphere is its separation from the *system-world*--the state and the economy (Young, 2000, pp. 157-158). State and economy are each *systemic* insomuch as each tends to extend its influence or effects, bureaucratizing or commodifying human life by authorised power or money (pp. 158-159). Instead, the public sphere belongs to the *life-world* and is relatively autonomous from state and economy. The associational activities of the 'lifeworld' are structured primarily through 'communicative interaction' and 'discourse ethics'. The problematic of modernity, Habermas argues, is solved through these two inter-subjective approaches (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 212).

> The communicative rationality recalls older ideas of logos, inasmuch as it brings along with it the connotations of a non-coercively, consensus-building force of a discourse in which the participants overcome their subjectively based views in favour of a rationally motivated agreement (Habermas, 1987, p. 294, 315).

Habermas argues that the consensus-bridging force of communicative action--characterized by argumentative speech--is a central experience in the life of human beings (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 212).

The only valuable force in a communicative action is the force of a better argument. Habermas offers a procedural blueprint for communicative action, which he refers to as “discourse ethics” (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 213; Young, 2000, p. 59; Held, 2006, pp. 239-241; Gastil, 2008, pp. 18-19). The five key procedural requirements are: (1) no party affected by the discussions should be excluded from the discourse; (2) all participants should have equal opportunity to present and criticize claims; (3) participants must be willing to empathize with each other; (4) existing power differences should be neutralized so that these differences have no effect on consensus-building; and (5) goals must be presented in a transparent way (Flyvbjerg, p. 213, 1998; Gastil, 2008, pp. 4-7).

In Habermas’s model of argumentative-deliberation citizens are defined in terms of taking part in public debates. There is, in Habermas’s own words, a sharp distance from the liberal-democratic model of citizenship, which is defined by pursuit of private interests:

> [The liberal democratic model extends citizens] the opportunity to assert their private interests in such a way that by means of elections, the composition of parliamentary bodies, and the formation of government, these interests are finally aggregated into a political will that makes an impact on the administration (1994a, p. 1).

In Habermas’s model, participants are emotionally detached, power-neutral, and performative. In other words participants *detach* themselves from group belonging in order to transcend ideological biases and are capable of *performing* the role of the *neutral* citizen in a deliberative setting. This model suggests an impartial subjectivity: being impartial means being open to all points of view and disregarding one’s own group belonging, or being able to set it aside in moments of empathy for others-- i.e. class, gender, ethnicity, and nationality (Held, 2006, p. 239; Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 213; McKee, 2005, p. 145).

On the question of ‘Who or what institutions are to safeguard such procedural democracy,’ Habermas relies on a right-based political order called “constitutional republicanism" (Modood, 2007, p. 148; Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 214). Democratic processes are linked to judicial institutions that are to overlook and monitor the work and implementation of civil society laws and regulations. "What unites the citizens of a society shaped by pluralism are first of all the abstract principles of an artificial republican order, created through the medium of law" (Habermas, 1994b, p. 514).

We may have come a long way since the mid-eighteenth century Europe and its exclusive model of the public sphere. Revisionist scholars of the public sphere thesis, however, argue that the structure of the public sphere remains highly exclusionary. Nancy Fraser (1992) has argued that the public sphere, grounded in Enlightenment ideas of rationalism, empiricism and emotional detachment, has become an instrument for domination rather than a utopian model for democracy (p. 117). The Habermasian public sphere has also been criticized for subscribing to the liberal idea of a singular, comprehensive sphere of debate, which seemingly is always preferable to multiple publics (Fraser, 1992). Such a homogenous public, it is argued, cannot possible facilitate and accommodate differentiated needs and aspirations of citizens of multiple heritages (Benhabib, 1992; Fraser, 1992; Karim, 2002a).

Media scholars have relied on the public sphere in their critique of contemporary media models. Media as facilitators of an informed public can play a significant role in shaping public opinion. Such claims to 'social responsibility' are, however, part of the larger debate on the overall role of media in society. The very foundation of Western mainstream media is grounded in an "ethos of objectivity" (Hackett and Zhao, 1998, p. 16), which in turn is related to Habermas's conception of a 'neutral' public sphere. According to Hackett and Zhao (1998), under such regime of objectivity distinctions should be made between private belief systems and objective reflection of the world. Nancy Fraser (1992) argues that the public sphere, as conceptualised by Habermas, can turn either into an instrument for domination or inclusion of historically marginalised groups in society such as women, and ethno-cultural and minorities.

The media's role in this liberal-representative model of democracy is to be objective informers. For instance, in times of election media should provide enough information so that citizens can form accurate judgments in electing public officials to office (Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards and Rucht, 2002, p. 291). The media can play a positive role by being the people's watchdog, monitoring and projecting the (mis)conducts of elite public figures. In this view, it is wishful thinking to ask for a larger participation of citizens in shaping the content of media. Instead, a number of elite sources are designated with the task to present opinion. The 'terms of engagement' are based on Habermas's egalitarian model of the speech-act, characterised by impartiality and emotional detachment. This 'liberal model of media' is hegemonic and acts in favour of the ruling elite in society. It is not so much the case of an outlet favouring particular political parties but rather the case of media playing an integral part in maintaining the social order. McNair (2007) gives an example. In the case of political campaigns, the media's concept of impartiality works to contain political debate within a more or less tightly drawn consensus which admits only an established political class and often marginalises or excludes others (p. 58). Impartiality means, in essence, to not endorse a political party. But it does not mean to give equal representation to all parties involved or all views. Other scholars, concerned with media's treatment of minorities, raise similar concerns. Bailey and Harindranath (2006) argue that "mainstream media are not neutral channels of disinterested information" (p. 306). Rather they are constantly involved in shaping the content of information to guarantee that specific mainstream views are emphasized while dismissing others. In fact this illustrates that media politics are shaped by the broader political context- the politics that defines patterns of access, ownership and regulation (Bailey et al., 2006). These patterns define the scope of participation and representation of minority voices in the public sphere.

> It could be argued that some of the views on media roles in liberal democracies are based on a liberal-humanist ‘colour-blindness’ argument, not paying much attention to the ‘politics of difference’ of minority groups or on the neutrality of liberal policy and on the notion of a singular public sphere (Bailey and Harindranath, 2006, p. 305).

For ethnic or racialized groups, the cumulative effect of such strategies is public disengagement from the political system, as well as racialization, misrepresentation, and misjudgement of certain groups. The ‘media malaise’ scholars argue that there is a strong correlation between a weak media infrastructure and political involvement (Gerbner, 1994; Putnam, 1993; Signorielli and Morgan, 1990). Decades-long research suggests that the ways in which the mainstream media cover political issues-- e.g. with great emphasis on personality cult, sensationalisation, racialisation and dichotomisation of issues-- contributes to a spiral of cynicism among the public.

In an attempt to remedy this ‘spiral of cynicism’, a number of contemporary communication scholars have applied Habermas’s theory of the public sphere to the study of ethnically differentiated media systems. These scholars (Karim, 2002a and 2006; Georgiou, 2006 and 2010; and Bailey et al., 2006) depart from bourgeois conception of media as ‘all-inclusive’ and neutral and suggest a fragmented media system that is not colour-blind, and is sensitive to local, ethnic, and group needs. Ethnic media, as part of a multiple model of “public sphericules,” offer a sense of belonging to groups largely alienated from the dominant public sphere (Karim, 2002a). They are not alternatives to the mainstream public sphere, but work in parallel to bridge the gap between marginalised groups and the mainstream of society. Karim’s study of the South Asian press in Vancouver, for example, demonstrates that the ethnic media are not isolated from the broader public discourse (2002a, p. 238). Issues that concern the rest of the society also concern ethnic minorities. One of the strengths of ethnic media is in their ability to reach their audiences in their own cultural idioms, instead of the language used in the mainstream public sphere (p. 239) and without racializing them in derogatory terms.

Scholars in this field are challenged by a number of important questions that are central to this dissertation: are ethnic media, as part of smaller ‘public sphericules’, challenging the mainstream public sphere?; are they counter-hegemonic?; or, are ethnic media independent of the mainstream public sphere?; and, with the number of ethnic media constantly on the rise, have they increased minority power?

Theories emerging on ethnic media are grounded in the literatures of the “cultural pluralism” school of thought (Kymlicka, 1995, 2007; Taylor, 1994; Young, 1990, 1995 & 2000; Walzer, 2003). To ignore particularistic group affiliations is to deny humans the right to engage in social, economic and political processes as they see fit. Iris Marion Young (1995) argues that despite the fact that many immigrants acquire full citizenship rights, many ethnic groups remain excluded from the bourgeois public sphere, and are reduced to second-class citizens. The solution lies at least in part in providing institutionalised means for the explicit recognition and representation of different groups (1995). This dissertation examines the process of cultural adaptation experienced by the Iranian diasporic community, through what Young calls “institutionalised means” (1989, p. 259), to analyse their levels of participation and sense of belonging in daily life. To do so requires a research framework. In this study, the framework is *locally produced* Persian-language media *in Stockholm* studied as part of a larger multicultural communication infrastructure of Swedish society.

On a conscious level, the processes of socio-cultural integration, as well as economic and political adaptation are made possible by the existence of a well-functioning *communication infrastructure.* A communication infrastructure consists of a web of community organisations and media outlets that serves the local immigrant population, assisting them by pooling their collective knowledge as they develop ways to live in new countries of settlement. Without the existence of a sustainable communication infrastructure it becomes more difficult for immigrant *communities* to form and function both as a social and physically concrete entity and as units within the larger dominant culture. (Matei, Ball-Rokeach, Wilson, Gibbs, and Hoyt, 2000; Marques et al., 2004). On another layer of understanding of diasporic groups, I will examin citizenship, not only for its traditional association with national identity but in a broader sense, including other kinds of identities, such as political, cultural, social and religious (Westin, 2003a) but also how social identities mediate formal and informal participation in the public sphere. In this context the media are assumed to be facilitators of living democracy by providing a flow of information and promoting communication among people (Dahlgren, 2000).

Ethnicity: Essentialist and situational

A number of different theories of ethnicity and identity formation exist. Here I give a short overview of two conceptions: the primordial or essential approach and the more critical or constructivist approach. I also explain my preference for the second approach that emphasizes the relational and contextual aspects of identity formation.

The primordial and essential approach to ethnicity qualifies ethnic ties and identities as fundamental characteristics of human beings based on common and shared culture. Diasporic subjectivities have the following characteristics according to Safran

(1991): (1) they are dispersed from an original home centre; (2) they maintain a memory, vision or myth about their original homeland; (3) they believe they are not-- or perhaps cannot be-- fully accepted by their receiving country; (4) they see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right; (5) they are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; and (6) group consciousness and solidarity are defined by continuing relationship with the homeland. This approach to identity formation is first and foremost bounded to a geographical territory called 'home' which offers a psychological and emotional attachment for the individual citizens (see for overview Pieterse, 1996; Laclau, 1996; and Safran, 1991). From this point of view, the genesis of ethnic identifications and boundary making pay less attention to the social, political and economic contexts where they occur. This approach can neither explain the different forms of ethnicity, nor can it critically assess the process of identity formation. By contrast, I locate the approach this dissertation takes closer to a strand of diasporic research that is less preoccupied with the fixed notion of a homeland and instead "gives greater subjective ability to the migrant subject in constructing the new" (Alghasi, 2009, p. 20). This concept of diasporic consciousness rests on the normative notion that global migration and flow of culture will lead to the decline of the nation state and in its place, a new form of cosmopolitan connectivity will emerge (Anthias, 1998, Brah, 1996, and Tsagarousianou, 2001).

In this regard, Stuart Hall (1994) states, "we cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about one experience, one identity, without acknowledging its other side" (p. 394). Cultural identities, far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power. Identities are the names we give the different ways (1) we are positioned by, and (2) position ourselves within the narratives of the past. Wimmer (2008) argues that ethnicity must be seen as a continuum that varies from a social context and from one society to another. Ethnic distinctions can, in fact, "be fuzzy and boundaries sharp, with unclear demarcations and few social consequences, allowing individuals to maintain membership in several categories or switch identities" based on the situation and context (p. 7). Cultural and ethno-racial hybrids and hyphenated identities (e.g. Muslim-Canadian, Iranian-Canadian, etc.), especially among diasporic communities, are more frequent than fixed identities based on essentialised cultural heritage. Such cultural hybridity is exemplified in Aihwa Ong's work with reference to multiple immigrants (2003, p. 254). In an examination of her own multiple identities, Ong writes that she is riding multiple hyphens as an Indonesian-born, European-educated, Dutch-speaking academic who now lives and works in Australia (1999, p. 23). Ethno-racial hybridity, Pieterse (2004) argues, is best described as a state of being between multiple ethnicities and races. He discusses a new ethno-racial formation called "Cablinasian" which he explains as a person who is a blend of Caucasian, black, Indian, and Asian (p. 94).

In this debate between primordial and constructivist conception of ethnicity, nation-states have historically represented the first camp. Traditionally nation-states have aspired to homogenize, centralize and normalize the definition of national citizenship and belonging. International migration and movements of diverse ethno-racial groups between geographical borders have resulted in a rupture in this dream of a homogenized nation. Many immigrant-receiving nations of the West have come to realize that modern nation building requires a certain degree of flexibility in defining the ethno-cultural boundaries of the nation.

Models of social adaptation

Although the global population of migrants is relatively small (3.2% according to the International Organization of Migration in 2013), the absolute number of international migrants has grown considerably from 1990 to 2013 (from 154 million people in 1990 to 232 million in 2013). This trend is the result, in large part, of globalization—a process fuelled by capitalism, technological innovation, and regulation—leading to increasing levels of interdependence among people, organizations, and government authorities (Norris & Inglehart, 2012). Popular concern regarding migration can be attributed to the significant social, economic, and political implications of the movement of people across borders on the countries of settlement and of origin. Often state and local governments fear, for instance, that the influx of new immigrants will place a burden larger than they can handle on local health and social services. However, research also highlights the potential gains that communities and countries can achieve due to immigration, as is the case when immigrants help address labour market needs (e.g., in engineering or medical fields, or in agriculture-related industries).

The processes involved in the social incorporation of immigrants into the social fabric of their communities of settlement have been called many things, including acculturation, adaptation, assimilation, and social integration. These terms are frequently contested in the scholarly literature and there is no universally accepted definition of them (Glazer, 2005; Hollinger, 1995). In the U.S., in the early 20th century, *assimilation theory* was the dominant framework for understanding the settlement experience of waves of immigrants from Italy, Poland, and other European origins. The theory suggested that, over time, immigrants adopted values, beliefs, and behaviours that prevailed in the country of settlement. Assimilation theory, though, came under fire in the 1960s, during the civil rights movement and as part of a reaction towards the assumption that Anglo-American culture in the U.S. was superior (Norris & Inglehart, 2012). Assimilation theory returned to the literature in more nuanced forms in the 1980s and 1990s, especially in the context of European countries, including Sweden. Alba and Nee (2003) argued that assimilation into a society was dependent on individual immigrants' human capital (education, language and work-related skills), economic capital, and social capital (degree of embeddedness in social and organizational networks). Other prominent theories of assimilation, such as *segmented assimilation theory* (Portes & Zhou, 1993), suggest that acculturation occurs for second-generation immigrants, but this process does not affect all of them uniformly. The acculturation of highly trained immigrant professionals and entrepreneurs, for instance, is likely to be less challenging compared to the social integration of immigrants with less professional training and economic capital.

Although the term assimilation has dominated research regarding immigrant settlement in North America and Europe, the term *integration* has been more prevalent in recent literature (post-1990s). Integration was initially proposed as a compromise between two normative positions, assimilation and multiculturalism, and shares several of the assumptions of assimilation theory as revised in 1990s and 2000s (Chapter Three in this dissertation is dedicated to multiculturalism). In the integration framework immigrants are successful in securing jobs and obtaining formal citizenship, while they simultaneously feel free to express their cultural and religious beliefs (Prieto, Sagafi-Nejad, & Janamanchi, 2013).

The process of immigrants' acculturation in the country and community of settlement is a complicated and long process that affects immigrants' life prospects, but it also shapes their social and cultural identity at both an individual and collective level. Research suggests that, for the settler community, ethnic media play a decisive role as mediators of culture that constantly shape immigrants' social identity, as well as their sense of community belonging (Georgiou, 2003a; Karim, 2011; Matsaganis et al, 2010).

Diaspora: Narratives and counter-narratives

Given my focus on Iranians in diaspora, this dissertation has also been influenced by literatures on diasporic Muslim and Middle Eastern communities. It is essential to outline some of the key debates and issues, as well as some of the gaps that exist in this field of study.

Alliances between members of the diasporas, rather than being based in the notion of a fixed homeland, are forged around other commonly shared experiences such as the suffering caused from displacement, adaptation to their country of settlement, resistance to integration and creation of new hybrid identities. The same can be said about Muslim or Middle Eastern diaspora. The different Muslim diasporic communities in the West are in a constant battle to negotiate a place and a meaningful life by forging alliances along the lines of common experiences and shared values to offer alternatives to what Edward Saïd calls Orientalised narratives, based on the dichotomy between *us* versus *them* (1978).

Heresiographers[4] have identified over 72 branches of Islam (Rahnema, 2006, p. 31). Therefore, it would be safe to say that Muslims have different views and interpretations of Islamic scripts and traditions; some groups adhere to a more liberal interpretation of the scripts, while others are more conservative; some individuals are secular in their worldview, while others are in favour of politicized Islam (Dabashi, 2006); some women are veiled head to toe, other women may not even wear a headscarf. According to Rahnema (2006), Muslim identities in diaspora are dependent on the interplay between three forces: (1) religious identity (including secular identity), (2) original national and cultural identity, and (3) new national and cultural identity (p. 33).

Since the events of 9/11 a large number of publications have explored Islam (Richardson, 2001 and 2004; Karim, 2000 and 2002b; Poole 2002; Nacos and Torres-Reyna, 2003 and 2007; Ruigrok and van Atteveldt, 2006; Berkowitz 2007). However more attention in the English and European speaking academic world has been dedicated to the relationship between Islam and the West--especially in light of religious extremism (Geaves, Gabriel, Haddad and Idleman Smith, 2004)--than to the complexities *within* the Muslim communities. The post-9/11 body of literature mainly focuses on the East/West binary and the struggle between an arguably democratic "EurAm" camp and an un-democratic Muslim camp. Many of these works are grounded in Edward Saïd's influential book *Orientalism* (1978) and his critical discussion of the binaries that characterise the relationship between the Occident and the Orient (binaries of civilised versus savage, democratic versus authoritarian, liberal versus traditional, etc.). Karim Karim (2000) in his book *Islamic Peril* (2000) discusses the stereotypes that exist in the West about the Middle East and Islam. He then argues that Islam is not a homogenous religion as the Western media portrays it; there are many different branches of Islam that are practiced differently. However, the West conflated these variances to the "enemy" after 9/11.

Subsequently, different remedies have been offered by scholars on Islam as to how to bridge this East/West divide. For most scholars this remedy is found in either liberalisation of Islam (Tibi, 2008) or accommodation of Muslims by Western nations (Modood, 2006 and 2007). According to Tibi (2008) "[Muslims] need to forge a pattern of Euro-Islam identity based on the core values of Europe, described as the idea of Europe endorsed by a liberal and reformed Islam" (p. 215). My problem with Tibi is that he does not critically examine the core “values of Europe” for what they mean, where they come from and where they are headed. Not only are many elements of Euro-culture from Arabic and Persian societies but also Europe today is more of a project or work in progress than a clearly defined cultural or geographical entity. With more countries joining the European Union, it has become more difficult to speak of *a* Europe with ‘core values’. This is clearly evident in the lack of a united front on the Syrian refugee crisis since 2011.

A number of scholars have critically questioned the secular nature of Western countries, and have argued that not only are the foundations of Western society based on Christian traditions, but also that religion plays a significant role in politics and the daily life of people in the West still today (see for example Salvatore, 2007). Tariq Modood (2006; 2007), on the other hand, is critical of any notion of a liberal tradition of egalitarianism and ‘core values’, and instead provides an argument very much along the lines of Will Kymlicka (1995) and Iris Marion Young (2000): one of accommodation and tolerance. In other words, Modood argues that majorities in democratic societies must protect minority rights, including Muslim ones, and accommodate difference (2007).

Even after a decade (since 9-11) of greater Western attention to Islam, there is a gap in the body of literature published in English that deals with Muslim or Middle Eastern diasporic communities. Absent from many of the debates on the nature of Islam in the West and accommodation of diasporic Muslim communities, is the question of diversity and conflicts *within* the Muslim communities, fragmented along national, ethno-cultural, and linguistic lines. Analyses based on the Islam/West binary fuel the flame of contrived opposites (such as East/West, fanatic Muslim/moderate Muslim, etc.). Less prevalent in contemporary analyses are nuanced accounts of the conflicts that arise as a result of tensions between and among ethno-cultural communities. On an analytical level, such dichotomisation overwhelmingly focuses on the struggle between Islam and the West, with questions of accommodation and acceptance at the core of this debate, taking little notice of the struggles *within* the Islamic or Middle Eastern diasporic communities.

In this regard, Muslim feminist scholars and critical race scholars have, in my view, offered a much more critical analysis of the multiple and complex issues and conflicts that occur within the culture, thus breaking away from the binary of East and West in their discussion of conflicts. Yasmin Jiwani (2006), in her book *Discourses of Denial*, criticises the way in which media in Canada sensationalise the violence against women of ethnic background (mainly Muslim and South Asian) in its occasional coverage of isolated events. The Muslim-Canadian feminist scholar Shahnaz Khan (2002) argues that a binary exists in society's view on Muslim female identity: the Orientalist view, which regard women as repressed, and the Islamist view which regards women as liberated. Moving beyond such binaries, and in order to understand such processes of homogenisation, Khan proposes the creation of a "third space" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 55), "which challenges the notion of culture as a unifying force legitimized by an original mythic and utopian past" (Khan, 2002, p. 19). In this crosscutting third space, articulations of new cultural demands, meanings, and strategies become practices of collusion and resistance. In a series of publications, Canadian anthropologist Parin Dossa (2004; 2005; 2008) and sociologist Haideh Moghissi (1999a; 1999b; 2006) critically examine the life conditions of Muslim women in diaspora.

My aim is to build on this existing literature and develop a more deeply rooted understanding of the complex nature of the social life of one particular Muslim-majority diasporic community, the Iranian community, by analysing their communication infrastructure in Stockholm. One of the key questions in this dissertation asks: what are the ways in which members of the community, who may or may not deviate from the mainstream of both societies (West and Muslim/Iranian), find a space of interaction and coexistence? Second, how can we look beyond the binary of East and West to also focus on the struggles that go on *within* the framework of specific cultures (in this case, the Iranian Diasporic communities in Stockholm)? I am particularly interested in those sub-groups who, through hegemonic forces within their own culture, are marginalized even further *within* their own already marginalised communities. I title this phenomenon *intracultural* marginalisation.

Interviews with audiences and media stakeholders in Stockholm, and textual analyses of Persian-language media content seem to suggest that while communication practices and ethnic media consumption can both prevent and promote adaption of Iranian immigrant communities to larger society, they can also bring old political, social, ethnic, and cultural tensions back to the surface, highlight existing conflicts, or simply help to create new tensions along new group formations (such as “new” and “old” immigrants, and first and second generation immigrants). This speaks against the false notion that a particular immigrant community has one unified agenda. Focusing on ethnic media, my experience with diasporic Iranian communities has given me access to how media outlets have diverse ideological and editorial inclinations. At the same time, I have witnessed instances where voices of a certain few community leaders, experts and media personalities become the only perceived voice of the community. This can possibly lead to marginalisation of alternative voices in the community.

This assertion echoes other emergent research in the field. In a study of Kurdish ethnic media, Kosnick (2007) argues that a particular immigrant community does not have one unified agenda. He finds that outlets have diverse ideological and editorial inclinations. However, through social hegemonic forces, certain value systems and ideologies are brought to the forefront as common sense and representative of the ethnic community, while other values and ideologies are overlooked as deviant and unrepresentative of the community (p. 159). Following the same logic, Aksoy and Robins (2003) warn against the hegemonic forces that often affirm and idealise certain dominant aspects of the homeland. These hegemonic forces shape the kind of "imagined collectivities" in which diasporic identities are framed (p. 104). In sum, these internal conflicts not only influence individuals' perception of their own identity as "Iranian", but also help to foster a collective sense of identity vis-à-vis the mainstream or dominant identity(ies) in the country of settlement.

To accomplish my research goals, I approach my field of inquiry from three angles: (1) analysing policy instruments in Sweden, specifically media policies that enable community building; (2) conducting interviews with media stakeholders; and finally (3) analysing media content in my research site. Before I explain the specific strategies for data gathering, it is important to explain the methodological foundations for this research design.

Research design: Identifying the research framework and corpus for ethnic media research

I have relied on research methodologies from the three academic traditions of political science (policy research), communications (content analysis), and anthropology (fieldwork in the form of interviews and observations). First, for policy review I have relied on government documents and reports as well as secondary sources such as reports from various NGOs and transnational organizations. Weimer and Vining (2015) divide policy research into two broad categories: documentary research and field research in the form of interviews with policy experts (p. 325). For the purpose of this research, I relied on the first category of document research.

For content analysis (Krippendorff, 2012), I first put together a directory of media outlets through on-line search engines, local telephone directories, and secondary sources to create a list of Persian-language media in Stockholm. The second step was to create a media archive. In Stockholm there are daily radio programs that cover news and current affairs, as well as three Iranian websites. Print media and television have no strong presence (See Table 14 for an overview). A period of seven weeks in April and May 2011 was selected as the sampling frame for the media archive to collect material from online publications and radio. For the daily radio in Stockholm I archived six radio programs, four daily and two weekly, over the period of seven weeks and generated a constructed week sample (Riffe, Aust, & Lacy, 1993). The benefit of the constructed week approach, according to Riffe et al. (1993) is that it allows for a better estimate than simple random sample by avoiding the possibility of oversampling Saturdays and Sundays. Also, in their research on different sampling methods, the percentage of the constructed week sample mean fell within one or two standard errors of the population mean, always exceeding the percentage for the simple random sample (Riffe et al., 1993). Riffe et al. (1993) argue that a sample of one constructed week (n=7) is sufficient for six months of material. To delve deeper into the various discourses represented in Persian-language media in Stockholm, and in order to investigate the degree to which these media foster or prevent an intercultural or cosmopolitan construction of identity, I generated a sub-sample of stories covered in media during the constructed week. This sub-sample came to include stories that were representative of the dominant frames covered in Persian-language media in Stockholm on the topic of belonging and identity formation.

This set of data is complemented with 18 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, such as media professionals and people active in the community to assess the current state of Persian-language media space in Stockholm and to investigate the lived experiences of my interview participants (Creswell, 2013). Each interview lasted for 90-120 minutes. In addition, being in the field allowed me to observe the day-to-day cultural and political activities of the Iranian community of Stockholm. These observations make up the 'organic' portion of the gathered data, which allowed for an "ears to the ground" approach to research and greater reflexivity (Etherington, 2004). In other words, other than the data gathered based on established protocols, my observations of community events, such as protests, meetings, symposia, etc., allowed me to experience and reflect on the "everyday communicative space" that make up the communication infrastructure of diasporic communities (Aksoy & Robins, 2003, 377).

One key component of media research which involves engagement with media audiences in order to understand their media needs and consumption habits is beyond the scope of this dissertation. In this phase of my study of Persian-language media in Stockholm I have focused on the production apparatus of media and media content. The limitations of this project, including time and funding, did not allow for a comprehensive and in-depth study of Persian-language media audiences in Stockholm. Arguably, ethnographically-inspired study to investigate the everyday engagement of Iranians with Persian-language media in Stockholm requires first a qualitative mapping of the system of local Persian media production.

Analytic approach: Media text as situated in discursive and socio-cultural practices

Rather than just counting words and phrases to determine presence or absence of media frames, the approach to media analysis for this research is located in Norman

Fairclough's (1995; 1998) discourse theory, and is built on the premise that 'texts' of any form are situated in wider socio-economic and cultural structures (Hall, 1980). Fairclough's proposed method for analysis of a communicative action rests on an interrelated three-tiered model that looks at the text, discourse and socio-cultural practices (Figure 1).

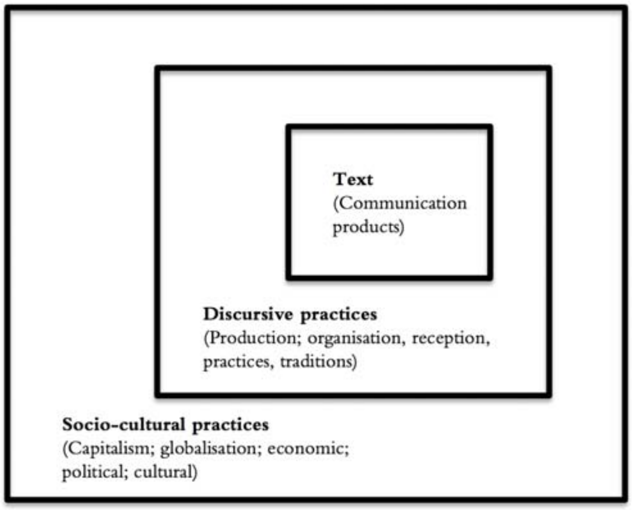

Text
(Communication products)
Discursive practices
(Production; organisation, reception, practices, traditions)
Socio-cultural practices
(Capitalism; globalisation; economic; political; cultural)

Figure 1: A framework for analysis of media text and operation

Note: Modified from Fairclough, 1995; Schrøder, Drotner, Kline & Murray, 2003.

There are three levels of analysis here. At the *micro-level* the text is looked at in terms of language and structure of presentation. At this level I will use content and discourse analyses. At the *meso-level* the discourse practices, including the processes of production, distribution and consumption, are analysed mainly based on my interviews with stakeholders and observations of the ethnic media landscape. Finally at the *macro-level* the socio-cultural practices which frame discourse practices and texts are considered (Fairclough, 1998, p. 144). These include political, cultural, and economic processes that impact the production and consumption of media text. In this case, the forms of socio-cultural practices include, but are not limited to, globalisation, deterritorialisation, nationalism, cosmopolitanism, diasporicity and multiculturalism. The policies that impact ethnic media production, dissemination and consumption are also considered at this macro-level of analysis.

Chapter Three - multiculturalism as culture and Multiculturalism as principle: Situating the Research within the Swedish Context

"Canada: among educated immigrants the unemployment rate is only a few per cent" (Mellgren, 2008, translated from Swedish). This was the headline of an article published in *Svenska Dagbladet,* a conservative-leaning daily national newspaper in Sweden. The article praises the Canadian government and society for successfully integrating immigrants into the Canadian society. "In the Canadian society," the author writes, "immigrants are not regarded as fortune-hunters or as individuals who are stealing the jobs. To the contrary they are embraced by most members of society" (2008). In another article in *The Vancouver Sun* (Carman, 2011) we learn that there is a Swedish delegation in Vancouver to observe local immigrant integration initiatives: "We very much want to hear what are you doing to be so successful," said one of the delegate members.

There is a general consensus among policy makers, researchers and those who follow issues related to immigration and integration that sharp differences exist between countries when it comes to social acceptance and integration of immigrants. For example, while both Sweden and Canada are among the few in the Western world to have Multiculturalism as a policy built into the state apparatus, in legislation and the constitution, the Swedish experience with immigration and integration is far from a success story. According to the Swedish Central Statistics Agency (Statistiska Centralbyrån) the rate of unemployment in some immigrant communities (defined as those born outside the country) rose from 22% to 35% between 2005 and 2009 (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2010). Within some communities the rate of unemployment is even higher. For example, the Somali community has an unemployment rate of 79%

(Carlson, Mganusson & Rönnqvist, 2012). At the same time, evidence suggests that immigrants in Sweden that are from other Nordic and European countries have always fared better in the labour market (Runblom, 1994). The numbers for unemployment among immigrants in Canada for example, although higher than the national average, is less alarming than those of Sweden.[5] Charles Westin (2004) argues that there is every reason to suspect that this trend in the Swedish labour market is indicative of a "systematic ethnic and racial discrimination" that is in operation in Sweden (p. 3).

Multiculturalism, both as theory and practice to combat systemic discrimination, has been discussed and critiqued in various academic disciplines, publications and forums. It has its proponents (Kymlicka, 1995; Taylor, 1994) and opponents (Barry, 2001; Mansur, 2010). In this chapter I will review some of the theoretical foundations for contemporary multicultural regimes that exist in Sweden.

Given the considerable attention multiculturalism has received in academic circles in recent years, what can this chapter add to the already existing arguments? What Homi Bhabha (1994) calls the "narrative of the nation" or Benedict Anderson (1991) calls the "imagined community" of a nation influence not only the way the people of a nation and society view themselves and others, they also have an impact on policy and decision making. The end-result of this transaction between socio-cultural practices of multiculturalism and the policy mechanisms is the creation of a *discourse* of multiculturalism that gets entrenched in the political, cultural, and economic fabric of the nation. Following Norman Fairclough's (1995) analysis of the operation of discourse operation in society (Figure 1 in Chapter 1, p. 45), I suggest that an analysis and fruitful discussion of multiculturalism should not be reduced to a study of a number of policy instruments, but should also include a discussion of the social attitudes towards multiculturalism on one hand, and the multicultural policies on the other.

It is evident that multiculturalism as a set of *policy tenets* has been widely covered and discussed by scholars from various academic disciplines. What is typical of these discussions is that they mainly see multiculturalism as an extension of the policy-making apparatus of local, national and international governance. From this point of view, Multiculturalism is primarily regarded as a set of state legislations, policies and practices that govern ethno-cultural intricacies. I label this as the *Multiculturalism principle* and argue that formalisation of these principles and norms are vital for safeguarding the legal rights of cultural practices and representation. They are also important for protecting minority rights by implementing guiding principles and laws against any discriminatory practices by the majority population on the basis of cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, and racial differences.

To understand a society's commitment to multiculturalism, one needs to look at its attitude towards immigration and immigrants. In the *Vancouver Sun* article (mentioned above), one of the Swedish delegates visiting Vancouver is quoted saying: "Although we have many immigrants, we are not used to handling different cultures because we are a homogenous people […] We tend to see immigrants not as a *problem*, but like they are weak and we must help them" (Carman, 2011). Subsequently, we must distinguish between the *policy* of multiculturalism and the *culture* of multiculturalism. What is peripheral to debates on multiculturalism or permeating them is what I label as *multiculturalism culture*, defined here as a society's or a community's deeply rooted values which promote adherence to cultural pluralism and cultural tolerance. In other words, from this standpoint, *multiculturalism culture* can be regarded as a set of socio-cultural practices or discourses that lay the foundation for a multicultural consciousness among various communities and individuals in society. Based on this assertion, multiculturalism as culture is positioned front and centre of contemporary debates in ethno-cultural accommodation and tolerance, which allows for it to serve as the *source* for policy making rather than an *extension* of it, informing state policies vis-à-vis culture, media and citizenship. This approach allows for a departure from viewing policies as silos, independent from one another.

Further to this, the *Multiculturalism principle* views accommodation as something that is granted to immigrants by immigrant-receiving societies, lending itself to the development of a system of domination between those who grant and those who receive accommodation. An approach based on *multiculturalism culture* would allow for a more levelled playing ground where the terms of accommodation would be negotiated between all players. This, as I shall discuss later in this chapter, would in turn allow for a 'multiculturalisation' of society from below, promulgated mainly by actors with loose or no ties to governments and policy makers.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, *multiculturalism culture* would allow for 'multiculturalism in reverse'. Let me explain this in more detail. Multiculturalism in reverse would open up a relatively new area of discussion that would extend the focus of accommodation from the immigrant-receiving society to immigrant communities themselves. In other words, it would allow for a close examination of the discourses of cultural, ethnic, and racial dominance *within* ethno-cultural communities. In the case of the Iranian community this form of 'multiculturalism in reverse' is extremely important as on-going tensions between ethno-cultural, religious and linguistic groups are frequently encountered.

The most fundamental difference between Sweden and countries like Canada and Australia is that Sweden is not by birth or tradition a multicultural or multi-ethnic society, and unlike Canada the state does not have two founding races (Runblom, 1994).

There is a strong Swedish tendency to uniformity that has traditionally informed the assimilative nature of Swedish immigration, citizenship and multicultural policies. These established attitudes, since the arrival of post World War II immigrants from Finland and southern Europe, have been that immigrants should become Swedes and adopt manners and customs that are Swedish (Westin, 2002b). While in its 1974 constitution the Swedish government extends political rights to religious and ethnic minorities, the overall political rhetoric, and even more so, the public discourse surrounding multiculturalism, has been based on assimilation rather than integration. This could indicate a disconnect between *Multiculturalism principle* and *multiculturalism culture*. What falls between these two seemingly opposing, yet complementary sides (at least in Sweden's case) are multicultural *policies* and *practices*, enabled by *Multiculturalism principle* and ideally serving as catalyst for *and* derivative of *multiculturalism culture,* suggesting a dialogical relationship between the two constructs.

Multiculturalism principle and the citizenship debate: Neoliberalisation and alternative formations

Liberal tradition

An overview of multicultural theory—or the *Multiculturalism principle* as I labelled it in the previous section—necessitates a discussion of the concept of citizenship. There has been much discussion in academic circles on the different models of citizenship. What is evident in the political tradition of Western liberal democracies is a commitment to a liberal model of universal citizenship. I will limit my discussion of citizenship to contemporary debates around the concept (i.e., post-World War II) without delving into a lengthy description of the historical construction of citizenship by tracing its roots back to the ancient European civilisations, Enlightenment and the liberal revolution of the mid-nineteenth century Europe. At the level of theory, citizenship has been discussed along three different yet overlapping trajectories: (1) individual entitlements; (2) individual responsibilities and obligations; and (3) attachment to particular community (developed from Kymlicka and Norman, 1994).

The first paradigm is based on T. H. Marshall's (1965) *Class, citizenship and social development*. According to Marshall's model, it is the state's responsibility to ensure that all its citizens are treated as full and equal members of society. For this model to function properly, Marshall suggests a liberal social-democratic welfare state with deep-running institutional support for equal recognition of individual rights to civil, political and social welfare (pp. 78-79). I see this liberal model of citizenship as mainly relying on two principles: the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the less precisely defined 'core values' of nations and cultures. In the first case, the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights established the principle of civil, political, economic, and cultural rights of all individuals in the hopes of creating a global safety net applicable to everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, origins, or creed (Fleras, 2012). The Declaration has been found to be useful in, for example, persecuting war criminals and is the backbone of the international criminal court system. 'Core values,' on the other hand, are rarely explicit in any part of concrete laws or declarations. Rather, they are based on a sentimental attachment to a set of vaguely formulated value systems that have come to characterize a territory or a nation. Unlike the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, these core values, in themselves, hold no legal status in any court of law. Rather they are the rhetorical extensions of a set of charters and declarations and yet have proved to be extremely useful in nation-building projects and the politics of inclusion and exclusion, especially in the post 9-11 era. In policy circles many European politicians have come out strongly against those who counter the 'core values' of the European Union, mainly targeting Muslim and Roma groups (Martiniello, n.d.). In some contexts we have seen isolated incidents where reference to core values were used to exclude what Mahmood Mamdani (2004) calls “bad Muslims” (p. 24) from the public sphere. In Canada for example, in cities like Hérouxville and Laval in Québec, Muslims have been targeted as the enemy within subjects, with discriminatory actions instigated by the majority culture. Mamdani argues that in the West, “good Muslims” are those who are modern, secular, and Westernized, and “bad Muslims” are doctrinal, anti-modern, and virulent (p. 24). In the case of Hérouxville and Laval, veiled Muslim women become the visual signifier of these “bad Muslims” in the West (Ahadi, 2009).

On a grander scale, some countries like Canada in the West have used multiculturalism as a core value for nation-building purposes and for constructing a national identity. As a result, multiculturalism has enjoyed the support of the majority of the Canadian population compared to other nations, such as Sweden (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010). Perhaps it is not surprising that official statistics for socio-economic indicators and the public discourse paint a more favourable picture of Canada as a model country for immigrant integration compared to Sweden. Through an economically oriented screening process, Canada ‘selects’ more immigrants that are more likely to adhere to the neoliberal ideal of the ‘model citizen’. Many of those who fall through the cracks and come to Canada with little money have to come in terms with under-employment when Canadian assessment authorities do not recognize their credentials.

There is, however, more to the story. Going back to my earlier discussion of neoliberalism, I would argue that ‘success’ stories from countries like Canada, in part, may have to do with advancement of neoliberal politics in these countries and the fostering of a particular form of citizenship that is hyper-capital, individualistically oriented, and superficially cosmopolitan. In Sweden’s case, Elingson (2009) and

Friedman and Ekholm Friedman (2006) argue that multiculturalism as a model for citizenship and nation-building has been less successful. The political and cultural elite has adopted the multicultural model whereas popular support has been significantly weaker in Sweden. It was claimed that multiculturalism would create a new type of integration, but this has not happened. On the contrary, today Sweden is one of the most segregated countries in Europe, with growing ethnic enclave communities and higher unemployment rates among immigrants (Ellingson, 2009). Westin (2003b) argues that despite the government's commitment to multiculturalism, the policy in practice has been more in line with assimilative approaches to social inclusion of immigrants.

Specifically, the Swedish model of citizenship is built on the foundation of social democratic values that are in turn based on the logic of universalistic theories of democracy and human rights (Fridel, 2007). But Fridel (2007) as well as other researchers have argued that recent decades have seen an ideological shift in policy making to neoliberalism (Andersson, 2010). Two successive right-wing coalition governments in the 2000s, headed by the Swedish Conservative Party (*Moderaterna*), have 'modernised' the Swedish welfare-state that was based on the decades-old social-democratic political philosophy of The People's Home (*folkhemmet*)[6] by shifting the burden of achieving prosperity, success, social integration and self-sufficiency of citizens and immigrants to individuals rather than the state (Joppke, 2012). Kymlicka and Norman (1994) argue that the political right has always resisted a model of citizenship based on rights on the grounds that they were economically inefficient. Whereas Marshall (1965) had argued that social rights to particular standards of accommodation enable the disadvantaged to enter the mainstream of society and effectively exercise their civil and political rights, the neoliberals argue that the welfare state has promoted a passive form of citizenship, especially among the poor and the marginalised groups, without actually improving their living standard, thereby creating a "culture of dependency" (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994, p. 356). According to Norman Barry, there is no evidence that welfare programs that guarantee access to certain standards of living have in fact promoted more active citizenship among immigrants, the poor and other groups operating on the margins of society (1990). Instead, Barry argues, lower voting participation rates are observed among these groups. In this neoliberal model, the concept of citizenship cannot be reduced to "entitlements" and should rather focus on responsibilities and obligations of the citizens to the state. Stuart Hall (2011) writes that according to the neoliberal narrative,

> […] the welfare state mistakenly saw its task as intervening in the economy, redistributing wealth, universalising life-chances, attacking unemployment, protecting the socially vulnerable, ameliorating the condition of oppressed or marginalised groups and addressing social injustice. It tried to break the 'natural' (sic) link between social needs and the individual's capacity to pay. But its do-gooding, utopian sentimentality enervated the nation's moral fibre, and eroded personal responsibility and the over-riding duty of the poor to work. It imposed social purposes on an economy rooted in individual greed and self-interest. State intervention must never compromise the right of private capital to 'grow the business', improve share value, pay dividends and reward its agents with enormous salaries, benefits and bonuses. The function of the liberal state should be limited to safeguarding the conditions in which profitable competition can be pursued (p. 11).

Since the welfare state discourages people from becoming self-reliant, the safety net should be cut back and any remaining welfare benefits should have obligations tied to them in this view (Kymlicka et al., 1994).

In Sweden's case, the neoliberals' strongest empirical case against social democratic citizenship has been the failure of the state to integrate immigrants into the labour market. Neoliberals have identified the solution of this problem in shortening the distance between immigrants and the so-called "junk jobs" in Sweden (Fridell, 2007, p. 254). If this problem is solved, through 'innovative' neoliberal initiative of labour deregulation, then social problems will be solved. “New Swedes, because they are tired of being jobless and stigmatized, will be integrated through the junk job labour market” (Fridell, 2007, p. 254). While this debate plays well as a wedge issue in election times, the merit of the neoliberal labour reform in Sweden has yet to prove successful. What the neoliberal model for labour reform in Sweden fails to recognise is that while this solution might decrease the number of unemployed among immigrants, it continues to naturalise underemployment among the immigrant population resulting in further segregation.

As a result, in Stockholm, wrong turns in integration and multicultural policies have resulted in the creation of a system of “parallel lives” (Cantle, 2008, p. 79), where many immigrant groups, including Iranians, live in geographically segregated areas compounded by lack of any meaningful contact in any sphere of life, such as employment, faith, education, or leisure and cultural activities. Cantle argues that this type of segregation “has profound implications for the way in which each community views each other and is inevitably a denial of any multicultural reality” (Cantle, 2008).

The municipality of Rinkeby-Kista (which evidently hosts 20% of Stockholm’s total Iranian population, and is where I grew up) is where one would find these parallel communities in Stockholm. The majority of the population in Rinkeby-Kista are first- or second-generation immigrants. Rinkeby-Kista is the epitome of the poor European immigrant neighbourhood. An average unemployment rate of nearly 10.5%, 3% higher than the national average, has left close to 20% of the households dependent on social welfare payments, compared to a national average of 4% (Table 5).

What has been the case for many European cities is the creation of ghettos, leading to a decreased opportunity for individuals to interact with members outside their own community. Segregated or parallel lives in Stockholm, seems to be along socio-economic rather than ethno-cultural lines.

Table 5: ***Demographic profile of Rinkeby-Kista***

	Rinkeby-Kista
Voting (Municipal)	50 % (81)*
Prevalence of high income (1)	10.5 % (20)**
Prevalence of low income (2)	42.5 % (20)**
Welfare recipients	11.1%*** (5.7)****
Education (post secondary)	20 % (54)**
Unemployment	10.5 % (7.5)*
Income (Median)	$29,259 (40,665)*

Note: Numbers in bracket indicate the national average
(1) Sweden: 361,931 SEK for year 2008, which is equivalent to 52,000 CAD (Source: Statens Folkhälsoinstitute, 2011)
(2) Sweden: 0 – 106,158 SEK for year 2008, which is equivalent to 15,500 CAD (Source: Statens Folkhälsoinstitute, 2011)
* 2010 figures (Source: Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2010)
** 2007 figures (Source: Statens folkhälsoinstitut, 2009)
*** 2011 figures (Source: Statistik om Stockholm, 2011)
**** 2010 figures (Source: Kommunalprofil, 2010)

Sweden has been trailing behind the neoliberal trend, but is fast catching up with privatisations, market deregulations and policy revisions. The global onslaught of neoliberalism and the form of citizenship that comes with it is the subject of discussion in Nick Couldry's (2011) book *Why voice matters?* In his book, Couldry makes the compelling argument that neoliberal principles have not exclusively been limited to the (labour) market and the economic sphere. Rather, neoliberalism as a discourse has spilled over to other spheres of life including the cultural and the political spheres, subsequently impacting the relationship between the state and its citizens. In the Canadian context, Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2008) have argued that the discourse of policy making in a globalised world is increasingly informed by language, ideals and references of neoliberalism, particularly those ideals that emphasize efficiency and global competitiveness as opposed to global community and global responsibility (pp. 19-20).

Their analysis assesses how contemporary neoliberal processes have affected domestic policy-making in areas of multiculturalism and immigration. In recent decades, erosion of immigration policies based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds have given way to policies which promote free market principles and idealize “model citizens” who will be self sufficient, independent and highly skilled, well-educated, English or French-speaking, upper-class male immigrants (Abu-Laban et al., 2008, p. 97).

The Swedish model of immigration and integration is also changing. While in the 1990s the Swedish model actively promoted multiculturalism (*etnisk mångfald*) and established an Integration Board, the conservative government that came to power in 2006 closed it down in an effort to promote socio-economic integration with an emphasis on individual rights, self-sufficiency, and self-support as positive indicators at the cost of multicultural ideals (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2010; Scuzzarello, 2010; see also Geddes, 2003).

Alternative formations: Multicultural and cosmopolitan citizenship

There are voices in academic and policy circles that believe that this trend of neoliberalisation is irreversible under alternative models of citizenship that (a) are not solely based on rights and obligations, but rather on diversity and multiple sense of belonging, and (b) that extend beyond the all encompassing and monolithic public sphere (Goldberg, 1994). Or, as Peter Dahlgren (2009) puts it, the universalist and state-centred versus the differentiated and agency-centred models of citizenship. Under this banner of ‘differentiation’, an array of normative citizenship models have been suggested and developed by scholars in the field of citizenship studies, two of which are important for the purpose of this study: multicultural citizenship and differentiated citizenship on one hand (Kymlicka, 1995; Young, 2000), and cosmopolitan citizenship on the other (Beck, 2007; Held, 2006; & Vertovec, 2010)-- the two however are not mutually exclusive.

The general premise of this collection of citizenship models lies in a critical analysis of the liberal notion of citizenship. Under the *liberal model of citizenship*, the promises of individual freedom, rights, access (material and power), and representation are yet to be realized. Discourses of exclusion and marginalisation are frequent: discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation; political marginalisation based on ideology; infringement of individual rights as a consequence of socially "deviant" behaviour; and intentional or unintentional misrepresentation (e.g. through media) are examples of how the exclusionary discourses operate in society. Discourses of inclusion then define and reward 'good citizenship'-- those who comply with the dominant norms and value systems in society (such as secularism). Cultural pluralists such as Kymlicka (1994), Iris Marion Young (2000), Michael Walzer (2003), Chantel Mouffe (1992) and Charles Taylor (1994) believe that the common rights of citizenship, originally defined by and for white middle class men, cannot accommodate the special needs of minority groups and historically marginalised ethno-cultural communities. These groups can only be integrated into the common culture if we adopt what Young calls a conception of "differentiated citizenship" (Young, 1989, p. 258) or what Chantal Mouffe calls a "radical democratic citizenship" (Mouffe, 1992, p. 235). From this point of view, Siapera (2010) argues, one's identity is built upon foundations that borrow from, debate, contend, and reflect on, other identities. This concentration on differentiated and multiple identities "shifts the onus for identity construction from the individual to the society" (p. 48). It suggests a departure from the state-centred citizenship model of the liberal and neoliberal traditions.

How does this conception of citizenship translate into real politics? For example, Chinese, East Indian, and Japanese immigrants and those born in Canada as well used to be excluded from voting in political elections until 1949, when a formal definition of

Canadian citizenship was established (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2008). Studies find that there is a positive relationship between voting rights and social cohesion as a result of the improvement of the social status of immigrants (see for example, Hooghem Reeskens & Stolle, 2007). This is consistent with Kymlicka's concept of multicultural citizenship, which states that, "recognizing minority rights would actually strengthen solidarity and promote political stability by removing the barriers and exclusions that prevent minorities from wholeheartedly embracing political institutions" (2001, p. 171). The recognition of differentiated rights, or entitlement of different cultural groups (national minorities and polyethnic minorities), emphasizes the need for more directed attention to citizens' cultural orientation and the process by which they integrate to broader society.

Similarly, Michael Walzer's "civil society" solution lies with a differentiated sphere of political engagement that is detached from the nation-state (2003). The questions he poses are twofold: (a) what is the preferred setting, the most supportive environment for a good life, and (b) what sorts of institutions should we work for? (p. 8). He concludes that historically established models of "democracy" are wrongheaded because of their singularity: established models of citizenship and democratic political engagement approach the question of "good life" by focusing on the nation-state as their arena. Within this arena, the concept of citizenship is constructed around common values and loyalties towards the nation-state and its social structure (be it through patriotism and nationalism, loyalty towards the market, or loyalty towards ideologies and parties).

Other 'post-national' scholars in similar ways argue for a fragmentation of power in an increasingly globalised world and foresee the emergence of a pro-social engagement of citizens. Such engagement is not partisan or limited to party-politics. David Held (1996) speaks of alternative political engagements (NGO's, international organisations, anti-establishment global movements, etc.) that transcend the national.

Within this model of civic participation (largely based on a social democratic model of political participation, where social cohesion is imbedded in the strengthening of public sector and civil society), individuals change their patterns of political participation based on contexts and interests that may or may not go beyond the local or national.

With an increasingly globalised world characterised by movement of capital, culture and people across borders, many scholars have argued for a new formation or conceptualisation of citizenship models under the banners of the ‘transnational social field’ (Schiller, Busch & Blanc-Szanton, 1992), ‘transnational social space’ (Pries, 1999), ‘transnational village’ (Levitt, 2001) or ‘translocality’ (Appadurai, 1995). An extension of this post-national and fragmented or flexible citizenship model is cosmopolitan citizenship based on the idea of developing an orientation towards other cultures and societies across the globe, “belonging to all parts of the world, not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants” (Calhoun, 2001, p. 5). We may comprehend cosmopolitan identity as the interplay of a set of attitudes, habits, practices, and abilities gathered from travel or displacement, transnational contact and diasporic identification (Beck, 2007; Hannerz; 1990; Vertovec; 2002 & 2010; & Waldron, 1992).

The British anthropologist Steven Vertovec (2000) conceptualized cosmopolitanism under six rubrics: Cosmopolitanism as a (1) socio-cultural condition; (2) ideology and philosophy; (3) political project for transnational institutions; (4) political project for multiple subjects; (5) attitude or disposition; and (6) practice or habitus (p 2-8). The notion of capacity or competency is central to all these areas of debate. Drawing on Bourdieu’s (1984) work on the *habitus*, scholars in this field have operationalised the abstract concept of cosmopolitanism in terms of the cultural competencies of individuals, their open-mindedness and their willingness towards encounters with divergent cultures (see for example Karim, 2006 on “cultural competencies”). Koehn and Rosenau (2002, p. 110) have elaborated on individual competencies in the following way:

Analytical competence

- Understanding of the central beliefs, values, practices, and paradoxes of counterpart cultures and societies- including political and ethnic awareness;
- Ability to link counterpart-country conditions to one’s own circumstances and vice versa;
- Assessment of the number and complexity of the number of alternative cultural paths.

Emotional competence

- Motivation and ability to open oneself up continuously to divergent cultural influences and experiences;
- Ability to assume genuine interest in, and to maintain respect for, different (especially counterpart) values, traditions, experience, and challenges (i.e. Intercultural/transnational empathy);
- Ability to manage multiple identities.

Creative/imaginative competence

- Ability to foresee the synergistic potential of diverse cultural perspectives in problem solving;
- Collaborative ability to articulate novel and shared transnational synthesis;
- Ability to tap into diverse cultural sources for inspiration.

Behavioural competence

Communicative facility

- Proficiency in and use of counterparts’ spoken/written language;
- Skill in interpretation and in using an interpreter;
- Proficiency in and relaxed use of interculturally appropriate nonverbal cues and codes;
- Ability to listen to and discern different cultural messages;
- Ability to engage in meaningful dialogue; to facilitate mutual self-disclosure.

Functional (project/task) adroitness

- Ability to relate counterpart(s) and to develop and maintain positive interpersonal relationships;

- Ability to apply/adapt understanding, sensitivity, and imagination in transnational interactions;
- Flexibility to employ extensive and nuanced range of transnationally accommodative organisational strategies and interaction paths.

Needless to say, a ‘cosmopolitan person’ would not have all these attributes at once. Rather, Koehn and Rosenau argue that cosmopolitan competence is best understood along a continuum “from incapable to proficient” (2002, p. 116).

What is evident in the literature is the lack of empirical and ethnographical studies that measure the degree of cosmopolitanism in society or among individuals. Vertovec’s study of the Berlin radio “Multikulti” as a public space for articulation of cosmopolitanism remains one of the few ethnographical studies in the field (2002). This has left the concept, and those who advocated for a more cosmopolitan outlook, vulnerable to scrutiny and criticism by some, and outright rejection by others.

First, what has been described so far as the cosmopolitan condition would be categorised by many scholars as an elite form of cosmopolitanism that only focuses on well-travelled middle- or business-class (transnational) citizens (see, for example, Aihwa Ong’s discussion of the hyper-capital, multiple passport holder, ‘neither here nor there’ “astronaut” family, 1999, p. 19). Characteristics of a working- or refugee-class cosmopolitanism is not clear in these texts, although thinking through Koehn and Rosenau’s “incapable to proficient” continuum it is probably possible to achieve a moderate score as a working-class person (2002).

Second, cosmopolitanism’s promise of a break with established social ties and constraints, nationalistic sentiments, and essentialised ethno-cultural and national backgrounds is also questionable. In parting from the dominance of one set of social affiliations, we are propelled towards a new and much broader set of commitments and dependencies (Kennedy, 2009, p. 35). While these provide *and* demand scope for a much broader and more urbane set of cultural references, they also bring their own social and moral responsibilities.

Lastly, the more radical critique comes from scholars who see cosmopolitanism and its 'offsprings', namely translocality, hybridity and transnational mobility, as an extension of neoliberalism. Kim (2011) writes that the tendency in academic circles to celebrate transnationality and valorise it as some kind of state of 'cultural grace' is often separated from mundane realities, actual condition and experiences of diasporic subjectivity--a premise with which I generally agree. Kim continues, "embedded in the liberal West or 'liquid individualized society', where individuals must plan, produce and accomplish their biographies themselves, [immigrants] experience new burdens of choice and dilemmas of personal responsibility alongside increased personal freedoms, as well as global structures of domination and unspeakable inequality of racial relations" (2011, p. 135). Other scholars take this critique a step further by focusing on the class dimension of cosmopolitanism (Calhoun, 2001; Paul, 2004). A cosmopolitan culture and identity is an especially effective means by which to unite transnational capital and the new middle class for this is their common ground. Cosmopolitanism has always been the identity and ideological project of a transnational elite (Paul, 2004). Similarly, in a generally unsympathetic discussion of cosmopolitanism, Craig Calhoun (2001: p. 6) writes,

> Cosmopolitanism was the project of empires, and as an intellectual and a personal style—and indeed a legal arrangement—it flourishes in imperial capitals and trading cities. Cosmopolitanism is the project of capitalism, and it flourishes in the top management of multinational corporations and even more in the consulting firms that serve them. In both cases, cosmopolitanism has joined elites while ordinary people lived in local communities—or served in armies fighting wars to expand or control the cosmopolis.

Calhoun goes on to argue that cosmopolitanism is not necessarily a bad thing. In a globally interconnected world, it is generally a good approach to life. The point is that we need to be clear about what results we can reasonably expect from cosmopolitanism and what is beyond it (2001, p. 8). The ‘post-national’ agenda of cosmopolitanism, with its commitments to hybridity and fragmentation of patterns of ethno-cultural belonging is simply not something that one can reasonably expect, considering that our public discourse is conceived within a social imaginary in which the idea of ‘the nation’ is still basic (p. 9).

In fact, as stressed by Goldberg (2009), the neoliberal state (and therefore the cosmopolitan condition, if we agree with Calhoun’s postulation) allows the state to become invasively repressive in the lives of the culturally and socio-economically less competent people (mainly the racialized and marginalized segments of the population), *despite* the neoliberal promise of the state’s retreat (p. 335). Contrary to the neoliberal promise, deregulation has turned out to apply only in the realm of the economic, playing up the fears of insecurity by playing down ‘welfarist’ convictions regarding social security (Goldberg). Further to this notion, Lentin and Titley (2011) argue that the neoliberal state’s function is to ensure citizens’ security rather than their welfare; it must protect the desirable from the undesirable by either locking them up or locking them out in the case of immigrants, submitting them to increasingly punitive measures that drive a deeper wedge between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (p. 172). The Canadian government’s attempt in 2012 to grant unprecedented power to the police force to monitor people’s online activity under the banner of ‘national security’ is a clear articulation of the way a government’s’ role is being remodelled under the neoliberal regime.

At the same time, the lack of any concrete sense of political self or belonging that is manifested through the ‘neither here, nor there’ phenomenon of cosmopolitanism is something of which I am critical. The critique of cosmopolitanism that I presented above speaks to the heart of the challenge that most researchers are faced with in the study of diasporas: if cosmopolitanism is generally accepted as the positive possibility of 'diasporism', then what is the extent of it, and how far can it go without fragmenting any meaningful understanding of the self and the place one is in? Is the 'neither here, nor there' condition that many transnationalists speak of something that is inevitable or even desired as an alternative to nationalism? Can there be a way to approach the question of situated identity and formation of belonging without getting trapped in the infinite loop of hybridity? If so, how would this 'cosmopolitan identity' manifest itself? Can a cosmopolitan model of citizenship be observed in the Iranian diaspora in Stockholm? And finally, can we reconcile the 'cosmopolitanists' with the 'anti-cosmopolitanists'?

The position I take in this debate is somewhere in between. I think that the experiences of 'diasporism' or transnationality while *being real* for many immigrant communities including the Iranian communities in Stockholm are not *unbounded*. As Ayse Cağlar (1994) writes:

> The debris of our past experiences are not immediately usable, since they are already embedded in structures in which they have meanings. These limit their immediate use in producing new arrangements […] Moreover, these juxtapositions and bricolage are not random, nor do they represent a chaotic jumble of signs. In their hybridity, they still tell a story. They have an organizing principle or principles. The objective is then first to identify the conditions that enable this drastic uprooting of elements and practices from very different sources, and second to explain the organizing principle(s) of their recombination and resetting […] (p. 34).

This position provides an important and much needed modification to concepts such as cosmopolitanism, hybridity and multiple identities that often suggest "an unbridled horizon of cultural appropriation and enactment" (Vertovec, 2010, p. 66). Cağlar (1994) points to the fact that people's actions are embedded in a constellation of relations and structures, and that actions of transnational actors are, indeed, multiply-embedded. In order to gain a better understanding of the cosmopolitan condition and practices in every context we need to ask ourselves: what is the set of meaning-carrying traits that has to be read, engaged, performed, and even more so, how are they embedded across differences in class, ethnicity, race, locality, gender, religion, age, sexuality, subculture and other configurations of social meaning?

What scholars in the field have suggested is that contemporary cosmopolitanism, rather than being a political project (like multiculturalism), remains as a set of ethical suggestions (Robins & Aksoy, 2015; Yilmaz, 2004). In other words there is no debate at the political level as of yet about cosmopolitanism as a policy as there has been for multiculturalism. As Vertovec and Cohen (2002) point out, the focus in academic circles is on 'everyday' or 'ordinary' cosmopolitanism, where "men and women from different origins create a society where diversity is accepted and rendered ordinary" (p. 4). By contrast, Robins and Aksoy (2015) argue that cosmopolitanism should be defined more loosely as an intellectual or a cultural movement, perhaps not too different from intellectual movements such as the Renaissance, Naturalism, and Romanticism rather being viewed as a concrete condition of citizenship, with predetermined indicators.This ambiguity is captured in what I referred to as *multiculturalism culture* earlier in this chapter: a state of continuous evolution of the socio-cultural landscape of a society that moves towards a comprehensive multiculturalism that goes beyond the economic sphere, or "shallow multiculturalism" (Matsaganis et al., 2010, p. 193). The question for media and communication scholars is then, "if a cosmopolitan identity-- with its emphasis on an openness towards global thinking and being-- is a desired marker of citizenship, in what ways then do our media reflect this in their content?" This question will to a certain degree guide the findings chapter of this dissertation where I will discuss Persian-language media's ability or inability to reflect and foster a cosmopolitan outlook among the various Iranian communities that they serve in Stockholm.

Multiculturalism culture: Societal attitudes towards multiculturalism

'Shallow multiculturalism' refers to a model of policymaking that seemingly supports multiculturalism insofar as it finds it beneficial for educational and economic purposes (Matsaganis et al., 2010).

> States with such policies find that multiculturalism can help "develop literacy and ensure that primary and secondary schools are more effective in reaching minority students" (Riggins, 1992, p.9). In such cases, the state is not committed to multiculturalism per se, but rather to the economic advantages that a type of *shallow multiculturalism* can generate. It can help the state, for instance, attain its education goals and create a more versatile and skilled workforce. But, shallow multiculturalism means that the state is not truly committed to the long-term preservation of the culture and language of ethnic minority populations. At the end of the day, the state sees multiculturalism only as a transitional phase, prior to the assimilation of the foreign-born and indigenous populations (p. 193).

In Sweden, this 'shallow multiculturalism' has manifested itself in the government and society's commitment to a 'politics of pluralism' (Glasser, Awad, & Kim, 2009), rather than a 'politics of recognition' (Fraser, 2009; Taylor, 1994). Following Glasser et al., (2009), 'pluralism' is defined here as a set of standards about "the virtues of interest-group politics and the importance of the role of a market economy in the resolution of the difference and disagreements" (p. 60). It offers very little by way of substantive programs to address and redress social inequalities and domination of some ethnic groups by others (Steinberg, 2001). In contrast, 'multiculturalists' argue for a commitment to an equitable distribution of resources to enhance the opportunities for socio-political and cultural participation of historically marginalised populations. Still, this commitment to multiculturalism—usually manifested through state policies— cannot be sustained without factoring in multiculturalism into a society's values. Perhaps this could explain the abandonment of Multiculturalism as official state policy in Germany and Britain in 2011.

In Sweden, despite the state commitment to an official policy of multiculturalism, two key questions still remain: (1) how much diversity is accepted, and (2) to what extent are immigrants allowed to participate in the larger public sphere? A European Commission report, *Migration and Social Integration of Migrants* (European Commission, 2003), states that:

> In Sweden legal immigrants are legally included, but socially excluded, i.e. there is no official exclusion but still a high degree of informal exclusion. The Swedish welfare state is based on an inclusive discourse and a commitment to equality. Swedish policy offers access to legal and formal treatment for immigrants through a policy of integration and it rejects exclusion through the law which would result in second-class citizens as well as the guest workers system. Despite this, a majority of migrants feel excluded from the labour market. In one suburb, Rinkeby-Kista, 50 per cent of the population are welfare recipients and 73 per cent are of immigrant background. Being an immigrant in Sweden means having to face many social and cultural obstacles despite legal inclusion (pp. 49-50).

In another report, Chamberlayne & Rustin (1999) also stress the ‘painful’ gap between a dominant social-democratic ideology based on Swedish compassion towards the ‘Third World’, and a reality of an increasingly disenfranchised immigrant class of poorer urban areas (p. 49). Other studies (see, for example, Hanak, 2001) have reported that despite the existence of various programs and institutions intended for improving opportunities for immigrants, there is very little empirical data that would support the success of these initiatives in fostering an inclusionary social environment. To the contrary, studies show that the immigrant class are under-represented in many sectors and spheres of Swedish public life.

For example, evidence from Hultén (2009a & 2009b), Hultén and Horsti (2011), and Camauër (2011) suggest that there is a profound underrepresentation of immigrants in the Swedish journalistic field. What is interesting is that the topic of 'cultural diversity' in Swedish journalism was the subject of a lecture series at the University of Stockholm's Journalism School in 2011 while I was conducting fieldwork in Stockholm (Mångfald i journalistiken, 2011). Five faculty members presented their damning assessment of the lack of cultural diversity in Swedish journalism. They opened the seminar with an image of a group of journalists from the Swedish media landscape and they criticised the fact that all of them were racially white. The presenters then went on to criticise the Swedish media for not being diverse enough. Ironically, little attention was paid to the fact that the panellists themselves were all ethnically white, and more so *all* the faculty members and staff in the Journalism School at Stockholm's University are also ethnically white. This begs the question, 'where does the buck stop'? Rival narratives of media history have accepted the proposition that institutions have an important role in shaping the media landscape of a country (Fairclough, 1995; Hall, 1980). Is it reasonable then to expect of a journalism school that is critically inclined towards the lack of cultural diversity in the Swedish society to have mechanisms in place to increase ethno-cultural diversity in the newsroom? I would say 'Yes'. It is noteworthy to add that the audience that attended this event, comprised of students and faculty members, was also entirely white suggesting a lack of ethno-cultural diversity not only in the faculty but also in the student population.

In an hugely controversial report to the Swedish government in 2005, the Iranian-born scholar Professor Masoud Kamali spoke of an 'institutional and structural discrimination' in the Swedish society that had kept the immigrants constantly on the margins of public life (2005; 2010). Kamali (2010) explain this institutional/structural discrimination as:

> […] orders, arrangements, and organisations of society that often indirectly and unintentionally discriminate against individuals and groups with ethnic backgrounds different to those of the majority society. Structural discrimination legitimises and normalises indirect forms of negative treatment of the 'Others' and makes it a part of everyday normal life of a society. It is based on established ideologies, patterns of behaviour, and procedures that may not aim to discriminate against any group but practically exclude some groups from having access to jobs and other opportunities (p. 6).

Kamali attributes this form of discrimination to policies and laws that are 'race' and gender neutral and practically harm ethnic minorities and women. While there are laws in Sweden that protect the immigrants from 'individual discrimination', such as hate-crime legislation and laws against displaying racist symbols, no provisions exist to enhance immigrant rights on an institutional level. As a remedy, he suggests the introduction of affirmative action for residents in marginalised areas where the majority of inhabitants have immigrant or minority background (2010, p. 286).

Kamali attests to the difficulty in getting the issue of structural discrimination seriously taken up on the public agenda in part because many political and economic elites are extremely reluctant to acknowledge it as a problem. Successive Swedish governments, in favour of social democratic universalism, have repeatedly rejected Kamali's suggestions for affirmative action policies. As senior conservative parliamentarian Britta Lejon explains:

> It's not a good idea to create special solutions. Our job as legislators is to help judges with existing legislation. Legislation is a base. But you can't look at problems in the labour market as separate from education. Problems on the labour market are due to attitudes, lack of knowledge, fear (as quoted in Fridell, 2007, p. 66).

In other words, she is arguing that the system works; we just have to educate people about racism and discrimination in the workplace. Generally, Swedish anti-racist scholars agree that racism exists because of the lack of cultural understanding (Horsti, 2009). In order to elevate the degree of cultural understanding there should exist provisions that would encourage this. What Kamali suggests is not unique or radical. Similar policies exist in the USA and Canada to actively encourage ethno-cultural diversity in the workplace (Affirmative Action in the USA and Employment Equity Act in Canada). Yet he has been chastised in the Swedish policy and academic circles for being subjective, inaccurate in his empirical evidence, and for 'politicising' the integration debate (see for example Friedman & Ekholm Friedman, 2006, pp. 80-86).

Regardless of Kamali's intentions, personal background, or political leaning, the evidence from other studies and research suggest that his proposals for improving the lives of immigrants and ethno-racial groups could be plausible, to say the least. Runblom (1994) argues that the Swedish majority population never objected to the cultural demands for inclusions of the Nordic and other European groups that arrived in the 1940s and 1950s. It was only after the arrival of refugees and immigrants from other parts of the world that a consciousness matured whereby there these newcomers could culturally challenge the society. The established attitude then became that immigrants should become Swedes, adopt Swedish manners and customs, and harmonize with Swedish society (1994, p. 629).

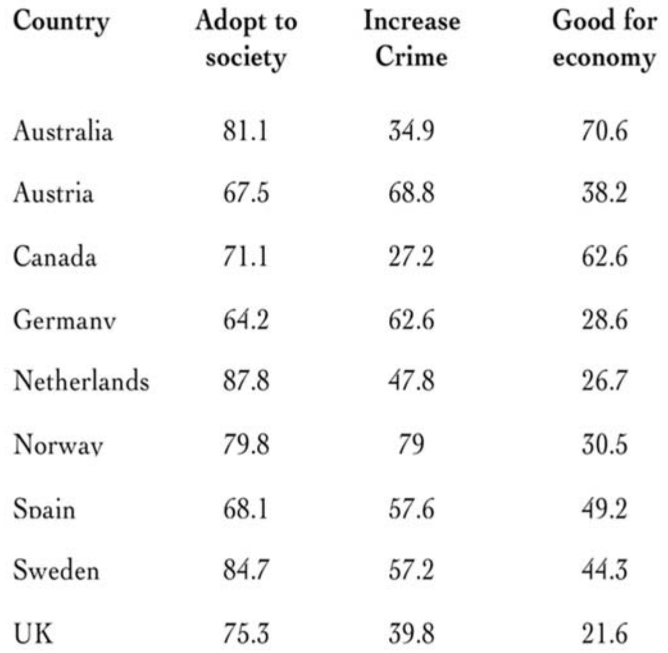
Empirical evidence in the form of surveys also shows that Swedes, despite the country's commitment to official Multiculturalism policy, tend to favour an assimilationist strategy of 'immigrant management' over a multiculturalist line. Ingelhart, Basáñez, Díez-Medrano, Halmn, and Luijkx (2004) suggest in their *World Value Survey* that the majority of Swedes (64%) are in favour of assimilation. This is not to be interpreted as evidence that the Swedish society is racist. Rather, attitudes towards immigrants can reflect anxieties about the labour market and competition for resources (Lang & Westin, 1997). Such attitudes have proven a useful wedge among voters during elections when political parties pledge to reform the nation's immigration and integration policies.

This observation of the Swedish multicultural regime begs the question, "how Sweden compares to other Western nations when it comes to integrating immigrants into the national narrative?" In Canada for example, what is evident from existing debates is that the country has emerged as a model for integrating immigrants into the national narrative. Canadian geographer and multiculturalism scholar David Ley argues that in Canada, the umbrella of multicultural recognition has created a space for cultural difference that is important for immigrants but also even more important for the public imagination, and hence its political culture (2008, p. 191). The trajectory that Ley outlines here is one that resembles Fairclough's (1995) model for "discourse order" where he proposes a logical link between sociocultural practices and the 'texts' that they tend to produce, in this case policies informed by societal practices of multiculturalism. Shauna Wilton's comparative study of texts intended for newcomers and citizenship applicants in Canada and Sweden demonstrates this link between 'socio-cultural practices' and 'the text' in an interesting way (2008). Wilton argues that in the booklet *Sweden: A Pocket Guide* (Integrationsverket, 2001) the country is portrayed as "very white" (Wilton, 2008, p. 68). For example, her content analysis of images in the *Pocket Guide* shows that only 10% of the total 117 images are of visibly minority individuals. These images, she argues, "convey the impression that Sweden has a vertical mosaic in which the top of the social and economic pyramid is occupied by white individuals, and non-white individuals are not a part of mainstream Swedish society" (Wilton, 2008, p.

68) The study of Canada’s *A Newcomer’s Introduction to Canada* (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2002) provides an interesting contrast to the Swedish case. Overall, in the Canadian text the images display a conscious effort on the part of the state to represent Canada as diverse and welcoming. Immigrants are portrayed as blending into the image of the nation, which reflects the state’s emphasis on official multiculturalism, diversity and tolerance (p. 67).

Other data suggest that there is a positive correlation between how citizens identify themselves as multicultural and the level of multicultural policy provisions. Evidence from the International Social Survey Program, which studies public attitudes in more than a dozen democratic countries, suggests that Swedes are more likely to regard immigrants as threats to national prosperity than countries like Canada and Australia (Table 6).

Table 6: Attitudes towards role of immigrants in society, 2003



Country	Adopt to society	Increase Crime	Good for economy
Australia	81.1	34.9	70.6
Austria	67.5	68.8	38.2
Canada	71.1	27.2	62.6
Germany	64.2	62.6	28.6
Netherlands	87.8	47.8	26.7
Norway	79.8	79	30.5
Spain	68.1	57.6	49.2
Sweden	84.7	57.2	44.3
UK	75.3	39.8	21.6

Note: Modified from Banting & Kymlicka, 2010a, p. 59

At a glance, these results may suggest that Canada or Australia for example, partially due to their deep commitment to multiculturalism, is doing a better job to assure accommodation and tolerance for ethno-cultural diversity. At the same time, the discourse on multiculturalism in Canada or Australia is based on the bland statement that 'everyone are immigrants and refugees' and therefore no one can lay claim on an 'authentic Canadian or Australian identity'. But this brushes aside practices of ethno-racial exclusion, discrimination, forced assimilation, and social marginalisation of Indigenous peoples that has profoundly characterised these countries' modern history.

Furthermore, in contrast to the skills- and economic-oriented immigration policy of Canada which has enabled the creation of a particular kind of immigrant population with high social and economic capital (education, language proficiency, economic wealth, etc.), Sweden, for the larger part of the 1980s and 1990s, has been accepting immigrants based on humanitarian needs. Swedish immigration policy was in fact a 'refugee policy', until changes introduced by the conservative government in 2008 to 'the skilled labour immigration policy' (Regeringen, 2008). To put this into perspective, in 2006 Sweden admitted 25,000 refugees and asylum recipients. After the introduction of new immigration laws in 2008 that number was reduced to 12,700 in 2011. The country has instead experienced an increase in labour migration, from 6,000 in 2006 to almost 19,000 in 2011 (Migrationsverket, 2012). Since 2011 Sweden has however accepted more than 150,000 refugees who have been displaced due to the various conflicts in the Middle East, mainly Syria, with restrictions put in place in 2016 to control refugee intake.

But as a consequence of a long tradition of refugee-oriented policy, the Swedish immigrant population has come to consist of individuals with social-economic capital that would comparatively score lower than those of Canada's. Based on this observation, it is not surprising that Canadians have a more favourable attitude towards immigrants who are regarded and portrayed as “investors” and “productive” as opposed to a “burden” and a “problem to be dealt with.” I do not raise this to defend the Swedish society’s lack of multicultural awareness. Critics from both ends of the political spectrum agree that the Swedish government has utterly failed in bridging the gap between native Swedes and the immigrant population. Aside from societal attitudes, the Swedish government, by allowing “parallel societies” to grow in outskirts of urban centres, has further marginalised a large portion of its immigrant population.

Such disparate experiences in different countries raises the need for a clarification of multiculturalism as a principle, a culture and a set of practices. In the next section I will discuss some of the existing theories on multiculturalism that have emerged in the past two decades in Western immigrant-receiving societies. The spectrum of opinions regarding multiculturalism is broad: from Brian Berry’s (2001) dismissal of multicultural policy making to Will Kymlicka’s (2001) unequivocal support for a citizenship model based on multicultural ideals. I will also attempt to position myself vis-à-vis the arguments presented by some of these scholars.

Critique of Multiculturalism

Has multiculturalism prevailed in the battle for justice and equal representation or is it time to write its obituary? Will Kymlicka (2001) asserts that there is a “clear shift in public opinion towards viewing minority rights not just as a matter of discretionary policies or pragmatic compromises, but as a matter of “fundamental justice” requiring special legislation to safeguard the promises of multiculturalism (p. 6). While this may be true in Canada’s case, there are those on the political right who would argue that multiculturalism and its reliance on identity politics muddles the concept of justice and human rights. In 2011, the leaders of Germany and the United Kingdom publically denounced official multiculturalism as state policy and called it an utter failure in integrating immigrants into the mainstream of society. At the same time, the left's critique of multiculturalism has essentially relied on the meta-narrative that multicultural policy making conceals socio-economic inequalities in society. There is truth in both arguments, and, as I shall try to argue, neither of these two arguments can convincingly reject multicultural policy making for the simple reason that ethno-cultural diversity will be an ever-increasing feature in immigrant receiving countries of Europe, North American and Australia, and that a rejection of institutionalised forms of multiculturalism will only lead to further marginalisation of immigrant groups in these societies.

The right critique

Egalitarian critics of multiculturalism argue that 'differentiated rights' fragments the social fabric of the nation-state and its ideals of universal citizenship rights. The central pillar of this critique is Brian Barry's influential book *Culture and Critique* (2001). Contrary to Kymlicka's argument that culture, stemming from a shared language and a shared way of life, "provides people with meaningful options, and with a sense of belonging and identity that helps them negotiate the modern world" (1998, p. 96), Barry argues for a removal of culture from the debate on justice and calls for a 'privatisation of culture' (Barry, 2001, p. 39). He argues that, "the core of our conception of citizenship, already worked out in the eighteenth century, is that there should be only one status of citizen, so that everybody enjoys the same legal and political rights" (p. 7). This argument glosses over the complexity of citizenship in an increasingly globalised world. Few political philosophers would limit citizenship to only one model. An even more naïve argument against multiculturalism comes from Canadian scholar Salim Mansur

(2010). He stresses that diversity, multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism are natural elements of our society. This diversity is “naturally respected as a given wherever the liberal democratic arrangement in politics is strong and institutionalised” (p. 9). Based on this assumption, Mansur argues that there is no need to make a fetish out of this diversity, in form of policies, in order to recognise and accommodate diversity. In contrast to these arguments, Iris Marion Young (1989) writes that this model of ‘difference blindness’ and a strict adherence to a principle of equal treatment tends to perpetuate oppression or disadvantage (Young, 1989, p. 251). Consequently, Young calls for special rights to be granted to marginalised groups to overcome their oppression. Evidence from countries like France, Denmark, the Netherlands and many other European countries that subscribe to the French citizenship model of *laïcité* would support such calls. Behind such “equalizing policies” lies continued resentment, inequality and discrimination, culminating in severe civil unrest among mainly second- and third-generation immigrants, not unlike that encountered in the UK and France (Siapera, 2010, p. 33).

Similarly, Sweden, while embracing multiculturalism at a policy level, has resisted incorporating any form of special rights for immigrants. As discussed earlier, there have been calls in Sweden to adopt a form of affirmative action to better address the marginalisation of immigrants in the labour market (see Kamali, 2005 & 2010). But the public and the politicians have rejected these calls on the basis that such claims contradict social cohesion and diminish individual liberty. But this insistence on ‘difference blindness’ fails to direct attention to the continued bigotry and racism experienced in many of these societies. Rather than increasing equality, policies based on *laïcité* gloss over the high rate of unemployment and the acute lack of opportunities for integration, and try to attribute them to lack of education, language competency and work experience.

The left critique

Multicultural policy has also been under attack by the political left. Authors such as Yasmeen Abu-Laban (2002), Himani Bannerji (2000), Ghassan Hage (1998), Audrey Kobayashi (1993), Peter Li (2003a), Kenneth McRoberts (1997) and Katharyne Mitchell (1993), to name a few, have expressed concerns with multiculturalism as a project for classification and containment of immigrants and their cultures. In contrast to the anti-multiculturalists (like Brian Barry and Samuel Huntington), these authors are not against multiculturalism as a *philosophy* and do not see it as a threat to national unity. Rather, they sympathise with multiculturalism and claim that it needs a radical redesign.

In general terms, Kymlicka's theory of liberal multiculturalism is at the receiving end of these critiques. In Kymlicka's model, there are three groups through which cultural pluralism is enacted: the national majority (the English-speaking Canada), national minorities (the Aboriginal people and French Canada), and immigrants (1995). Historically, he regards multiculturalism as part of the larger human-rights revolution that was initiated after the Second World War. To resolve the question of rights of national minorities (self government rights) and ethnic groups (polyethnic rights) within the framework of the nation-state, Kymlicka argues that documents such as the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not far-reaching enough to protect minority rights. We therefore need to supplement traditional human rights doctrines to address these issues (1995, p. 5 & 2012). Within a liberal-national framework, it falls upon the majority culture to accept group-differentiated and minority rights, and grant accommodation, protection, or even delegated autonomy through policy provisions (p. 113).

Power absent

For many of Kymlicka's critics, liberal multiculturalism does not go far enough to address ethno-racial tensions and the systems of oppression that these tensions give rise to. Instead, they see multiculturalism as a *clever device by ruling elites to control unruly ethnics.* Critical race scholars like Ghassan Hage (1998) argue that multiculturalism, rather than being a strategy of tolerance and antiracism, is "a strategy aimed at reproducing and disguising relationships of power in society […] It is a form of symbolic violence in which a mode of domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism" (p. 87). The focus of this critique is on the official state multiculturalism that imposes a certain form of policy that is intended to 'manage' ethno-cultural groups from above.

Similarly, relying on Althusser's (1971) writings on the role and the location of ideology within the state, Bannerji (2000) argues that official multiculturalism feeds into the "ideological apparatus of the state" as a device for constructing and ascribing political subjectivities to Third World immigrants (p. 6 & p. 117). Bannerji writes that in this process there is "an element of racialized ethnicization, which whitens North Americans of European origins and blackens or darkens their 'others' by the same stroke" (p. 6). This form of official multiculturalism rests on posing an imagined 'Canadian culture' against 'multicultures.' "An element of whiteness quietly enters into cultural definitions, marking the difference between a core cultural group and other groups who are represented as cultural fragments" (p. 10).

Further to this claim, she writes that proponents of liberal multiculturalism (like Kymlicka) speak of cultural difference as if it is the culture in itself that is the source of difference and discrimination in society. By essentialising culture as discrete categories, in this case majority and minority cultures, liberal multiculturalists gloss over issues of colonialism and political power that in essence are central to any discussion of difference in society. Bannerji stresses that by eradicating gender, race, class, ideology and resource allocation from discussions of power one is only left with a superficial understanding of difference based on culture. She writes,

> […] At the same moment that difference is ideologically evoked it is also neutralized, as though the issue of difference were the same as that of diversity of culture and identities, rather than that of racism and colonial ethnocentricism as though our different cultures were on par or negotiated with the two dominant ones! (Bannerji, 2000, p. 96).

Not only is the discourse of cultural dominance embedded in the conceptual framework of the liberal multiculturalism policy, but also it is implicitly woven into the manner in which the policy is discussed by likes of Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor. Richard Day (2000) writes that there is a constant reference in Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995) to a passively voiced 'we' that will decide what gifts to give to 'them': "I will discuss whether immigrant groups *should be given* the rights and resources necessary to sustain a distinct societal culture" (p. 76); "If people have a deep bond with their own culture, *should we not allow* immigrants to re-create their own societal culture? (p. 95); "*We should aim at ensuring* that all national groups have the opportunity to maintain themselves as a distinct societal culture" (p. 113). Day (2000) suggests that this implicit 'we' forms a silent invisible self group that has the power to recognize, or not recognize, the "noisy visible other", and thus contribute to the creation of a social hierarchy based on what is presumed to be people's cultural origin (p. 216). In Sweden's case, Mörkenstam (2004) argues that such classification of people according to majority/minority cultures has resulted in further discrimination of minority groups in Sweden. In a report to the Swedish government on integration he points out that compared to other national minorities--like the Sami aboriginal people, Swedish Finns, Jews, and Roma-- the immigrants are in a less favourable bargaining position for rights, privileges and resources (p. 184).

This criticism raises one important issue regarding ‘majority/minority’ relations, and the deconstruction and the re-assemblage of this implicit ‘we’. In Benedict Anderson’s (1991) term this majority culture constitutes the ‘imagined community’ of a nation. Kymlicka (1995) labels this as the “societal culture” of the majority cultures (p. 76). This societal culture, based on shared language, provides its people with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities (p. 76). On a national level, the societal culture of the majority group constitutes what I have referred to earlier in this chapter as the system of ‘core values’ of the nation to which all newcomers are required to adapt. It is not clear whether this implicit ‘we’, which at this point in time in Canada is constituted of the majority English and French speaking groups and is the source of this system of ‘core values’, is a fixed category or fluid! In other words, are immigrant minority groups ever to be part of the majority culture, or is the ‘minority group’ category also an ideologically fixed category? When and how can minority groups become part of the majority group? Is this majority/minority hierarchy grounded in statistics or ideology? If it is the former, then in a not-so-distant future we should be able to speak of the Asian diaspora as the majority culture in Canada. But if it is ideologically rooted, which I believe it is, then just a sheer growth in the size of these groups is not sufficient to tip the balance in favour of an immigrant majority culture. In that case, Homi Bhabha’s (1990) arguments in *Nation and Narration* could potentially serve as a normative framework for addressing questions of power within the national framework.

To Bhabha (1990) the minority cultures, working from the margins of the national narrative, play an important role in redefining the symbolic processes through which nation, culture and community are identified and performed (p. 304). It is from these spaces of ‘in-betweenness’ or “liminal” spaces that meanings of culture, nation and political authority are negotiated (p. 4). Their counter-narratives of the nation that continually evoke and erase its totalizing boundaries and grand narratives “disturb those ideological manoeuvres through which imagined communities are given essentialist identities” (p. 300). It is only through this re-writing of the narrative of the nation that a deconstruction and re-assemblage of this imagined ‘we’ is made possible.

Saris, samosas and steeldrums

Other critics of multiculturalism have voiced concerns with the ways symbols and practices of cultural celebration have become the exclusive content of multiculturalism (as discussed in Ley, 2008). In British literature this has been referred to as the “3S” model of multiculturalism- saris, samosas, and steeldrums (Alibhai-Brown, 2000) and in the Canadian context Audrey Kobayashi refers to this as “red boot multiculturalism” (1993, p. 205). It stands for a form of ‘feel-good multiculturalism’, ‘boutique multiculturalism’, or ‘artistic and style multiculturalism’ that shifts focus away from minority demands for collective rights and cultural accommodation to lifestyle multiculturalism. As Bailey and Harindranath (2006) suggest, this form of commodified multiculturalism does not address the material and discursive conditions in which minorities live in multi-ethnic societies. As suggested by Sardar, the celebration of the ‘Other’ in postmodernism becomes an irony, “that is, instead of listening to the voice of the marginalized, it uses the category to prove how unimportant, and ultimately meaningless, is any real identity it could contain. Difference is everywhere, and therefore nowhere” (Sardar 1998, p. 13, as quoted in Bailey & Harindranath, 2006, p. 303).

Celebration of ‘clothing, cuisine and music’ as central aspects of multiculturalism and as something uniquely cultural and exotic is potentially harmful. The reason for this is that it encourages essentialisation of cultural practices as something that is shared by *all* members of the ethno-cultural community. Inadvertently, this could reinforce the perception of ethno-cultural groups as the eternal ‘other’. As an example of how this manifests itself in real encounters, consider the following description, by a Swedish journalist, of Rinkeby-Kista, an immigrant-heavy suburb of Stockholm:

> I have travelled out to Rinkeby-Kista several times to shop at the open-air market. It is like a market in Morocco or Pakistan. And when I meet a Swede in line at the fruit-stand it is like being on a trip some place far away in the world and meeting a fellow countryman. They ought to organize tourist trips here, we say to one another. Rinkeby-Kista is something for travel agencies […] You would be able to make a visit to the Turk’s mosque during prayers. With local guides you could do home visits, just like in the villages of India. Every Swede ought to come here. Those who are still afraid of black people would discover that they can move about safely (Lars Westman, editor of the Social Democratic weekly magazine *Vi,* p. 52).

The article is titled “There are no Christmas trees in Rinkeby”, suggesting that Christmas is not celebrated by the immigrant communities in this Stockholm suburb. The author’s construction of and claim to ‘Swedishness’ is also problematic. Reference to “fellow countryman”—meaning an ethnically white Swede— excludes the ‘ethnic Swede’ and places her in the eternal category of the ‘other’. It ignores the possibility that the encountered ‘other’ might be born and raised in Sweden, and therefore should be considered a ‘fellow countryman’ as well.

Aside from this ideological implication, the “3S” model of multiculturalism has also proven to be advantageous for larger immigrant-receiving nations like Canada and Australia. It enables the governments of these countries to play the ethnic card as a sign of their worldliness and cosmopolitanism in order to attract foreign skills, labour and capital (Mitchell, 1993). The essentialisation of cultural origins represents a ‘commodified form of multiculturalism’ that to a large extent serves an economic purpose, while glossing over social and cultural rights of minorities.

But the implications of essentialising cultural origin extend beyond the ideological and the economic spheres; it also involves the legal sphere. This extension of the 'essentialist critique' is concerned with the extent to which nations can accommodate diverse ethno-cultural, linguistic and religious practices. In other words, critics in this case are concerned with how *multiculturalism runs the risk of justifying systems of oppression on the basis of cultural relativism*. This 'relativist' critique is perhaps the most influential, and, at the same time, the most complex critique of multiculturalism.

Cultural relativism

There are generally two articulations of the cultural relativism critique. First, there are those who reject multiculturalism, and thus cultural relativism, on the basis that it undermines democracy in Western countries. This version of the critique has mainly been given voice in the aftermath of 9/11 when liberal democratic countries were faced with a Muslim 'enemy within' the population. Anxieties about accommodating religio-cultural demands of Muslims—like building of schools and mosques, implementation of *sharia* law and in some isolated cases female genital mutilation—have resulted in a vibrant debate on how far-reaching these accommodations should or can be. According to critics like Bassam Tibi (2007) and Salim Mansur (2010) accommodation of these demands on the basis of multiculturalism is dangerous and will erode the liberal democratic values of Western nations. "The indiscriminate openness of cultural relativism that leads to tolerating the politics of *jihad* reveals the absurdity of multiculturalism", argues Mansur in his essay, *The Muddle of Multiculturalism* (2010). But by the same token, can we argue that freedom of religion in the USA, in this atmosphere of divisive partisan politics with far-right populous camps like the Tea Party Movement, is adding fuel to intolerance and racism? Perhaps not.

Tibi’s criticism is equally rash and unsubstantiated. One of the main arguments in his ‘Europeanisation of Islam’ (or “Euro-Islam”) thesis is that cultural relativism represents the capitulation of Europe to the undemocratic demands of religious fanatics (2010). There is a paradox in this argument. Isn’t Tibi’s suggestion to mute the demands of ethno-cultural groups for accommodation in order to safeguard democracy, social unity and core values of Europe *in itself* grounded in undemocratic thoughts? Furthermore, to claim that Europe has capitulated, or will capitulate, to undemocratic demands of cultural relativism is not based on concrete evidence. In fact, the quest for any form of accommodation has always been faced with legal and constitutional obstacles, and in many instances has been rejected on the basis of being undemocratic or discriminatory. In other words, the totalising claim of ‘capitulation’ does not hold, considering that any request for accommodation is treated on a case-by-case basis, under the scrutiny of the judicial system of the state.

The second articulation of this critique comes out of the feminist tradition and is concerned with the injustice that women face under the conditions of cultural relativism. The argument that ‘women’s rights are incompatible with multiculturalism’ has been most forcefully put forth by the late American political scientist Susan Moller Okin in her widely discussed essay, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?” (1997). Okin argues that under the banner of tolerance and respect for diversity women have been subjected to injustice in form of female gentile mutilation, polygamy, and physical and sexual violence. This has resulted in practices that have historically excluded women from the full and equal exercise of their rights (1997). Based on this assertion, Okin arrives at the controversial solution that women in minority cultures who have little or no respect for their rights:

> *might* be much better off if the culture into which they were born were either to become extinct (so that its members would become integrated into the less sexist

> surrounding culture) or, preferably, to be encouraged to alter itself so as to reinforce the equality of women--at least to the degree to which this is upheld in the majority culture (1997).

There are a number of problems with this ‘solution’. Homi Bhabha, in a response essay to Okin accuses her of Eurocentricism and writes, “[Okni’s] narrative begins by pitting multiculturalism against feminism, but then grows seamlessly into comparative and evaluative judgement on minority culture […] delivered from the point of view of Western liberal cultures […] which has now become at once the measure and mentor of minority cultures” (1997). Instead, Bhabha proposes a contextualised approach to minority women’s rights. Minority women are too frequently imaged as the abject ‘subject’ of their cultures of origin, without any attention being paid to the context of the on-going lives of these people (1997). To elaborate on this point, Seyla Benhabib (2002) argues that over centuries Western colonial discourses have viewed the cultures of the ‘Other’ as homogenous and internally coherent. This has in turn ignored the internal complexities and tensions of global civilizations (p. 25-26). Furthermore, to suggest that women should ‘change themselves’ is perhaps easier said than done. In theory, it may be true that women are under no obligation to endure oppression by their male-dominated cultures and they can choose to alter their life by leaving or fighting back; in reality, however, leaving may not be an option for those minority women who find themselves marginalised not only by their own culture, but also by circles of friends, support networks and the society in general (Fleras, 2012). Finally, to suggest that Western liberal governments, based on the premise of cultural relativism, allow injustices to occur is not always true. As Kymlicka (2007b) asserts, in the case of female genital mutilation, Canada, as it was adopting its Multiculturalism Act, became one of the first countries in the world to accept that a girl should be granted refugee status if she faces a risk of being subject to female genital mutilation, if returned to her country of origin, even if the practice is ‘traditional’ in that country of origin. Kymlicka argues that it would be self-contradictory for a country like Canada to tolerate female genital mutilation within its own borders in the name of cultural preservation, while defining it as persecution overseas (2007b, p. 103 n.)

Is there a solution? Is it possible to create a female-friendly multiculturalism? One solution lies in rejecting a reified understanding of culture as fixed, uniform, uncontested and determined (Fleras, 2012). Instead, cultures should be viewed as entities that are continuously evolving, repeatedly contested, and constantly in interaction with other cultures and traditions. As Jakubowicz (2006) asserts, societies and cultures are in constant state of change and this change triggers personal growth and the building of communal resources and solidarity. Based on this premise, it will become very difficult for collective interests to call on something that does not really exist to justify the denial or exclusion of women (Fleras, 2012). At the same time, we cannot entirely rely on this 'cultural evolutionary paradigm' to 'solve' this problem. On a policy level, we must aim for continuous institutional support—in the form of support groups, crisis centres, and intercultural education— to create an atmosphere of solidarity and recognition of the violence that women endure in many minority cultures (not only Muslim cultures) in the name of 'cultural practice'.

Can we do without multiculturalism?

There are four main points to be made based on what I have discussed in this chapter. First, one thing is certain: *despite* all the criticisms of multiculturalism as philosophy, theory, policy and practice, cultural diversity is not a trend; it is here to stay. Projections from Canada, Sweden and United States for example suggest that the number of foreign-born population in these countries will increase significantly by the middle of this century: by 50% in Canada and by 10% to 20% in Sweden and the USA (Statistics

Canada, 2010; Haub, 2008; Statistics Sweden, 2009). Evidence from countries with a *laissez-faire* approach to minority rights shows a continued trend of marginalisation of immigrant communities in those countries. On the other hand, there exists some compelling evidence from countries with multicultural policies like Canada that shows lower rates of xenophobia and socio-economic hardship for immigrants (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010a; Fleras, 2012). In Sweden's case, despite the country's commitment to official multiculturalism, researchers have repeatedly pointed to the fact that the public perception in the country supports an assimilative model (Friedman et al., 2006; Westin, 2004). Against this backdrop, any attempt to abandon multiculturalism as a policy is detrimental to the successful cultural, political, economic and social integration of immigrants. As Yasmeen Abul-Laban notes, multiculturalism exists in countries like Canada; not just as rhetoric, but as something institutionalised and established in the practices of the government and the people (2002, p. 460).

Second, as some of the post-multiculturalist critics accurately assert, it is not clear what exactly people dislike about multiculturalism: the philosophy, the theory, the policy or the practice? What is certain however is that in countries where the policies have been institutionally adopted, it is naïve to continue to suggest that multiculturalism is limited to a celebration of culture and heritage. This may have been the origin, but as Ley (2008) and Kobayashi (1993) argue, multiculturalism, at least in Canada, has advanced from its celebratory beginnings and has moved into the territory of citizenship rights. But these citizenship rights are hierarchically articulated. In other words, individual freedoms are not absolute; they are subservient to collective rights and freedoms. For example, cultural or religious customs such as arranged marriage for women or female gentile mutilation are only reasonably accommodated, as long as they do not infringe upon the collective rights of women to make an informed decision about these issues.

Further to this, Lloyd Wong et al. (n.d.) suggests that empirical assessments of the positive and negative effects of multiculturalism have proven to be very difficult. Yes, we can establish that there is a positive correlation between multiculturalism policies and the degree to which a country accepts cultural diversity, but to trace causality in this area of research is extremely difficult. Perhaps the question to ask is not whether multiculturalism is good or bad, or whether it causes segregation or integration. Rather, its merits depend on the context within which the policy is enacted. A better approach then is to recognise that liberal multiculturalism can have an isolating effect on cultures as it separates them in distinct groups, leading to essentialist understandings of culture and extreme cultural relativism. At the same time, recognising cultural difference is the first step towards accommodating cultural diversity at an institutional level. This brings me to my third point: how is recognition achieved, maintained and developed over time?

Contrary to many scholars in the field of diasporic media studies who have frequently questioned the continued relevance of the nation-state in an increasingly globalised world I suggest here that the nation-state is the only organising and regulatory framework that can effectively safeguard the core values of multiculturalism. It is the only authority that can protect group and individual claims against discriminations on the basis of race, culture, religion, sexual orientation and other areas that concern multicultural policy-making. Of course, international and regional bodies such as the United Nations and the European Union have according to some theorists challenged the authority of nation-states (see Held, 2006). But what is true about these institutions is that their mandate does not eradicate national policy-making; rather, they complement it. At best, the U.N., and more so the E.U., can draft guidelines for nations to follow, and intervene (like the European Court of Appeal) when disputes arise between nations and/or their citizens. Even this intervening role of the E.U. has been criticised as yet another layer of government bureaucracy.

What I am arguing here may sound like a complete capitulation to the authority of the nation-state. For surely, as Leonie Sandercock notes, "to become multicultural societies requires more than a top-down policy declaration of multiculturalism […] It is more than a matter of bureaucratic management, or of citizenship legislation" (2003c, p.12). I could not agree more with this statement. While I am defending the continued relevance of the nation-state for policy making, I do believe that from a normative perspective we must find ways to move beyond the totalising effect, and at times the oppressive effect of the national legal framework. In recent years, the idea of a 'multiculturalism from below'— an offspring of the 'globalising from below' thesis— has attracted considerable attention from academic and policy circles. This strategy is made possible by local and transnational non-governmental organisations and institutions. They provide an outlet for translating the abstract ideals of *the multiculturalism principle*— which encompasses respect and recognition for ethno-cultural diversity— into concrete actions and strategies for socio-economic and cultural adaptation. Diasporic communication infrastructure, in which media institutions play a central role as symbolic mediators of culture and identity, are crucial for the development of a robust 'multiculturalism-from-below' strategy. These articulations of ethno-cultural agency operate in everyday spaces through crossings and exchanges of ideas and strategies that strive to facilitate sense-making of the diasporic condition. What is important to emphasise here is that this strategy of 'multiculturalism from below' and the apparatus of government multiculturalism policy are not mutually exclusive; they are the main ingredients for the development of what I have labelled earlier in this chapter as *multiculturalism culture.*

The greatest long-term contribution of the interplay between a robust government multicultural policy making and a ‘multiculturalism-from-below’ strategy is the formation of a social and cultural sphere of active participation through which members of immigrant communities and ethno-cultural minority groups can develop models for belonging and citizenship. Here, the transactions between what Norman Fairclough calls ‘the text’, ‘the discourse’ and ‘the socio-cultural practice’ plays a decisive role in the ways this citizenship formation is enacted (1995). For example, given the socio-cultural move towards a market-oriented model of governance and policy-making, is it conceivable to expect that the discourses of media and journalism have also been influenced by this market logic? Contemporary critical media scholars, including Nick Couldry (2010), Peter Dahlgren (2011) and Sean Phelan (2011), have argued that the logic of the market has indeed ‘spilled over’ from what Arjun Appandurai (1996) calls ‘financescape’ and ‘ideoscape’ to the ‘mediascape’. What impact does this have on conditions of production, and, by extension, on the ‘text’ that is produced by media? An even more important question is, what systems of belonging and citizenship does this transaction foster? Is it one that mimics the market logic, with focus on the individual, and internalises its norms and values? Or, as it has been suggested by many contemporary scholars of diasporic media and communication infrastructure, is this transaction giving voice to other models of citizenship like cosmopolitan, hybrid, or diasporic-nationalistic citizenship? In Chapters four and five, I rely on evidence from Stockholm to revisit these questions and examine the relationship between *policy making, communication infrastructure* in form of ethnic media and *constructions of systems of belonging* among Iranian communities.

Chapter Four - Persian-language media in Stockholm

On April 13, 2011 at approximately 10:45 a.m., a woman calls the studio of *Radio Ava*, an Iranian local radio station in Stockholm. The call comes during the ‘community bulletin’ segment of the radio program during which listeners call to announce community events, advertise for sale of goods and services, or announce that they are seeking employment. The woman’s voice is clearly laced with panic and urgency. She tells the radio host, Mr. Ahad Irani, that on her other phone line she is talking to an Iranian man, ‘Reza’, who had been detained by the Swedish police the night before and now is awaiting deportation at the Falun Detention Centre (about 250 km north of Stockholm).[7] The radio host tells the women to give him Reza’s cellphone number off the air so he can call him. This way Reza would avoid hefty cellphone charges. He puts the scheduled radio program on hold and ask listeners to not call into the studio so that Reza can tell his story without any interruptions.

Reza’s story is typical of many other rejected refugees who have been living in Sweden anywhere for up to ten years without any legal status. He had fled Iran as a political activist and after spending some time in Holland he finally made his way to Sweden and sought political asylum. After several appeal processes his case was finally rejected by the Swedish Migration Board (*Migrationsverket)* and he had now been transferred to Falun to be deported back to the Netherlands, as it was Reza’s first port of entry to the European Union, and most likely from Holland he would be deported back to Iran.

The radio host asks Reza if there is anything he or the Iranian community could do to help him. Reza is not sure if there is any time left for action. The radio host tries to comfort him and tells him that he will get in touch with the manager of the Iranian

Refugee Federation (*Fedrasion-e Sarasari-e Panahandegan-e Irani*) Ms. Sara Nakhaei to see what kind of support her organisation could provide. Within minutes Ms. Nakhaei calls the radio station and tells the host that she is at work and has no access to the radio. One of her friends, who was listening to the show, had called and informed her about Reza's story.

Ms. Nakhaei announces that later that afternoon there would be a rally in support for Reza outside the Ministry of Immigration (*Migrationsverket*) in Stockholm. This campaign for Reza lasted for the duration of my fieldwork in Stockholm (April-June 2011) and included daily rallies outside the Ministry, Falun Detention Centre and the Swedish Parliament, as well as petitions and letters to the Swedish immigration officials. Close to the day of my departure I heard on the radio that Reza had been released and granted asylum in Sweden. The campaign that had started with a simple telephone call from a concerned citizen had turned into a mobilisation campaign of the Iranian community in Stockholm. Radio played a decisive role as the connecting node. It not only facilitated communication, but the host of the radio show played an active role as reporter and activist in an effort to bring attention to the plight of many illegal refugees in Sweden.

My encounter with the Persian-language media in Stockholm is central to the formation of this chapter. The story I shared above demonstrates that there is something organic about how Persian-language media are experienced and practiced by the Iranian community in Stockholm. The instantaneous nature of radio as a medium is crucial for community building on one hand, and maintaining a sense of belonging to that community on the other. Given radio's central role in the lives of 40,000 Iranians in the city the narrative of Iranian community media in Stockholm is really a narrative of radio and its central role in the lives of 40,000 Iranians in the city. At the same time, this narrative stands for something larger than that: it is a concrete ground for investigation and debate on *how multiculturalism is or ought to operate within and outside the mediascape*.

Using the Persian-language media —primarily radio— as my area of focus in this chapter and next, I focus on the role of media in the Iranian community in Stockholm. I address the following research questions: (1) What media outlets are available for the Iranian community in Stockholm? (2) What do these outlets cover? (3) How is “Iranian” identity constructed and mediated by Iranian local media? (4) What are the policy and operational conditions under which these media outlets operate? (5) What are some of the opportunities and limitations in the Iranian ethnic media sector, and what strategies should be employed to overcome the limitations?

Swedish media system and ethnic media

The ethnic media landscape in Stockholm can be divided into two broad categories: (1) programmes directed to ethnic communities by public service broadcasting *Sveriges Radio (SR)* and *Sveriges Television (SVT)* (Sweden’s Radio and Sweden’s Television); and (2) ethnic community media programs, mainly radio, operated by not-for-profit organisations under the mandate of *Närradiolagen* (Community Radio Act). However, in an increasingly globalised world, the national and local media landscapes are shaped in part by regional (European Union) and international policy regimes. In the following section, I first provide a brief overview of the Swedish media landscape followed by a discussion of the various tiers of policy making.

A long tradition of press freedom

According to Hallin and Mancini's[8] (2004) classification of media systems Sweden falls into the *democratic corporatist* category, which is distinctive of Northern and Central Europe. It is one of three original models they developed to compare media systems and politics across nations. The other two include the *polarised pluralist* model that developed in Southern Europe and the *liberal* model that is in operation in the UK, Australia, and North America (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 67).

While in the *liberal* model the media are considered as a commercial enterprise, media in Sweden are regarded as social institutions. In the *democratic corporatist* model it is the state's role with its system of press subsidies, policies and strong public service broadcasting to ensure a democratic and free media landscape.

The most fundamental law that can be applied to media in Sweden is the *Freedom of the Press Act* that dates back to the country's 1766 constitution. Sweden was, in fact, the first country in the world to establish principles of publicity and press freedom (name, year, p. 145). The first widely circulated newspaper, *Ordinari Post Tijdender*, was published in 1645 (Rehmann, 2010). Today Sweden is a leading figure in the print sector with a high rate of newspaper consumption. According to Weibull & Jönsson (2007) more than 80% of the adult population read a newspaper on an average day (p. 170). Swedes are also well served by other types of media. According to a 2012 study by Nordicom (Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research) almost every household has a radio, 95% of households own a television set, 95% of the population (9-79 years old) own a mobile device, 85% of the population subscribe to internet services, and 75% of the population own a laptop (Nordicom, 2013). While seemingly staggering, media ownership and connectivity in Sweden are comparable to other developed nations such as Canada (except in the case of mobile device ownership which is 75% in Canada; this can be partially attributed to higher subscription fees) (Canadian Wireless Telecommunication Association, 2013).

Aside from being well equipped in terms of media use, Sweden enjoys high international ranking in terms of press freedom. In 2012, Sweden, along with Finland and Norway, ranked first in the Freedom House Index on freedom of the press (Freedomhouse, 2012). Reasons for this include strong legal protections through fundamental Freedom of the Press and Freedom of Expression laws, as well as provisions for the protection of sources and the access to information for citizens (Freedomhouse, 2012, pp. 321-322). For comparison, the United States ranked 22nd, Canada 25th and Australia 31st (pp. 32-37).

Aside from government oversight, the Swedish media's system of self-regulation is exemplary with the Swedish press council being one of the strongest press councils in the world (Hallin & Mancin, 2004, p.172f; Rehmann, 2010). The council is comprised of the following four bodies:

- The Swedish Newspaper Publisher's Association (*Tidningsudgivarna*), is a trade organization with 240 members.
- The Swedish Magazine Publisher's Association (*Sveriges Tidskrifter*), with about 400 members.
- The Swedish Union of Journalists (*Journalistförbundet*), with more than 19,000 members, and, according to Weibull and Jönsson (2009, p. 583), an organizational degree of almost 100%.
- The National Press Club (*Publicistklubben*), with 5,200 members, mainly journalists

The four consolidate as the *Pressens Samarbetsnämnd* (Press's Cooperation Committee), which, according to its Code of Ethics,

> "[...] is responsible for the Charter of the Press Council and the Standing Instructions for the Press Ombudsman. They all contribute to the financing of the Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman" (Pressombudsman, 2010a).

This self-monitoring system or "media-accountability system" as Weibull and Börjesson (1992) call it, is not dependent on any state policy or legislation but "is entirely voluntary and wholly financed by the four press organisations" (Pressombudsman, 2010b).

The Press Council provides very few guidelines on provisions for diversity. Section 7 of its Code of Ethics states that journalists should refrain from emphasising "ethnic origin, sex, nationality, occupation, political affiliation, religious persuasion or sexual disposition in the case of the persons concerned if such particulars are not important in the specific context and demeaning" (Pressombudsman, 2010a). If followed properly and by all journalists, this could translate into less frequent racialization of ethnic minorities, for example. The Council also deals with complaints directed to them by the general public on matters such as racism in the press. A search in the Council's database resulted in a handful cases from the 2000s that dealt with the issue of racism and discrimination in Swedish media.

Officially, Sweden has a number of other provisions to safeguard and promote diversity within the media system. Policies have also provided opportunity for local ethnic media initiatives to foster. However, as I will argue in the next section, these policies are not far reaching enough to increase ethno-cultural diversity in media organisations.

Layers of international and regional policymaking and their ramifications

Policy regimes both influence and govern the ethnic media landscape of a country. The first category, policy regimes that influence, are generally comprised of directives from international and regional policy making institutions that guide national frameworks. While these institutions are influential in shaping the global media landscape, media policy is not their primary concern. Article 19 of the United Nations'

Declaration of Human Rights serves as an overarching principle for the right of people to communicate. It states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers” (United Nations, 1948). But as Browne (2005) argues, the United Nations generally follows a hands-off policy where specific practices of any single nation are concerned, unless it can be shown that they pose a serious danger to other states or to a significant group within the nation. Even then, history has shown that something close to genocide is required for the United Nations to intervene (p. 72).

Another United Nations body, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adopted the Convention on Cultural Diversity in 2005 which stresses protection of cultural values of ethnic and linguistic minorities (UNESCO, 2005). Article 7, § 1.a of the Convention stresses the importance of fostering an environment for minorities and indigenous groups to create, produce, disseminate, distribute and have access to their own cultural expressions (p. 6). On the issue of media however, the convention is not directly addressing minority *access* to media outlets, but that media should aim to enhance diversity, including thorough public service broadcasting (Article 6, § 2.h). The document has also been subject to criticism. Horsti (2011) argues that the Convention is focused more on the national and indigenous cultures than media needs for minority and diaspora cultures. Instead, Horsti (2011; Hursti & Hultén, 2011) argues that the regional policy making institution, the European Union, has been more influential in shaping multicultural policies and initiatives at the national level.

As far back as 1981, the European Parliament passed a resolution urging member states “to allow and take steps to ensure access to local radio and television in a way that guarantees consistent and effective community communication... [and] to ensure that minority groups receive organisational and financial assistance for their cultural events equivalent to that received by the majority groups" (European Parliament, 1981). This provision was complemented in 1994 with a new resolution to "encourage the use of lesser used languages in the Community's audiovisual policy... and assist lesser used language producers and broadcasters to produce new programmes in [HD] format" as well as "to ensure that modern digital telecommunications technology... is used for carrying a greater number of minority languages" (European Parliament, 1994).

The lingering question remains whether these para-national initiatives translate into action at national and local levels The literature on European media policy seems to suggest that without political intermediaries these policy directives do not automatically translate into concrete actions (Browne, 2005; Horsti, 2011; Horsti et al., 2011; Napoli, 2007). Even then it is extremely difficult to "systematically assess the impact of individual policies" on media practices (Napoli, 2007, p. 19). Nevertheless, intermediaries such as the World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC, from its French title), European Ethnic Broadcasting Association (EEBA), and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) have emerged as lobby groups to influence governments to support community ethnic media initiatives. Among their activities include financial support for minority and ethnic media outlets, training programs for young ethnic journalists, and diversity training for mainstream media journalists (Browne, 2005; Horsti, 2011; O'Boyle, Fehr, Preston & Rogers, 2013).

Horsti et al. (2011) argue that the EBU in particular has been influential in promoting and creating multicultural policies and practices. The conditions for active membership in the organisation, of which the Swedish public broadcasting media are also members, is outlined in Article 3, § 3 of its statues, which includes the following clause:

> (b) [members] are under an obligation to and actually do, provide varied and balanced programming for all sections of the population, including programmes catering for special/minority interests of various sections of the public, irrespective of ratio of programme cost to audience (Horsti et al., 2011).

How the Swedish public broadcasters have interpreted this mandate is quite revealing of the way multicultural programming has been approached by Swedish public broadcasters. In an address to the EBU annual meeting in Dublin in 2004 the chairman of the Swedish Radio, Ove Joanson, stressed the danger of focusing on the particularities of various cultures and calls on broadcasters to focus on the normality of those who are perceived as different in society. This is the only effective way of changing attitudes towards immigrants, Joanson added (Horsti et al., 2011). This effort to mainstream minority cultures in public broadcasting has been part of the Swedish public broadcasting directive since the conservative government came into power in 2006. The shift in policy also mirrors what I discussed earlier in the study: the European backlash against multiculturalism and multicultural policymaking (see page 18). Instead, the general discursive shift in Europe has been towards social cohesion to remedy the disintegration of the European social fabric (Horsti et al., 2011; Joppke, 2004). Events since 9-11, such as the reaction against Mohammed cartoons in Denmark's Muslim communities and elsewhere in Europe particularly, have contributed to increased calls for social cohesion. Media and cultural policies are not immune to these discursive shifts and this is nowhere more obvious than in changes to the language of policy instruments since the turn of the century.

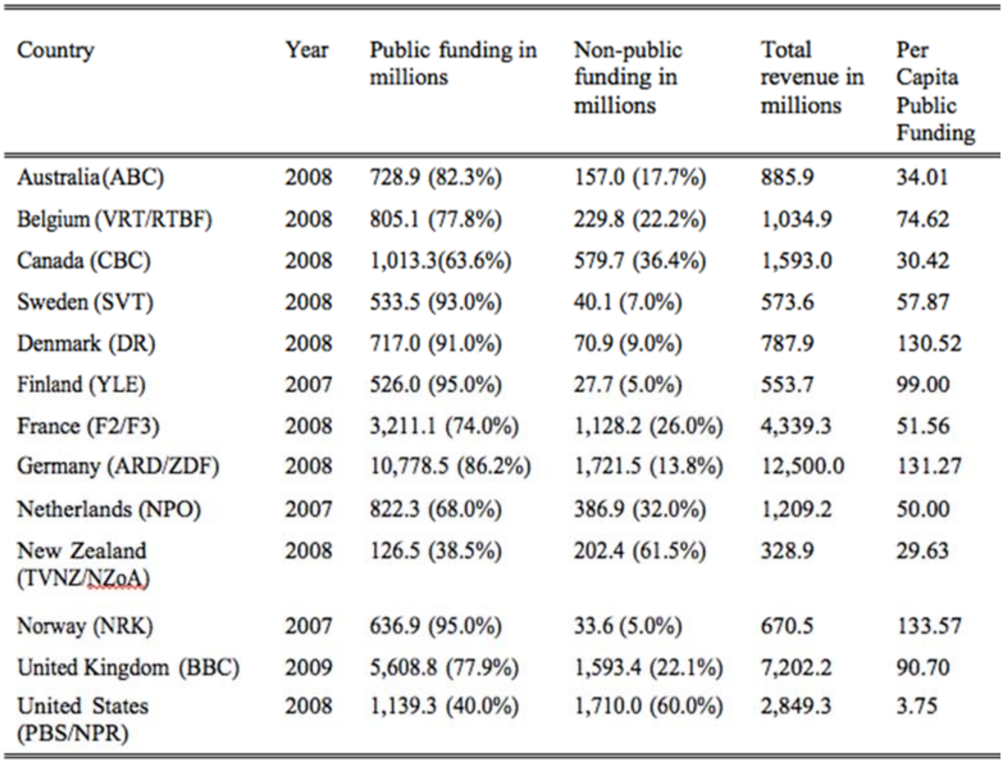
In the Swedish public broadcasting television's annual report from 2002 the word "diversity" is used in the context of diversity of voices and sources. Sections referring to ethno-cultural diversity use references such as "multicultural dimensions" and "multicultural programmes" (Sveriges Television, 2002, p. 33 as cited in Horsti et al., 2011). In the 2006 policy the word "multiculturalism" is only mentioned once to refer to the multicultural qualifications of staff. Elsewhere in the document the word had been replaced by "diversity" (Sveriges Television, 2006, p. 6 as cited in Horsti et al, 2011). The 2008 version of the policy makes no reference to multiculturalism and the document is reduced to less than one page (Sveriges Television, 2008 as cited in Horsti et al, 2011). The ramifications of these policy changes were immediately apparent; the public broadcasting television cancelled some of its most popular multicultural programmes due to cutbacks: *Mosaik* (a multicultural current affairs and cultural program), *Språka* (a popular multilingual children's programme, also offered in Persian) and *Aktuellt för invandrare* (*Aktuellt for immigrants*)*,* the company's flagship evening news program in minority languages (Horsti et al, 2011).

As evidenced, transnational policy making can be influential in providing roadmaps to enhance ethno-cultural diversity in media programming at the national level. However these policy instruments are not isolated from social, political, cultural and economic events and trends. The retreat of multiculturalism in Europe and in Sweden contributed significantly to the change in both media policy and programming. Public broadcasting has experienced further cuts in its multicultural programming, including significant cuts to multicultural radio programming. The existing policy regime, as I discuss below, has not only eroded multicultural programming, but has also failed to increase ethno-cultural diversity in the newsroom.

Public service broadcasting and cultural diversity

Public service broadcasting has a long tradition in Sweden and enjoys solid public support. In comparison to other countries, Sweden has remained steadfast in protecting its public service broadcasting and in fact has increased its overall operating budget (see Table 7 and Figure 2).

Table 7: Funding for public media in Sweden and internationally (US dollars)



Country	Year	Public funding in millions	Non-public funding in millions	Total revenue in millions	Per Capita Public Funding
Australia(ABC)	2008	728.9 (82.3%)	157.0 (17.7%)	885.9	34.01
Belgium (VRT/RTBF)	2008	805.1 (77.8%)	229.8 (22.2%)	1,034.9	74.62
Canada (CBC)	2008	1,013.3(63.6%)	579.7 (36.4%)	1,593.0	30.42
Sweden (SVT)	2008	533.5 (93.0%)	40.1 (7.0%)	573.6	57.87
Denmark (DR)	2008	717.0 (91.0%)	70.9 (9.0%)	787.9	130.52
Finland (YLE)	2007	526.0 (95.0%)	27.7 (5.0%)	553.7	99.00
France (F2/F3)	2008	3,211.1 (74.0%)	1,128.2 (26.0%)	4,339.3	51.56
Germany (ARD/ZDF)	2008	10,778.5 (86.2%)	1,721.5 (13.8%)	12,500.0	131.27
Netherlands (NPO)	2007	822.3 (68.0%)	386.9 (32.0%)	1,209.2	50.00
New Zealand (TVNZ/NZoA)	2008	126.5 (38.5%)	202.4 (61.5%)	328.9	29.63
Norway (NRK)	2007	636.9 (95.0%)	33.6 (5.0%)	670.5	133.57
United Kingdom (BBC)	2009	5,608.8 (77.9%)	1,593.4 (22.1%)	7,202.2	90.70
United States (PBS/NPR)	2008	1,139.3 (40.0%)	1,710.0 (60.0%)	2,849.3	3.75

Note: Modified from Benson & Powers, 2011, p. 61.

The current policy for the public service corporation instructs the state media to mirror the culturally diverse character of contemporary Sweden as well as the cultural life of other countries (Sveriges Television, 2011; Sveriges Radio, n.d.). The policy also underlines the responsibility of the company to take the needs of linguistic and ethnic minorities into account, with particular attention to the Sami, the Finnish and the Tornedal-Finnish cultural-linguistic groups.

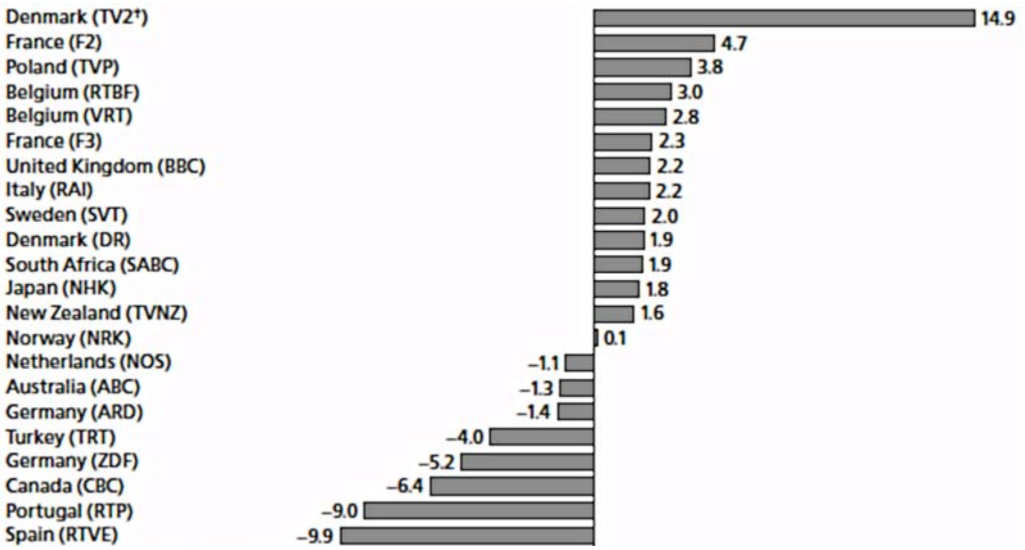


Figure 2: ***Change in public funding for public broadcasting (%, excluding commercial income)***

Note: Modified from McKinsey & Company, 1999.

The linguistic needs of people in cultural and ethnic minority communities are also to be accounted for by SVT (The Charter for Public Service Broadcasting in Sweden, as cited in Camauër, 2002, p. 15). Separately, state television (SVT) and radio (SR) have drafted policies and memoranda to address diversity in broadcasting (Sveriges Television, 2011; Sveriges Radio, n.d.). Both branches of the public service broadcasting corporation adhere to a number of practices, including: anti-discriminatory practices in the workplace, production of programming that reflects the ethnic diversity in Sweden, and pay equality, to name a few. However, neither of the two policy instruments suggests any concrete measures to increase ethno-cultural diversity in the newsroom. A comprehensive study by Gunilla Hultén (2009a & 2009b) on ethnic diversity in the Swedish media landscape suggests a profound underrepresentation of non-white and non-Swede media workers and journalists. For example, Hultén found that, out of the 25,000 employed journalists in Sweden, half are women, 5% are foreign born and only 2% (or 500) are born in a non-European country (2009a, p. 2). This is remarkable when considering that 15% of Sweden's population is comprised of immigrants (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2010). These figures suggest that while there is equality in gender representation in the journalistic field in Sweden, when it comes to ethno-racial diversity in media, there is more work to be done.

Despite a low number of non-white journalists in the Swedish media landscape, very little policy directives exist to remedy this gap. In fact, the two policies from SVT and SR make no mention of any conscious effort to hire media workers of non-white origins. To the contrary it is stated in the SVT directive under section "Recruiting and Selection" that, "SVT follows anti-discrimination laws and apply recruiting methods based on competence to guarantee a professional selection" (Sveriges Television, 2011, p. 4). The directive also states that, "SVT shall always respect equality in its recruitment practices and not evaluate a candidate's credentials based on gender, age, ethnicity or other discriminatory categories" (p. 4). These practices are in line with my discussions in the previous chapter of the egalitarian and Social-Democratic tradition in Sweden where provisions similar to Affirmative Action are considered discriminatory. Numerous studies have pointed to a systematic discrimination in the Swedish labour force based on ethnicity (Kamali , 2005; Westin, 2004). These studies have looked at the American example of Affirmative Action and the Canadian Labour Equity Act to suggested concrete measures to increase ethno-cultural diversity in the Swedish workforce. A job advertisement or company policy directive could encourage recruitment of immigrants and members of ethnic minority groups.

On other fronts, namely diversity programming, SR and SVT have a long tradition of representing linguistic diversity in their daily and weekly broadcasts. SR's international services date back to 1939, only 1 year after its formation, with 18 hours of news per week in English, German and French (Om Sveriges Radio, n.d.). Television programming began in 1956 but the international language programs where not launched until 1988 with daily news in Finnish (Om SVT, n.d.). Today, SVT broadcasts daily or weekly news programs in four out of five national minority languages of Sweden: Finnish, Meänkieli (also known as Tornedals Finnish), Sami, and Romani (Camauër, 2005, p. 42). There are no programs in Yiddish. Since December 1999, these four ethnic groups, together with Jews, due to their long history in Sweden, have been recognised by the Swedish Parliament as official National Minorities (according to 1998/1999:143 government bill as cited in *Presstödsnämnden* [The Press Subsidies Council], 2002, p. 15). Under this law, these languages are to be protected and developed through subsidised government programs in, for example, library acquisition of books in these languages, educational support and media rights. The unique provision under this law that sets these five language groups apart from other ethnic language groups is that these five are allowed to use their native language in official communication with various government agencies (p. 15). All, except Yiddish, are represented in SVT. Other language groups in Sweden, however, are not covered under SVT's mandate.

SR on the other hand, has a broader program offering. Aside from programmes in the five official minority languages, it also offers programs in nine ethnic languages:

Table 8: SR International's broadcast in minority languages (Broadcast in hours per year for 2004)

Language	First Broadcast	Rerun	Total
Albanian	52	0	52
Arabic	65	0	65
Assyrian	52	13	65
Kurdish	52	52	104
Persian	82	0	82
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	91	26	117
Somali	30	0	30

Spanish	39	61	100
Turkish	34	26	61

Note: Modified from Camauër, 2005, p. 117.

Public service programming in Persian

Sveriges Radio International (SRI) sends 82 hours of Persian news per year, with no reruns (Camauër, 2005, p. 117). SRI is part of the SR, with the mandate to broadcast in languages other than Swedish to cater to the immigrant population in Sweden. The first program was broadcasted in 1991. Through the 1990s and until 2003, the Persian language program *Perjvak* had a 30-minute daily scheduled programme during the weekdays to broadcast news and current affairs in Persian across Sweden. Starting in 2006, the Persian services were cut down to three days per week, Monday-Wednesday.

I asked one of the former hosts, Omid, about the reason for this cut-back. The main reason for programming in foreign languages in public service broadcasting is to represent a Swedish perspective, he said. For example, in the news, it is acknowledged that news from their home-country is important to the immigrant communities. However, the mandate of public broadcasting is to teach newcomers about the Swedish society. Therefore, the majority of the information broadcasted in SVT and SR foreign languages services or published on their websites focus on Swedish issues and current affairs. As an example, he continues, “If there are two breaking news, one from Sweden and one from Iran, we are to start with the one from Sweden and then continue with the Iranian story.”

Omid’s account is consistent with a content analysis of news stories that appeared on *Pejvak’s* website and radio broadcast for a constructed week sample in April and May of 2011 (based on a seven week sampling frame). Less than 10% of the 110 collected news items in both of *Pejvak’s* media platforms focused on international news, including news from Iran (Table 9).

Table 9: Pejvak (Radio and Online) - Geographic Location of News Items (%)

	Pejvak Radio (n=43)	Pejvak Online (n=67)	Total (N=110)
Local-ingroup(Iranian)	24	12	17
Local-outgroup (Swedes)	16	28	23
Lolca-outgroup (other ethno-cultural communities)	-	6	4
National (Sweden)	42	51	48
International-ingroup (Iran)	10	2	5
International-outgroup (Countries other than Iran and Sweden)	8	1	3

Research on ethnic media in the past has told a different story: local and national news are *less* likely to be covered in ethnic media outlets (Carøe Christiansen, 2004; Lin & Song, 2006; Murray, Yu & Ahadi, 2009). As we shall see in the next section on Iranian community media in Stockholm, the numbers for "news from Iran" are significantly higher than those from SR. However local news still enjoys considerable coverage in Iranian community media in Stockholm (Table 11).

This relatively strong focus on Swedish news is a testament to a long tradition of public service broadcasting and strong legislation protecting this right. The government outlines the mandate for SVT and SR as follows:

> We believe that, in a democratic society, there is great intrinsic value in the existence of one or more actors in radio and television that are free from governmental, financial, political and other interests and powers in society. Furthermore, there is intrinsic value in the public having access to programmes that are free from advertising, product placement and, as far as possible, direct and indirect sponsorship. Public service broadcasting is also a guarantor of diversity in radio and TV programming (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2012, p. 15).

In addition, the condition of licence for SR, for example, states that the programming of public broadcasting "should be characterised by a commitment to educate the public and allow for public opinion to form freely" (Regeringen, 2009, p. 2, §

9). Also emphasised throughout the document is the importance of public broadcasting for safeguarding democracy, freedom of speech and diversity of opinion in Sweden. Omid's account of SR sheds light over this policy statement:

> In the 1970s the government decided to extend voting rights to new immigrants. This was of course not for parliamentary election. It was restricted to municipal elections only [that is still the case in Sweden]. One of the major obstacles that the government faced was the lack of information about election procedures among new immigrants. At that time, the majority of immigrants were coming from countries like Chile and former Soviet Block countries, and they had little or no experience with democracy. To fix this problem and to help immigrants to learn more about the Swedish society and democracy, the Swedish government set up the mandate for public service broadcasting in immigrant languages. I think the first one might have in Finnish [in 1969], followed by Greek, Turkish [and Serbian in 1975].

I asked Omid to talk about the challenges they faced at *Pejvak* to work within this rather strict mandate:

> At first the mandate was not as restrictive. When we started in the early 1990s *Pejvak* was about bridging "here and there". Also remember that, at that time, there was no internet and satellite television available. So, *Pejvak's* role was also to inform Iranians on events in Iran. We even had a permanent reporter inside Iran, Mr. Sharif Emamjomeh, who was employed by SR.
>
> As the Iranian community became more integrated into the Swedish society, and with the advancement of information technologies, SR no longer saw a need for *Pejvak* to continue broadcasting on Iranian issues. In one of my last meetings with the management at SR it was decided that *Pejvak* would broadcast three days a week, instead of five. The time that was taken away from us would be allocated to newer immigrant groups such as the Iraqis. The rationale for this was that newer immigrants, because of language barriers, are in greater need for SR's programmes which will educate them about the Swedish society. And older immigrant groups, such as the Iranians who have been here on average for more than 20 years, no longer needed SR's programmes. They can just listen to the Swedish radio stations. Secondly, it was decided that the focus would be on Swedish news. We were to review the daily news from *Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå* (TT) [The Newspaper Telegram Bureau, a Swedish news agency] and or *Dagens Eko* [Echo of the Day, the news service of Sveriges Radio] and translate those stories to Persian for our listeners. So we went from bridging "here and there" to only focusing on "here".

I asked Omid if he believed that these new directives had undermined the editorial freedom of Pejvak. “Yes and no,” he answered. “There are still special stories and reportage on, for example, the Iranian refugee crisis in Sweden. And *Pejvak* still have segments on local cultural festivals, concerts and the Iranian new year celebrations. But with a reduced staff, it is inevitable that your original content also becomes limited.”

I was also curious to know whether program hosts and producers paid close attention to the changes in the language of media policies, or whether media managers communicated these changes to them. Omid could not recall any specific conversation about this. He did remember that in one of the last meetings with SR managers, he was told that multicultural programming was being severely cut. The timing of that meeting which took place in 2006 overlaps with the drastic changes in public broadcasting’s multiculturalism policy (as outlined in the previous section).

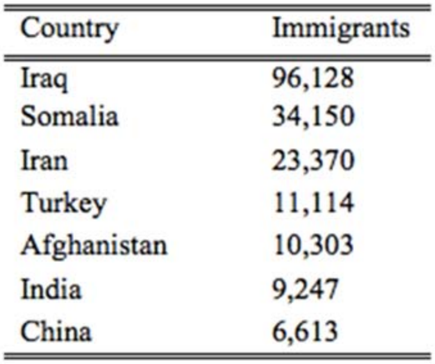
There are cases when *Pejvak* pays close attention to Iranian news. During my fieldwork in Stockholm, *Pejvak’s* website had significant coverage of the Iranian refugee crisis in Sweden, with regular updates from protests that were taking place on a daily basis in central Stockholm and in front of the Swedish Parliament. *Pejvak’s* website also had a special section on the refugee issue. Overall the *Pejvak’s* main role is to provide Sweden’s national and local news in Persian. Payam, another employee at *Pejvak* went even further by describing the programmes as a mere translation service for SR rather than an original radio show. During the 1990s and early 2000s, there were nine or ten full-time and part-time employees, he added. Today, *Pejvak* employs half of that, with only one full-time staff member.

It is difficult to accept SR’s rationale for reducing Persian language programming, i.e., that Iranians have integrated in society and no longer need Persian language news services. The picture is more complex. Dana, an Iranian activist and frequent media contributor argues,

> the notion of a decrease in immigration from Iran is partially true. But to say that immigration from Iran has stopped or will stop in the future is a myth. The nature of immigration has changed and you see different types of immigrants coming to Sweden. Before most people came as refugees and asylum seekers. Now Iranians come here to work or study. For that reason, it is unacceptable that SR or any other government agency cuts back on resources allocated to the Iranian community or any other immigrant community.

These claims are supported by recent statistics. While it may be true that the big wave of immigrants from Iran stopped with the end of the Iran-Iraq war in the late 1980s, the Iranian community in Sweden has witnessed a steady increase in education and labour immigration since 2000. According to data from the Swedish Statistical Agency, between 2000 and 2011, 23,370 Iranians came to Sweden either as refugees, permanent residents, students or workers. Nearly 6,000 of these (25%) were students in Masters and PhD programs (Regeringen, 2008). Despite the decline in the massive wave of immigration that took place in the 1980s, Iran still ranks high in Sweden as a country of origin for immigrants (See Table 10). What has changed is the type of immigrants that come to Sweden. In the 1980s more refugee claimants and asylum seekers were admitted to the country. As a result of sweeping reforms of the Swedish immigration system in 2008 to attract more skilled workers, the trend has shifted in favour of skilled labour immigration (Regeringen, 2008).

Table 10: Number of immigrants received in Sweden (2000-2011), by country of origin.



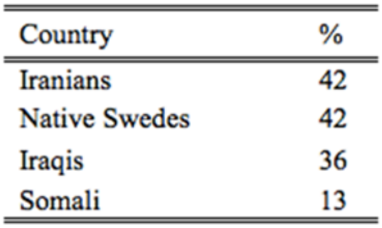
Country	Immigrants
Iraq	96,128
Somalia	34,150
Iran	23,370
Turkey	11,114
Afghanistan	10,303
India	9,247
China	6,613

Source: Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2013.

Perhaps what this demographic change should translate into, in terms of media policy, is a shift in focus to media content rather than a simplistic model of downsizing. In other words, public broadcasting media should find innovative ways to respond to the periodic changes in the demographic profile of Iranian community (or any other immigrant minority community). In the UK, for example, the BBC Persian services (in operation since 1940) have moved away from a simple model of just translating and delivering the daily news to a more robust media programming that includes analysis of news, roundtable discussions, and various entertainment and variety programming in Persian, catered mainly to Iranians in Iran (BBC Persian, 2013).

Given this change in the demographic profile of Iranians in Sweden, it is reasonable to assume that SR's directive to cut back on Persian language programming is perhaps based on a prediction of where the Iranian community in Sweden is headed in terms of socio-economic adaptability and upward mobility. Given the increase in the numbers of skilled and well-educated Iranian immigrants, it is assumed by policy makers that these groups are more likely to integrate faster into the Swedish society, and thus are in lesser need of public service programming compared to other immigrant groups with lower rate of socio-economic adaptability, such as the Somalis and Iraqis, who have lower educational levels compared to native Swedes and Iranians (Table 11).

Table 11: Portion of population with post-secondary education (%)



Country	%
Iranians	42
Native Swedes	42
Iraqis	36
Somali	13

Note: Statistiskacentralbyrån, 2012

Despite these limitations, I found through a brief phone conversation with one of the staff at SR that the corporation has no plans to reduce the size and the weekly hours of *Pejvak* (repeated request for a longer interview with a manager at SR was declined). Yet, a number of questions arises from SR's decision to cut back on Persian language programming: what role can ethnic language public broadcasting play once an immigrant community is considered integrated?; what are the indications of this "integration": number of years lived in Sweden, naturalisation rates, integration into the labour market, or something else?; and finally, what role do other ethnic media outlets play in filling the void created by a lack of sufficient public broadcasting programming? While I do not deny the importance of the first two questions, in this chapter I would like focus on the last question: what is the role of ethnic community media, on one hand, in informing the immigrant communities about life in Sweden, and on the other hand, in communicating through language that is familiar and comforting, and does this foster a sense of belonging and community among displaced populations. In the section that follows, I shift focus from public service broadcasting to community ethnic media to investigate the role these outlets play in the Iranian community in Stockholm.

Community media: Background and policies

Hallin and Mancini's (2004) categorisation of the Swedish media system as *democratic corporatist*, as discussed earlier in this chapter, paints an overly idealised view of media in Sweden. As argued by Rosengren back in 1994, and reiterated by more recent research by Weibull and Jönsson (2007), the Swedish media system started to experience a process of increasing market control in the early 1990s with passing of legislation that allowed advertising in media (Svensk Författningssamling, 2010). Warning us of an increasingly commercialised media landscape, Rosengren wrote in 1994,

> In terms of the 'great wheel of culture in society' the economic and technological systems have more to say about the structure of the media system, while the normative, expressive and cognitive systems (religion and the polity, art and literature, science and scholarship) have experienced a corresponding decreasing influence. Newspapers are less closely tied to political parties and popular movements than previously. The great publishing houses have grown more market-oriented (witness, for instance, the many book clubs providing mainstream entertainment to a broad middle class) and less oriented towards a narrow cultural élite. Radio, once a great cultural, religious and political educator of national importance, to a large extent has become a medium for testing and launching hit music and/or for local small talk and advertisements (see below). In the wings, commercial radio is waiting for its time to come.

To some degree, it is this shift to 'market influence' that provided an opportunity for a vibrant ethnic media sector to grow in Sweden *parallel* to the rather limited Public Service ethnic media programming. What is the history of community radio programming and how does it operate today?

Unofficially, the practice of community radio dates back to 1979 when voluntary associations were allowed to broadcast within limited geographical areas and with no advertising allowed. In 1986, after a test period of eight years, the government amended "The Right to Broadcast Community Radio" clause (*Tillstånd att sända närradio*) to

“The Radio and TV Law” (*Radio- och tv-lag*). According to Article 12, §4 of this law, “community Radio means local sound radio transmission for association activities” (Svensk författningssamling, 2010, p. 19). The programs must be locally produced, and the reach should be limited to five kilometers in range, although expansions of ranges are allowed under special provisions (Camauër, 2002). Contrary to the public service broadcasting stations, community radio stations are not subject to the rules of objectivity (Hadenius & Weibull, 1999). Broadcasting licenses are usually valid for three years, unless specified differently, and a license to transmit community radio may only be given to the following persons:

> 1. Local non-profit associations which have been formed in order to transmit programmes by community radio as a part of the operations which a national organisation conducts within the transmission area;
> 2. Parishes within the Church of Sweden;
> 3. Associations of students at universities and colleges of higher education.
> 4. Associations of several license holders in a transmission area for common community radio purposes (community radio associations) (Svensk författningssamling, 2010, p. 19).

Other than these four principles, *Myndigheten för Radio och TV* (the Swedish Broadcasting Authority), the agency in charge of licensing and content regulation, grants broadcasting permissions based on the following criteria:

> 1. A broadcast area for community radio encompasses, at most, one municipality, but we can decide on a wider broadcast area if there are exceptional reasons.
> 2. When assessing whether a non-profit organisation or a religious group has ties to the broadcast area, the authority takes into account where:
>
> 2.1. the studio and other premises for the activities are located
>
> 2.2. the appointed publisher and board members are living
>
> 2.3. the annual general meetings and board meetings are held (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2013a).

The biggest change to the Radio and TV Law since 1986 was the introduction of legislation in 1993 to allow advertising in community radio undertakings. This change in policy resulted in a surge in the numbers of community radio stations in Sweden. According to a state-sponsored annual study of the Swedish media landscape, in 2004 there were 1167 associations with license to broadcast community radio (Larsson, 2012, p. 100, Table 5.5). Of these, Camauër suggests, 261 associations were considered ethnic organisations (2005). Camauër found that 45 were no longer in operation, 50 were not operating any media, and 10 could not be located. Thus, the number of active organisations with media operations in 2004 was 162. According to the same report, 65 (40%) of these were Iranian radio programmes.

Iranian community media

The Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm can be divided into four main sectors: print, television, online and radio. However, the first three sectors are significantly underrepresented while radio, largely thanks to Sweden's *laissez faire* radio licensing policy, plays a dominant role in the local Iranian communication infrastructure. Print and television do not enjoy the same relaxed policy oversight and are significantly more costly to produce. At the same time, internet publications have had a surprisingly slow entry into the Persian-language media market in Stockholm.

What was evident from my fieldwork was a drastic change in the Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm since the early years of settlement in the 1980s. Today, there are at least 27 media outlets in Stockholm, 20 of them are radio programs. To map ethnic media is not an easy task. Considering that many ethnic media outlets are small, it becomes a difficult task for researchers to locate these outlets; they lack any form of corporate structure with permanent offices. The churn rate of ethnic media outlets is also significantly higher than mainstream media (Murray, Yu & Ahadi, 2007). This makes it difficult for researchers to rely on existing media directories for their mapping of ethnic media. Nonetheless, for this project, mapping Iranian community media serves as a point of departure for understanding the community’s media landscape and media habits, thus addressing one of the key research questions: “What strategies and communication models are the Iranian communities adopting to enhance inclusion and help their members develop a sense of belonging to the larger society, while respecting diverse experiences?” For mapping of media outlets I relied on four different sources: (1) internet search engines, (2) local Iranian Yellow Pages, and (3) existing research on ethnic media in Sweden and across Europe, and (4) word of mouth and field research.

Internet search engines proved to be unsatisfying. Many of the outlets I was familiar with based on my background knowledge of the field had either no online presence or had very poorly managed websites, blogs and Facebook pages with infrequent updates. As one of my interview participants noted, this speaks to the aging population of the Persian-language media managers in Stockholm who have failed to stay up-to-date with advancements in technology. There were, however, a handful of outlets that had relatively well-managed online presence: *Radio Iran on Air, Radio Seday-e Zanan (Women’s Voice), Radio Hambastegi (Solidarity)* and *Radio & TV Hamsafar (Companion)*. Second, the local Iranian Yellow Pages, while providing a better inventory of media outlets, was also incomplete as many smaller outlets with little or no advertising revenues could not afford to advertise in the Yellow Pages; outlets such as *Radio Chakavak (Radio Sparrow), Radio Fanoos (Radio Lantern)* and *Radio Seday-e Zanan (Women’s Voices).*

For my third strategy I relied on existing research on ethnic minority media in Europe. One of the early mappings of ethnic media, in which Sweden was also included, was a pan-European collaborative project, headed by Roger Silverstone and Myria Georgiou at the London School of Economics, entitled *Minorities and their Media in the*

EU: A Mapping (2000-2003) (Georgiou, 2002 & 2003b; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005). Three Swedish reports authored by Leonor Camauër (2002, 2003 & 2005) remain to date the only comprehensive mapping of Swedish ethnic media landscape. In her report from 2005, Camauër lists over 85 Iranian media outlets that broadcast in Persian. While this figure is national, her media directory suggests that about a third of all Persian media originate from Stockholm (2002). The breakdown of the Iranian media landscape in Sweden is as follows: 4 websites, 6 television programs, 65 radio programs, and 10 print media (2005).

After closer investigation I realised that many of these outlets were no longer available or had changed name and management. Camauër's reports, while serving as an excellent starting point, proved to be somewhat out-dated. For my fourth strategy I had to rely on the "ear to the ground" approach: word of mouth, referrals and simply tuning in to daily radio programs. The end-result of the marriage between these four strategies is the following table of media outlets in Stockholm (Table 12).

Table 12: Persian-language media outlets in Stockholm

Radio (20)	Ava Ayeneh Chakavak Fanoos Hambastegi	Hamsafar Iran On Air Iranzamin Melody Payam-e Ma	Pejvak Peyvand Rangarang Seday-e Ashena Seday-e Farsi	Seday-e Iran Seday-e Zanan Seday-e Mehr Shahrvand Taraneh
Print (3)	Baran	Avay-e Zan	Hambastegi	
Television (2)	Hamsafar TV	Miniatyr TV		
Internet (3)	Stockholmian	Under the Sky of Sweden	Pers-Iran	

Print

Camauër's study from 2005 identifies ten Iranian publications across Sweden (2005, p. 102). I contacted all ten publications and was able to confirm that three of them were still active and published in print format on a fairly regular basis (Figure 3). Another two publications were active but not regularly published. I later found out that five of the remaining publications were inactive, and therefore did not respond to my requests for an interview. Other cities that have an Iranian community comparable to that of Stockholm's, in terms of size and demographic composition, have a larger number of publications in Persian. Vancouver, for example, has nine active publications, two of which have been in business for more than fifteen years (Murray, Yu, & Ahadi, 2007). A larger city such as Los Angeles, with a population of 500,000 Iranians, has 38 publications according to Pars Times' online inventory of Persian media (Pars Times, n.d.)[9].

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Figure 3: The front cover of Iranian publications in Stockholm

There are a number of reasons for this orientation *away* from print culture, and-- as I will explain later in this chapter-- *toward* radio. For one, the press policies have not caught up with the growth in ethnic communities in Sweden. Globally, Swedish press policies are regarded as one of the most liberal and democratic, and there is a tradition of generous press subsidies in the country. However, a closer look at these policies paints a more complex picture of how the press subsidies are managed and distributed, and who benefits from them.

Two main forms of government support exist for print media in Sweden: *Presstödet* (The Press Support) and *Kulturtidskriftstödet* (Cultural Publication Support). The first category, *Presstödet* was established in 1965 following recommendations from a Swedish Government Official Report on The Financial Conditions of Newspapers (Statens Offentliga Utrednigar, 1965). The Report raised concerns for the monopolisation of the Swedish newspaper market and proposed government intervention to financially stimulate the sector. The result was the introduction of two kinds of subsidies under the *Presstöd* mandate: *Operation support* and *distribution support*. Since 2007, the annual budget for the Press Support has been 567 million SEK, or 100 million CAD (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2013, p. 25). Some 80% of this budget is administered as *operation support*.

This generosity however does not necessarily translate into a greater support for ethnic press in Sweden. The conditions for receiving support under the Press Support program are almost impossible to meet for the vast majority of the ethnic press. The most difficult barrier to overcome is the condition of having a minimum daily subscription rate of 1,500 copies. In 2013, 70 publications, which were categorised as low frequency publications with 1,500-2,000 daily subscriptions, received press support. Out of these 70, only 6 were published in other languages than Swedish, and 5 out of these 6 publications were in one of the five national minority languages. The one remaining publication was in Spanish (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2013). Evidence from government's own calculations shows that the main beneficiaries of the Press Support program are the larger regional and national publications that have a circulation number in the tens of thousands and all are published in Swedish (Söderling, 2013).

A more realistic support program for ethnic publications is *Kulturtidskriftstödet* (Cultural Publication Support). The program has been around since 1971 and is administered by the Swedish Arts Council. According to the Ordinance for State Support for Literature, Cultural Publications, and Initiatives to Promote Reading (2010) the following categories of publications are eligible to apply for funding:

> Literature: Literature in foreign languages or translated work to Swedish or to one of the five national minority languages which preferable is published in Sweden and targets the general population;
>
> Cultural publication: a publication which targets the general public and contais debates on cultural matters or provides a platform for anlaysis and presentation of cultural expressions and arts form.

The overall budget for the Arts Council in 2013 was 2.1 billion SEK ($350 million CAD). According to the Council's financial report, 154 million SEK ($25 million CAD) were allocated to cultural productions of minority groups, excluding national minorities (Statens Kulturråd, 2013, p. 25). The Council's website reports that 141 publications applied for funding in 2013 and 91 were approved. These 91 publications received 90 million SEK ($15 million CAD) in subsidies in total, ranging from 25,000 SEK ($4,000 SEK) to 725,000 ($120,000 CAD) (Kultrrådet, 2014).

It is not clear how many of these cultural publications are 'ethnic' publications. Camauër estimates that a quarter of subsidy recipients are ethnic publications targeting minority and immigrant communities (2004). There is only one Persian publication mentioned in the list of subsidy recipients for 2013: *Avaye Zan* (Women's Voice), which received 75,000 SEK ($12,500 CAD) (Kulturrådet, 2014). The magazine comes out with three issues per year and has been published fairly regularly since 1991. It focuses on women's fight for justice and equality in Iran and elsewhere in the world.

The magazine is one of three Persian magazines that are published in Stockholm on a fairly regular basis. I spoke to editors from two of these publications in order to get a better understanding of how the Persian print sector operates. My conversations with them focused on the challenges and promises of publishing print media in Stockholm. Early on in our conversations I ask them: "Why has print media not flourished in the Persian community in Stockholm like it has elsewhere?"

> Raha: The biggest hindrance to our success is not inefficient policies or lack of government help. I believe it’s a lack of a literary culture among Iranians in general. For whatever reason, the Iranian community in Stockholm has adopted an oral culture. The same goes for people in Iran. Just look at the publishing industry: we have a population of 70 million, but you very rarely see a book to be published in more than 5,000 copies for its first edition.

I ask Raha to explain why he thinks that there is a lack of a literary culture in Iran:

> Raha: There are a number of reasons for this. One is historical. In Iran a free press has never existed. When I was growing during the [1979] revolution, reading was considered a dangerous activity. Because, just like today, the most interesting publications were banned by the government. So, engaging in the act of reading was considered dangerous. Families discouraged their children to read in an effort to protect them from being arrested or interrogated. Another reason is cultural. In Sweden for example there are incentives to encourage reading: book clubs, book fairs, massive annual book sales, literary prizes, and so forth. In the Iranian culture we don’t have any of these activities in any meaningful ways. Book fairs exists but are heavily controlled by the government.

Raha’s description of the lack of a culture of reading has been discussed in other contexts as well. In “The Iranian press, state, and civil society,” Gholam Khiabani (2008) gives an overview of Iranian reading habits. In 2000, newspaper circulation in Iran was 26 per 1,000 inhabitants (or 2.6%), a figure well below the 100 per 1,000 inhabitants recommended by UNESCO (Khiabani, 2008, p. 27). In comparison, countries that score high according to the UNESCO data include Japan, Sweden, Finland and Norway-- all of which have a circulation number between 500 and 600 per 1,000 inhabitants. Canada, USA and Australia score around 200. Other countries in the Middle East, like Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia score around 100 (p. 27).

The existence of such data supports Raha’s hypothesis regarding a lack of print culture among Iranians and how it may contribute to a lower circulation of print media both inside and outside Iran. However this certainly is not the only contributing factor to Iranian’s digression from print media. If so, cities like Toronto and Vancouver would not have experienced a thriving Iranian newspaper industry over the past two decades![10] The second editor I interviewed in Stockholm, Sima, attributed the low reliance on print media to other factors. I asked Sima about the lack of print culture among Iranians and its impact on print media consumption in Stockholm. According to Sima, lack of meaningful policies and financial support are the real obstacles in the print sector.

> Sima: I don't think the problem is a lack of reading culture among Iranians. We do have a dedicated audience that have been following [our publication] since the beginning. And probably every publication would tell you the same thing. But, what impacts the print sector is lack of [efficient] policy to support [ethnic] print media. For example, [the Arts Council] has an overall budget for ethnic publications and this includes financial assistance for books, educational materials, and so forth. So, not exclusively for newspapers and magazines. For this pool of money there are hundreds of applicants each year. In recent years we have received an average of 40,000 SEK ($7,000 CAD) each year. This barely covers the cost of 1 issue of our publication.
>
> A second issue is the financial backing from the private sector. I visited Toronto a while ago and when I was reviewing [their Iranian] publications I noticed a large variety of businesses had ads in them. I was very surprised to see such variety of ads. I mean, there were Iranian *pharmacies* in Toronto. You don't see that of course in local media here because pharmacies are publically owned. My point is, such variety in businesses [translates] into financial support for the local media [in form of advertising dollars]. You don't have that in Stockholm. Iranian publications here don't have many ads. The ones they have are mostly from non-profit organisation and we charge them a small fee for that. Radio shows have ads, but many of them have been running the same ads for years. This shows that the Iranian business sector here is very small and don't have the same financial power as the ones in Canada and USA.

My content analysis of advertising in the print media is consistent with Sima's observation. The number of ads is significantly lower in the Iranian publications in Stockholm than for examples in Vancouver. At a glance, Iranian publications in Vancouver have between 5 to 8 ads per spread while in the case of Stockholm's Iranian print media the number is 1 to 3.

At the same time, historically, research on entrepreneurship has suggested a lower rate of self-employment among immigrants in Sweden. Shahram Khosravi (1999) conducted an analysis of Iranian businesses in Stockholm and looked at census data from the 1990s. In his estimate only 2% of Iranians in the 1991 were self-employed (Khosravi, 1999). For the same year, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported an average rate of 10% for self-employment in Sweden (OECD, 2000). The current employment landscape in Sweden also looks remarkably different. Due to a number of factors, including deregulation of the Swedish labour market in early 1990s (Fölster & Peltzman, 2010), the joining of the country to the European Union, thus becoming increasingly integrated into the European market, and as the Iranian community became increasingly integrated into the Swedish society, the rate of self-employment started to rise. Recent trends suggest that 15% of Iranians in Sweden are self-employed, which is lower than native Swedes at 18% but the same as the national average of 15% (Ohlsson, Broomé, & Bevelander, 2012). Sweden's rate of self-employment among immigrants is similar to that of Canada's which according to the 2006 Census had 15% of its immigrants in the self-employed job sector (Wayland, 2011). However, Sima's observation about the greater advertising variety in Canadian ethnic publications can be explained, perhaps partially, by the difference in Canadian and Swedish immigration laws. The Canadian immigration strategy has been mainly focused on attracting "hypercapital" citizens[11] of the world. Naturally, this creates an environment for more immigrant businesses to grow compared to countries like Sweden, which to this day does not have business class immigration. In Khosravi's study, the businesses of Iranians were highly concentrated in low-stake and low-skill sectors such as food service and cab industries (1999). To establish a correlation between how one seemingly unrelated policy domain-- in this case immigration policy-- impacts a struggling media sector is a difficult task, if not impossible. However, based on these observations, there seems to be an interesting relationship between the vitality of the Iranian business community and a thriving print media. In the absence of public funding and without the support of private sector advertising, these media outlets have a difficulty time to survive and flourish.

Another contributing factor to the stagnant growth of the print sector is the operating cost. Print media remain costly compared to radio programs and internet-based publications. Aside from printing, delivery, and distribution costs there are staffing and operational costs to factor in. According to Sima, “All you need for a radio show is one host, but you need an entire team for publications and we don’t have the money to support such operation.” Despite these obstacles, Sima’s publication has been able to survive and publish fairly regularly. The organisation under which the publication is given out, has been one of the few among dozens of Iranian organisations which apply for government subsidies. Since its inception in early 1990s, this organisation has been able to attract significant amounts of government support not towards its media operations *per se*, but to support pro-social outreach initiatives for Iranian newcomers, including support for women and children, anti-racism campaigns, and refugee protection.

Television

Four actors can be identified in the minority television landscape in Stockholm: Public Service broadcasting, commercial local broadcasting, public access broadcasting, and satellite television.

Public Service broadcasting

As mentioned above, there are no Persian Public Service television programs in Sweden, despite a 2006 policy which states Sweden’s Television (SVT) commitment to increased pluralism in programming and staffing (Sveriges Television, 2006). The mandate of the SVT requires programming in five official national minority languages of

Sweden, namely Finnish, Meänkieli (also known as Tornedals Finnish), Sami, Romani, and Yiddish (Camauër, 2005, p. 42). Beyond this, there are no provisions in the mandate to produce or air programming in any other minority languages in Sweden. On the topic of pluralism in programming and staffing, Gunilla Hultén (2009a) states that the two public broadcasting services, television and radio, do not have any statistics on their staff's ethnicity. Therefore it is difficult to assess whether they are following their own commitment to pluralism. However, her study of diversity in the newsroom in Sweden reveals an overall under-representation of ethnic diversity (Figure 4). Journalists of Nordic, European, North, Central and South American descent seem to be well represented. However, journalists of Asian (including Middle Eastern) and African background are significantly under-represented in the Swedish media landscape.

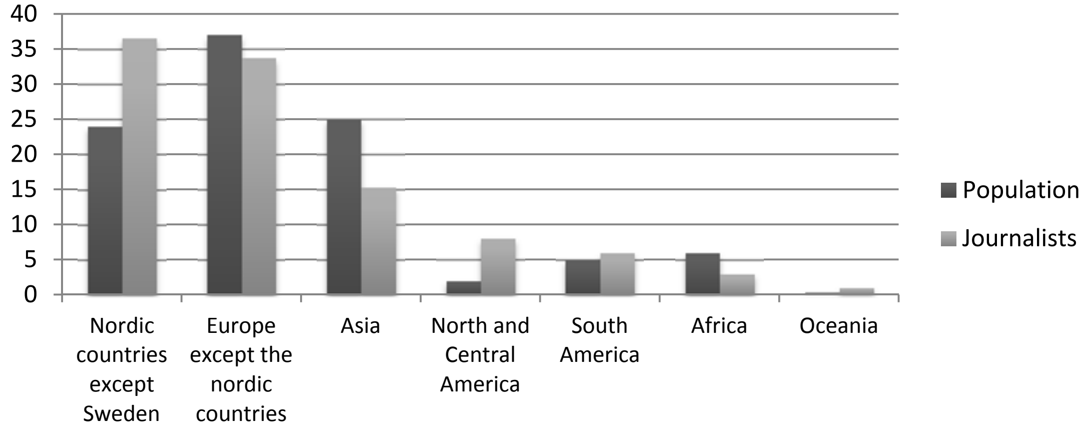


***Figure 4:* Percentage of foreign-born within the Swedish population and foreign-born journalists by region of birth**

Source: Modified from Hultén, 2009a

Furthermore, the broadcaster's commitment to 'pluralism' is reminiscent of what the literatures on diversity politics refer to as "shallow multiculturalism" (Glasser, Awad, & Kim, 2009). Such a commitment is characterised by a loosely defined notion of *pluralism*, which subsumes a myriad of possibilities: gender, age, ethnicity, language, religion, and geographical focus. It offers very little by way of substantive initiatives to address social inequalities and underrepresentation (Steinberg, 2001). In contrast, a 'deep multiculturalist' approach would include provisions to ensure, for example, intentional recruitment of minorities and historically marginalised populations (Taylor, 1994; Fraser 2009; Kamali, 2010). In a Canadian context, the Labour Equity Act and the preference given to Visible Minority and Aboriginal groups would be an example of such a provision.

As a consequence of these policy shortcomings, as well as continued cutbacks on Public Service Broadcasting in Sweden, there has never been any real debate to introduce Persian language programming. I asked Omid, a former host of Persian language Public Radio programming, about his views on why Sweden never introduced Public Service television programming for Iranians and other immigrant groups:

> You have to remember that the Swedish immigration policy follows an assimilative model. The desired outcome is that immigrants will eventually become part of the Swedish society. The little Public Broadcasting that exists for immigrants [in form of radio programming] strictly plays an informative role, and the allocation of time to various immigrant groups changes with immigration policies. Iranians used to be priority in the 1990s. But now, there are fewer newcomers from Iran. Instead, Arab language programming is given more priority since the war in Iraq.
>
> As far as diversity in concerned, Public Service Broadcasting in Sweden is aware of the lack of diversity in its programming and among its staff. They have attempted to fix this by hiring more journalists of ethnic background. I personally know that there are at least 6 or 7 Iranian journalists working in SVT and SR. But it's not good enough. 20% of the Swedish population are immigrants. But we don't see this reflected in the newsroom and on air.

Omid's reflections are consistent with Public Broadcasting's shifting priority. In the 1990s and 2000s, SR had daily Persian language programmes. Programmes were reduced to three days a week in 2008, and the staff cut drastically from four members to one with the logic that Iranians are now integrated into the Swedish society and are in less need of

Persian language programming than other newcomer groups, such as Arabs and Somalis. Evidence on language acquisition, labour market entry, and level of education of the Iranian community in Sweden *do* suggest that Iranians are coping better than other immigrant communities (see for example Table 11 on p. 113). However, since 2006 introduction of new labour and student immigration laws, there has been an increase in the number of temporary immigrants among the Iranian population. I asked Dana, a political activist and a frequent contributor to Iranian radio in Stockholm, about this influx and its potential impact on the Persian-language media landscape in Sweden:

> There are a number of differences between the old wave and the new wave of Iranian immigrants that might influence how each consume Persian-language media. The old wave of refugees of the 1980s and 1990s came here with the intention to stay. So Persian-language media, in their case, played a significant role in terms of their introduction to the Swedish society as permanent residence and eventually as citizens. They learned about the political system, voting, political parties, immigration system, and so forth. In those days, *Pejvak* [Public Broadcasting radio service in Persian] was very popular among Iranians because of this reason. You also have to understand this within the context of the background of many of these newcomers: most of them were political refugees and therefore politics played a significant role in their life. Today, the new wave of Iranian immigrants, namely temporary workers and students are perceived to have different needs. They are not expected to integrate of course and have very little [citizenship] rights in terms of political participation.

No audience research exists to shed light on these assumptions about consumption of Persian-language media in Sweden. However, based on my interviews, it seems likely that the new wave of temporary immigrants have other priorities while in Stockholm. Pourang, a radio host and producer, speaks to this notion:

> For one, [temporary immigrants'] ties to the Iranian society are stronger. We have people from [the previous wave] who can't return to Iran because of political reasons. This is not the case for the new wave. They are expected to return to Iran and many of them in fact plan to return [while some find ways to become permanent, mainly through marriage]. Persian-language media play a crucial role for them when it comes to connecting to the Iranian community mainly to find employment and housing.

According to many of my interview participants, both media producers and community activists, the exclusionary experience of the Swedish Public Service Broadcasting (PBS) has fostered a stronger support for the existence of a vibrant local Persian-language media, mainly radio, that better serve the needs of the community. Through these platforms community members recognise their voice, express their concerns, seek comfort, and find solutions for the perils of resettlement. This is especially true for newcomers who are still in the early stages of resettlement, whether permanently or temporarily. PBS, however, does fulfil a crucial role as well, providing useful and relatively objective information about current affairs in the country and internationally. As Marc Raboy (1995) puts it, PBS providers are in the business of promoting "responsible citizenship" (p. 249). The Swedish PBS policy to reduce programming hours for integrated communities is both a moral and an economic decision. It is moral in that it stems from the egalitarian notion of 'service for all' regardless of race, ethnicity, language, and so forth. Under such standards, it is contrary to social cohesion to produce programming in distinct languages as it promotes social fragmentation. The economic incentive is to survive as a public broadcasting company in times of austerity. Since 2007, SVT alone (excluding SR) has lost 500 positions and 250 million SEK or 10% (40 million CAD) of its operating budget (Kvalitetsmedia, 2014). However, the political reality in Sweden today requires a different media policy. On one hand, Sweden is becoming increasingly multicultural. At the same time right wing political parties have gained significant gains in municipal, national and European Union elections.

The third aspect of this equation is the overall lower voter participation among immigrants. Bevelander and Pendakur's (2011) study of voting in Sweden clearly shows that immigrants are Sweden are less likely to vote in elections at any level. For example, 84% of native Swedes voted in the 2006 municipal election compared to 57% of those born in the Middle East. Overall, since 1976 voter participation of foreign-born Swedes has declined from 60% to 35% (Bevelander, 2012). In this political climate it is imperative for the Public Service media to function to their fullest capacity and strengthen their commitment to multicultural programming in various languages and across multiple media platforms in order to increase awareness about politics and public policy in Sweden.

Internationally Sweden lags behind countries like the USA and the UK when it comes to funding ethnic Public Service Broadcasting. *Voice of America* (VoA) in the USA and *BBC World Services* (BBCWS) in the UK have Persian-language television programming across multiple media platforms. Behind such initiatives there exists political motivation: public diplomacy. This kind of public or media diplomacy is hardly a new phenomenon. The term “public diplomacy” was coined by Edmund Gullion in the 1960s and is based on a simplistic linear model of communicative action involving a sender and a receiver (Cowan & Call, 2008). Nevertheless, VoA and BBCWS, representing countries with a long colonial legacy in the region, operate based on this communicative practice, mastering the art of soft power and propaganda by appropriating marketing, branding, and public relations strategies in order to reach the ‘hearts and minds’ of the public intellectuals and the educated elites in Iran and elsewhere in the world. Sweden, on the other hand, does not have a similar relationship with the region and Iran. Nor does its media system enjoy the same clout as VoA and BBCWS. If the Swedish Public Service television were to expand its multicultural programming in minority languages, it would best serve the domestic purpose of citizenship building rather than for the purpose of empire building.

Commercial Television Broadcasting

The only commercial television program in Sweden that started as an Iranian program is *Miniatyr* (Figure 5). In early 1990s it was operating under the license for non-commercial local television program and all shows were in Persian. In 1999, *Minatyr's* Iranian producer Bijan Salehi started *Kanal Global*, a multicultural commercial terrestrial television channel. According to Article 4, §5 of the Swedish Television and Radio Law a commercial terrestrial television license to broadcast television and teletext "may only be granted to a broadcasting company that has adequate financial and technical resources to broadcast during the entire term of the licence, and is prepared to cooperate with other licence holders on technical issues" (Svensk Författningssamling, 2010). According to §6 the licence holder must take particular care "to appeal to a variety of interests and taste" (Svensk Författningssamling, 2010).

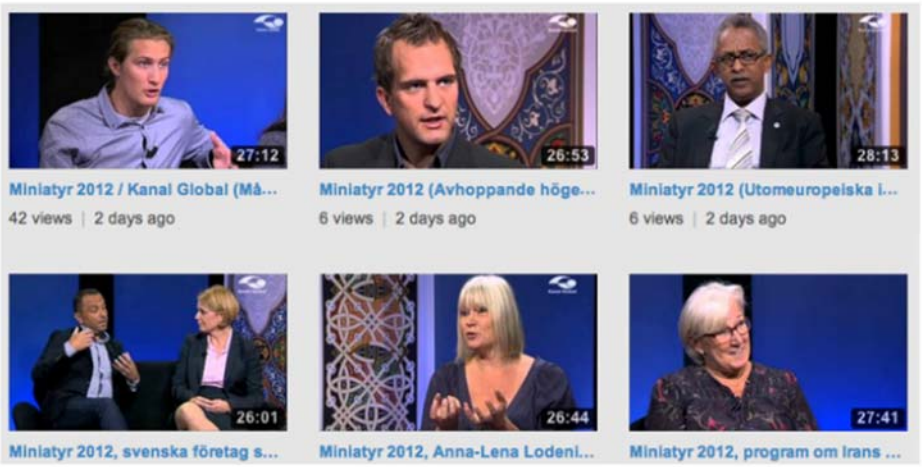

27:12
Miniatyr 2012 / Kanal Global (Må...
42 views | 2 days ago
26:53
Miniatyr 2012 (Avhoppande höge...
6 views | 2 days ago
28:13
Miniatyr 2012 (Utomeuropeiska i...
6 views | 2 days ago
26:01
Miniatyr 2012, svenska företag s...
26:44
Miniatyr 2012, Anna-Lena Lodeni...
27:41
Miniatyr 2012, program om Irans ...

Figure 5: Commercial ethnic broadcasting

Note: Miniatyr on Kanal Global

Miniatyr has a daily 30-minute talk show on current social, cultural, and political issues in Sweden. Programs are no longer in Persian and guests are typically Swedish political and cultural figures discussing issues pertaining to immigrant communities, such as racism and integration. Aside from the talk shows *Myniatyr* and *Solet Skiner,* which are *Kanal Global's* original productions, the channel largely relies on multicultural imported programs such as Bollywood productions and South American telenovelas. It brands itself as a uniquely multicultural channel that,

> [transmits] at all hours, the language is Swedish and material in other languages is subtitled to Swedish. [Kanal Global] is a bridge between geographical boundaries and viewers of different nationalities, concerning those who are curious to discover the world but also those who want to discover Sweden. Sheds light on everything from traditional Swedish midsummer celebration and other Nordic traditions to the traditions of other cultures in Sweden. In cooperation with authorities or organisations information about important society issues is shared.

Unfortunately *Kanal Global's* reach and audience numbers are not tracked by the Swedish media tracking company Mediamätning i Skandinavien (MMS). It also proved to be challenging to schedule an interview session with one of their staff members. In absence of such data it is difficult to assess how big a player the channel is in the Swedish media landscape. The channel has forged a partnership with Sweden's *Kanal 4* and broadcasts its daily flagship news program. It has also developed a strategy to cover politics in Sweden by, for example, attending the highly influential political event in Sweden, *The Almedalen Week.* It is an annual event taking place in June of every year in Almedalen, a park in the city of Visby on the Swedish island Gotland. With speeches, conferences, and other political activities, the week in Almedalen is considered to be the most important forum in Swedish politics. During the week, party leaders from major political parties in Sweden deliver speeches in Almedalen and present their policy platform for upcoming Parliamentary session and political elections.

While there are still many gaps in the data on this multicultural initiative, *Kanal Global* seems like a step in the right direction. One of the major criticisms of ethnic media is that they tend to be inward looking, highlighting the stories 'from there' (the homeland) rather than ‘here’ (the country of settlement) (Murray et al, 2007; Georgiou, 2003a; Lin & Song, 2006; Kosnick, 2007). *Kanal Global* as an ethnic media operation in the Swedish language could be regarded as a cross-cultural initiative that, through its original productions, seeks to raise awareness about political issues among immigrant communities in Sweden.

Public Access Broadcasting

Since the 1990s there have been several attempts by mainly Iranian community radio licence holders to establish local, non-profit cable television programmes. Under the Swedish Radio and Television Law (Svensk Författningssamling, 2010) any cable network provider is obligated to provide a separate space in its channel inventory for local community organisations to broadcast programs. This space is free of charge, but local organisations are responsible for any production costs. Thirteen public access channels representing hundreds of local community organisations have created a national coalition called *Öppna Kanalen* (Open Channel). Each of these 13 channels, operating in 13 metropolitan areas across Sweden, manages allocation of broadcast time and studio access for their member organisations. Members are typically religious, ethnic, political, cultural, student, or sport organisations, and the purpose for this public access broadcasting platform is for these organisations to reach out to their members.

Figure 6:   Iranian public access television programs

Note: Hamsafar Television in Öppna Kanalen.

In 2011 there was only one Iranian organisation that broadcast programs on Stockholm's *Öppna Kanalen. Hamsafar TV* (Figure 6), a subsidiary of *Hamsafar* community radio and cultural organisation, has broadcasted an hour-long television program every Sunday for the past decade. However, in recent years the organisation has been less frequent with its television programmes and has instead focused on expanding its radio broadcast. I spoke to *Hamsafar's* manager about the challenges of producing television programmes in Stockholm:

> At some point I realised I was part of a losing battle. My one-hour weekly show didn't really make any difference in people's lives. By the time we aired on Sunday nights, the news I was reading was old, and the information I was presenting had already been presented in my live radio show. At the same time, my show couldn't possibly compete with around the clock Iranian satellite television shows from Iran and Los Angeles. Fighting over studio time with other organisations in *Öppna Kanalen* also became a tedious task.

Conceptually *Öppna Kanalen* is an admirable coalition with strong pro-social values. It is a type of grassroots media initiative that provides an affordable platform for community organisations to get their message across. The market penetration is strong, with 620,000 households reached across the Stockholm region (*Öppna Kanalen*, n.d.). However, in the case of the Iranian community, there has never been a strong desire to pursue television programming within this framework, or any other. Partially, this turn away from locally produced community television shows is attributed to the strong presence of Iranian radio shows in the city. But perhaps more importantly, access to Iranian satellite television channels has made it difficult for smaller local productions to establish and grow.

Satellite Television

Perhaps the largest player in the television sector in Sweden is satellite television. It is estimated that in Sweden satellite dish ownership is twice as frequent among ethnic minorities (Weibull & Wadbring, 1999). Much has been written about diasporic satellite televisions (Aksoy & Robins, 2003; Slade, 2010) and Iranian satellite televisions (Naficy 1993; Alikhah, 2008) in terms of their availability, practice, social impact, and significance for identity orientation. Unlike the other three television sectors discussed earlier, there is enough material-- both in terms of original content and research literature-- to write an entire dissertation on Iranian satellite television alone. While it is beyond the scope of this project to delve deeply into this subject, there are a number of points that need to be raised and discussed here. After all, they have a significant presence in the Persian-language media landscape in Sweden and some of my interview participants had strong opinions about the role these channels play.

Since the early 1990s, two major players have played a significant role in the Iranian satellite television market: Los Angeles-based Iranian satellite television channels and the Iranian state television's satellite channels, specially produced by the regime in Iran for the diasporic audience. Recently, however, London-based Iranian television channels like the BBC Iranian service and the hugely popular commercial channel *Man-o-to TV* (Me and You TV) have challenged the dominance of the former two. A brief overview of each follows.

By the 1990s Los Angeles had become the hub of the Iranian cultural scene outside of the country. Current estimates suggest that there are about one million Iranians living in Southern California, most of whom immigrated to the USA in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution in 1979. A vast majority of migrant Iranian entertainers and media personalities settled in the Los Angeles region as well. In the early years of settlement in the 1980s these groups set up local television programs to cater to the growing number of Iranians in California. With the introduction of satellite technology in Iran in the mid-1990s it became possible for L.A. satellite stations to broadcast directly into Iran. As a consequence, the Iranian government acted swiftly and banned private ownership of satellite dishes. Yet in the age of globalisation this battle proved to be impossible to win for the government. What was once a strictly controlled mediascape was now overtaken by television shows produced by anti-regime expats in the USA. The exact number of satellite receiving dishes owned in Iran is not known. According to conservative estimates 40-50% of the population owns a satellite receiver (Sohrabi-Haghighat, 2011).

A 2008 mapping points to the existence of 37 Persian satellite channels in Iran, most of which were produced in Los Angeles (Alikhah, 2008, pp. 100-101). On one hand these diasporic satellite television programs function as a window to the outside world for Iranians. On the other, these television channels, mainly managed by entertainers from the Shah's era who by now were in their 50s and 60s, reproduce an image of Iranian culture and nationhood that was unfamiliar to the generation born after the revolution. In his book *The Making of Exile Cultures,* Hamid Naficy (1993) makes reference to this as the "fetishization of television" by the expat Iranians in Los Angeles. He writes, "fetishization in exile results when the exiles invest heavily in constructing certain cathexted images of homeland and the past while knowing deep down that those are forms of disavowal, or of partial representation, because they are fixed and frozen" (Naficy, 1993, p. 127). The sense of nostalgia that the Iranian diasporic media projected was most profoundly displayed in the Iranian music and music videos that were produced in Los Angeles and showcased on Iranian satellite television (see Naficy, 1993, pp. 147-162 for a discussion of Iranian music in Los Angeles). For example, the symbolic construction of a lost homeland in the Los Angeles music scene, found in lyrics, melody, composition and music videos, was something that had dominated the Iranian music scene since the revolution. By the turn of the century and the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians, these references to nostalgia had little relevance for young

Iranians who had not experienced the life before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. References to homeland in the nostalgia-stricken satellite programs were far from the reality experienced by the people in Iran and in exilic Iranian communities around the world. Bourna, an Iranian radio contributor in Stockholm, is very critical of the L.A. based television stations: “When you watch these satellite televisions it is as if the Revolution never happened! As if there hasn’t been any changes to the Iranian society and the people! Time has stood still for Iranians in Los Angeles. It’s quite a remarkable phenomenon.” These sentiments are echoed by other participants. Nima, a radio producer and host adds:

> [Iranian] satellite television is very dangerous. They distract people from being informed citizens. Being informed about issues here [in Sweden], I mean. Some of these satellite televisions from Los Angeles know exactly what they are doing. They are doing this purposefully to distract people from being politically active. Just focusing on entertainment and perpetuating gossip culture in heir shows. It’s because many of them are subsidiaries of the Iranian regime. They get their funding from the regime, either directly or in form of advertising. And I see the effect of this. Since their inception, people are spending less time listening to local radios and instead spending more time watching these channels. This is not a good trend. These shows have nothing of substance to offer.

No hard evidence exists to substantiate the claims that Nima makes about the Iranian regime’s support for these satellite televisions and at best they remain as conspiracy theories. The vast majority of the satellite television programs based in Los Angeles are anti-regime and, according to Alikhah (2008), have a destabilising effect on the regime in Iran. To counter these combative channels, the regime in Iran set up their own network of satellite channels broadcasting mainly to the Iranian diasporic communities. To add insult to injury, they called these channels *Jam-e Jam,* a reference from Persian mythology to a cup of divination that was possessed by the rulers of the Persian Empire. For decades after the Islamic Revolution, the regime had distanced itself from Iran’s pre-Islamic history and framed it as tyrannical in school textbooks and media. To use a mythological symbol was a strategic move to appeal to the diasporic community who were largely anti-regime and took great pride in their Persian heritage.

At first, these channels received a mixed reaction. Iranian diasporic communities have a complicated relationship with whatever product, service, and media production comes out of Iran. For example, when *Iran Air* started its direct flight services between Stockholm and Tehran in the mid 1990s, there were daily protests in front of the Iranian embassy, the airline's head office in Stockholm, and at the airport. Interestingly enough, the flights were usually fully booked! On one hand, there clearly was demand for a direct connection to the home country, and yet, on the other there was a significant portion of Iranians who were outraged by the infiltration of the Iranian regime into the Iranian diasporic community in Sweden. Despite the protests, the airline continued its operation and today has several weekly flights from major Swedish cities to Tehran. Similarly, when the Iranian state television started its satellite channels, the reactions among Iranians in Stockholm were mixed.

The 1990s in Iran was a decade of reform. As the rhetoric of the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s started to wound down and with the election of the moderate president Mohammad Khatami, Iranians experienced an opening up of society. Internationally, Khatami, with his political pitch about a *dialogue of cultures*, sought to improve Iran's image. Media especially benefited from this reform movement. Iranian state television, The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), set up four satellite channels: two showed Iranian series, talk shows, and movies, a third was a news channel, and a fourth channel dedicated to religious programs such as prayers, Islamic guidance, and readings of the Qur'an. This was Iran's answer to the hegemony of Iranian satellite channels in Los Angeles, and overall, IRIB was hugely successful to detract viewers away from them.

Today, however, the biggest challenge to both of these networks of satellite channels comes from London-based Iranian television programs *BBC Persian* and *Man-o To TV*. They capitalise on three major weaknesses of the Iran- and Los Angeles-based channels: (1) the religious undertone of IRIB's productions; (2) tiered, old, combative, and ineffective political rhetoric of Los Angeles-based channels; and (3) the low production value of both. Taking their cues from Western media productions, such as political satire shows like *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and reality shows, such as *American Idol* and *Don't Forget the Lyrics*, BBC Persian and Man-o to TV captured a significant portion of the audience in both Iran and in the diaspora. With a higher production value and focus on original productions, and with providing access to their programs across multiple platforms, these channels revolutionised the Persian-language media landscape and provided a much-needed face-lift to a stagnant sector. Today, Man-o To TV's Facebook page alone has a strong 2.8 million followers (as of April 2016). In contrast, *NITV*, one of the first Los Angeles-based satellite televisions, and at one point one of the most popular channels, has 1500 followers on Facebook (as of April 2016).

As for the cultural significance of these channels, scholars are of opposing opinion. The largely "pro" multiculturalism and ethnic media scholars are willing to see beyond the shortcomings of not covering 'on the ground' local and national issues, and instead see the value of satellite and transnational ethnic media in their ability to connect people to their homeland and cultural heritage. These channels have the ability to foster a sense of security and familiarity for immigrant communities, and through this, help them to integrate into their country of settlement. They serve as a buffer against alienation. On the opposite side of this argument are those who see a potential danger in ethnic media, especially transnational media, and the sense of disconnection from the country of settlement they seem to foster among immigrant communities. The reality is perhaps somewhere in between.

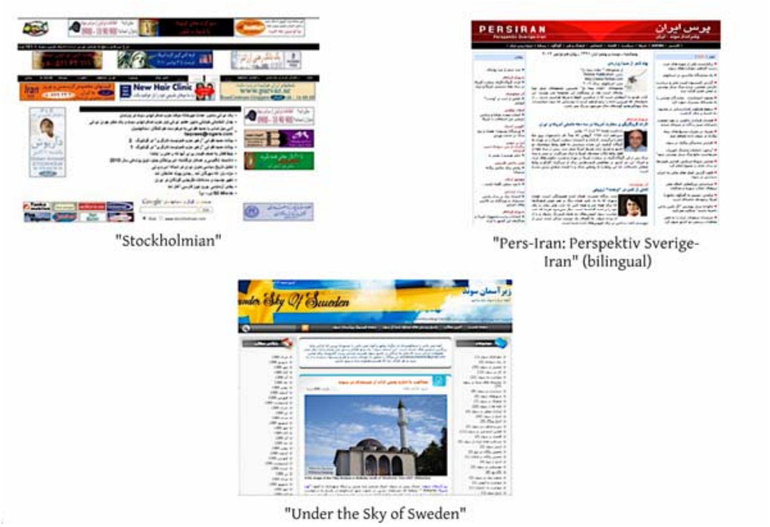
To fully agree with either of these arguments is to subscribe to a media centric model of analysis. Departing from this, I argue that media practice and audience engagement with media should be viewed within particular contexts (Couldry, 2010; Couldry, Livingstone, & Markham, 2007; Bozdag, Hepp, & Suna, 2012). To paraphrase Nick Couldry (2010), when studying media's role in society one need to consider whom, under what condition, and with which identity orientation consumes and engage with their media environments. Similarly, Bozdag, Hepp and Suna (2012) acknowledge that the *availability of diasporic media* influence the appropriation of it. But more important for identity orientation is the *subjective perception* of their quality.

> In general, most of the members of diasporic communities are acquainted with different diasporic media and use these occasionally to complement their media repertoires. However, the regular and active users of diasporic media are rather a minority within the diasporic communities we analysed. Furthermore, diasporic media are relatively seldom used as a result of a political consciousness of belonging to a certain community and looking for, or producing political self-representations, but used more in relation to broader fields of practices: information, entertainment, engagement, commerce, and faith (Bozdag et al., 2012, pp. 99-100).

In other words, what complicates the study of ethnic media is not only the diversity within the sector in terms of program genre, but also the diversity of its audience and the context within which audience members engage with their media environment. The case of Stockholm's Persian-language media is particularly interesting as the segmentation of the Iranian community happens along multiple demographic lines, including, but not limited to, age, gender, ethnicity, class, and religion. What this means for media availability and consumption within diasporic communities is that they are in constant flux and undergo structural and programmatic changes. As some of my interview participants posed it in a rhetorical question to me: "What will become of ethnic media when we are all integrated into the Swedish society? What will become of them when our children stop using these outlets?" What is evident from my research in Stockholm is that the Persian-language media environment is constantly evolving. While more traditional media like radio still dominate the landscape, new ventures are emerging.

Internet

Despite (or perhaps because of) a strong presence of Iranian websites on the World Wide Web and on social media (Alavi, 2005; Wojcieszak & Smith, 2014), Iranian online media originating in Sweden are very few and not regularly updated. I was able to identify three websites on Iranian and Swedish new and current affairs: *Stockholmian, Under the Sky of Sweden,* and *Pers Iran* (Figure 7).


"Stockholmian"

"Pers-Iran: Perspektiv Sverige-Iran" (bilingual)

"Under the Sky of Sweden"

Figure 7: Iranian online media in Stockholm

Note: Screen captures from June 8, 2013

The first two, in general, tend to cover more "soft news" material, while *Pers Iran,* run by an experienced journalist from the Swedish public service broadcasting, covers more political news. *Pers Iran* is also bi-lingual while the first two websites are in Persian only. Here is a comparative content analysis of two of these sites for the months of April-June 2011 (Table 13). I have also included in this comparison the online news site for the Swedish Public Broadcasting radio in Persian, *Pejvak. Under the Sky of Sweden* was left out due to a very low number of articles (only 6 were identified for the indicated timeframe).

The editorial mandate of each of the websites is quite clear from these numbers. *Pejvak,* as the Persian arm of the Swedish Public Broadcasting Service, mainly concerns itself with Swedish news topics in an effort to familiarise Iranians to the Swedish society. On the opposite side of the spectrum is *Pers-Iran* in Swedish which almost exclusively covers Iranian politics in Swedish. The main intended audience, according to its editor in chief, Omid, is Swedes who like to know about Iran. The Persian version of *Pers-Iran* is more balanced in its distribution of topics and covers both Swedish news and news from Iran. *Stockholmian* is heavily focused on soft news, with 50% of its content for the months of April-June 2011 being dedicated to entertainment.

Table 13: ***News topics of Persian-language websites in Stockholm for the months of April-June 2011 (%)***

News Topic	Pejvak Online (n=65)	Pers-Iran Persian (n=186)	Pers-Iran Swedish (n=220)	Stockholmian (n=26)	Total (N=497)
Economic	5	8	3	-	5
Immigration	17	8	1	12	6
Domestic Politics (Sweden)	54	27	-	15	18
Iranian Politics	2	19	91	4	49
International Politics	2	17	1	4	7
Social Policy & Programs	10	4	-	15	4
War & Military Conflict	3	-	-	-	-
Education	3	4	-	-	2
Health	2	6	1	-	3
Sports	-	1	1	-	1

Entertainment	2	2	1	50	4
Environment	-	2	-	-	1
Other	-	2	1	-	1

The notion that ethnic media outlets are predominantly inward looking, or dedicate too much of their content to ‘news from home,’ is challenged by these findings. To assume or claim that ethnic media tend to focus more on news from home is putting the carriage before the horse. Yes, some ethnic media tend to have such a focus, not by the virtue of their ‘ethnicness’, but by editorial mandate and audience demand. As we shall see in the next section on radio, news on Iranian radio tends to focus more on news from Iran. Such claims cannot be made about all Iranian ethnic media in Stockholm. The editorial mandate of each of these websites and their target audience determine their focus. Omid, the editor of one these sites and a former radio host, elaborates:

> The purpose of our website is in part to introduce Sweden as a country to Iranians who live here. By “introduce” I don’t mean just to newcomers. But also to people who have lived here for 10, 20, 30 years. Why? Because we need to be familiar with the culture and politics of this country in order to have an impact in society. I also think that Iranians in any country can best serve their own country [Iran] by transferring some of the knowledge from the new society to their home country.
>
> The other side of our mission is to inform the Swedish society about Iran. The Swedish media do not spend much time on Iran, unless it’s something negative. I think this has the potentials of creating a sense of solidarity among Swedes and Iranians.

The educational mission of media, more than other normative qualities, is highlighted throughout my interviews with media stakeholders. There is a strong desire to *serve* the Iranian community, to educate them about the Swedish society. Even *Stockholmian’s* strong leaning to entertainment news (50%) tends to focus on Sweden. How successful they are in fulfilling this mission requires longitudinal audience study. Even then it would be difficult to measure the *impact* of ethnic media, *per se*, against other elements of socialisation.

A website-focused mediascape has many affordances. Websites are easy to access, through them publishers can reach a larger audience, and they are cheaper to produce than print and broadcast media. At the same time, there are drawbacks to a website-centric media model. A disparity in access to advanced technologies is one limitation. Refugees, immigrants, and seniors, three key target groups of ethnic media in Stockholm (according to Persian-language media producers in the city), tend to have less access to electronic devices and the internet. This is due to various reasons, including low income and literacy. Traditional media such as radio, in the case of Stockholm, has proven to be an extremely useful medium for providing information and enabling access to local services for a large segment of the Iranian population. Next chapter is dedicated to radio programs and the role they play in not only the Iranian but also the entire Persian-speaking community in Stockholm (Afghans, Kurds, and Azeris).

Chapter Five - Radio

According to my mapping, there are 21 Iranian radio programs in Stockholm. Together they produce a total of 67.5 hours of programming per day on weekdays, and at least 9 hours on weekends. Parallel live programs start at 6 a.m. on weekdays and continue until past midnight. On weekends, live programs starts at 9 a.m. and end by 10 p.m. The Iranian community radio programmes have 7 FM frequencies at their disposal, all of which operate under the government's mandate for community radio (Table 14).

I have identified five different categories of Iranian radio programs in Stockholm. One category is *variety shows*. They are usually day shows, with a mix of music, news, talk, contest, interviews, and a highly popular community bulletin segment, the equivalent of a classified section of a publication. These shows are not necessarily political, but discuss politics if there is an urgent political event. The pace is usually upbeat and the hosts are veteran radio personalities in Stockholm who have been leading radio shows for more than two decades. The most popular ones are *Radio Ava, Radio Hamsafar, Radio Iran-on-Air,* and *Radio Rangarang.*

The second category is *political* shows. This group of radio shows can be divided into two sub-groups: political news shows and political talk. The first sub-group, *Radio Hambastegi* (Solidarity) and *Radio Seday-e Zanan* (Women's Voice) are both left leaning programs with a pro-social agenda. They produce interviews and investigative segments dedicated to social, political and economic issues of Iranians in Sweden.

Table 14: Iranian radio programs in Stockholm

	Radio Name	**Hosts***	**Gender of host**	**Ads**	**Daily or Weekly**	**Nmbr of live hours per day**	**Day or Evening**	**Weekday or Weekend**	**Established, Emerging or New****	**Genre**	**FM Freq.**
1	*Ava* - Voice	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Established	Variety	94.6
2	*Ayeneh* Mirror	2	M, M	Yes	Daily	5h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Talk	90.5
3	*Chakavak* Sparrow	1	F	No	Daily	3h X 5 days	Evening	Weekday	New	Political talk	91.1
4	*Fanous* - Lantern	1	M	No	Daily	4h X 5 days	Evening	Weekday	Emerging	Political talk	91.1
5	*Hambastegi* Solidarity	2	M, M	No	Weekly	6h X 1 days	Day	Weekend	Established	Political show	91.1
6	*Hamsafar* Companion	1	M	Yes	Daily	6h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Established	Variety	94.2
7	*Iran On Air*	2	F, M	Yes	Daily	5h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Established	Variety	90.5
8	*Iranzamin* - Land of Iran	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Political talk	94.2
9	*Melody*	2	M, M	Yes	Daily	7h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	New	Music	97.3
10	*Payam-e Ma* - Our Message	1	M	No	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	New	Talk/ Religion	91.1

11	_Pejvak_***	1	F	No	Daily	0.5h X 3 days	Day	Weekday	Established	News	89.6
12	_Peyvand_ - Connec	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	New	Talk	90.5
13	_Rangarang_ - Colourful	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Established	Variety	94.6
14	_Sedaye Ashna_ - Familiar Voice	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Talk	94.6
15	_Sedaye Farsi_ - Persian Voice	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Talk	91.1
16	_Sedaye Iran_ - Iran Voice	2	F, M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Talk	91.1
17	_Sedaye Zanan_ - Women's Voice	1	F	Yes	Weekly	2h X 1 day	Day	Weekend	Established	Political show	88.9
18	_Sedaye Mehr_ -Voice of Kindness	1	M	Yes	Daily	3 h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	New	Talk	94.5
19	_Shahrvand_- Citizen	1	M	Yes	Daily	3h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	Emerging	Talk	91.1
20	_Taraneh_ - Song	1	M	Yes	Daily	6h X 5 days	Day	Weekday	New	Music	97.3

* Number of hosts: Fulltime host, no including contributors.

** Established: 10 years or longer; Emerging: 5-10 years; New: Less than 5 years

*** Public Service Broadcasting

During my fieldwork, both radio programs reported at length about the dire situation of Iranian refugee claimants in Sweden. For this reason both radio programs, *Hambastegi* especially, enjoy the respect of the other shows. Many of the radio hosts I spoke to claim that they do not listen to any of their competitors. However, most of them did mention that they listen to *Hambastegi* because of the quality of its discourse.

The second sub-group, political talk, has very little production of original segments. The majority of airtime is dedicated to the host's opinion about various political topics, typically revolving around Iranian politics. Audience members call in to the studio and share their thoughts as well. At times, the debates get heated and derogatory language gets used. Many of my interview participants were very critical of these talk shows. Dana, an activist and radio contributor, shared the following about these shows: "These radio shows, with their foul language, unprofessional conducts, conflicts, and personal attacks produce the lowest type of culture among Iranians." *Radio Chakavak* (Sparrow) and *Radio Fanoos* (Lantern) are examples of political talk radio shows. *Radio Fanoos* has in recent years been in hot water. Its host waged a war against a number of Iranian political activists in Stockholm, and accused them on air of financial fraud and espionage for the Iranian regime. Some of the accused organizations have filed unsuccessful complaints with the Swedish Broadcasting Authority in order to get *Radio Fanoos's* license revoked. As a Swedish NGO and independent media watchdog reported in its newsletter from 2005 on this particular matter, the Swedish Broadcasting Authority can do very little by way of disciplinary measures (Public Access, 2005). *Radio Fanous* is protected under Sweden's freedom of speech legislation. However, the radio lost its license in November 2012 after failing to apply on time for renewal (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2012a). It was issued a new license a month later and resumed operation.

A third category is radio talk show. These shows are typically “one man shows” and spend most of their airtime on discussing various issues. They are not necessarily politically oriented, but given the highly political Iranian community in Stockholm--driven by anti-regime sentiments and the Iranian refugee crisis in the country-- politics is a frequent topic of discussion. The difference between these shows and the previous category is that they do not represent any political party or ideology. The remaining two categories are music and news programs, and only one radio program exists for each.

Iranian community radio content

Diversity in content is expected with such variety in programming. Subsequently, sampling and conducting content analysis on radio proved to be quite challenging. Since most shows are daily shows, I relied on a “constructed week sample” of four weekday shows, based on a seven-week sampling frame (Riffe, Aust, & Lacy, 1993). Two weekend shows were added to the list in order to increase the diversity of the sample (Table 15). My unit of analysis for the overall content was minute of programming. In total 4170 minutes of radio programming, or 69.5 hours, were analysed. My unit of analysis for news and advertising was items, in other words, one news story or advertising, was coded as one item.

Table 15: Radio programs included in content analysis based on a constructed week sampling frame in April-June 2011

Radio	**Frequency of program**	**Minutes of programs/week (Included in content analysis)**
Radio Ava	Monday-Friday	900
Radio Iran on Air	Monday-Friday	1200
Radio Hamsafar	Monday-Friday	1200
Radio Pejvak	Mon, Wed, Fri	90

Radio Hambastegi	Saturday	360
Radio Seday-e Zan	Sunday	120
	Total	4170

As Table 16 indicates, news (20%), music and advertising (both at 16%) made up the top three program genres in Iranian radio in Stockholm. *Ava, Hamsafar,* and *Iran on Air* predominantly played archived news from the Persian services of *BBC, Voice* and *America*, and *Radio Israel* (although, local news and current affairs were covered sporadically and informally throughout the program, but did not have a dedicated news segment). Typically these news programs from international services were 20-30 minutes in length. *Pejvak's, Hambastegi's* and *Seday-e Zan's* news segments were prepared and presented by the in-studio staff and did not rely on any of the international news services.

Table 16:   Program Genre of Radio Programs in minutes

Genre	Number of minutes	Percent of total
News	842*	20.2
Music	684	16.4
Advertising	680**	16.3
Community Bulletin	580	13.9
Discussion & Special Topics	492	11.8
Entertainment	317	7.6
General Talk	179	4.3
Contests	171	4.1
Interviews	121	2.9
Education	67	1.6
Poetry	24	0.6
Sports	13	0.3
TOTAL	**4170**	**100**

*Number of news items: 432
** Number of advertising: 936

As Table 17 indicates, the emphasis in news is overwhelmingly on Iranian politics, with 34% of the news content dedicated to this category. This finding is consistent with other research on ethnic media in other countries of settlements in regions in North America and Europe (Matsaganis et al., 2010; Murray, Yu, Ahadi, 2007). There are three observations to be made based on this finding.

Table 17: Percentage for news topics of Iranian radio shows in Stockholm for the months of April-June 2011 (N=Number of news items)

News Topic (%)	Ava (n=182)	Iran on Air (n=65)	Hamsafar (n=82)	Pejvak (n=43)	Hambastegi (n=26)	Sedaye Zan (n=34)	**Total (N=432)**
Iranian Politics	22	66	39	12	50	38	**34**
War/Conflict	25	23	15	12	8	9	**19**
Int’l Politics	8	-	18	5	19	18	**10**
Swedish Politics	4	-	10	35	15	15	**9**
Immigration	10	3	4	14	-	9	**8**
Economics	8	8	5	9	-	-	**7**
Nuclear - Iran	5	-	5	-	8	9	**4**
Social Programs	3	-	5	9	-	-	**3**
Sports	4	-	-	-	-	-	**2**
Entertainment	3	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Health	1	-	-	5	-	-	**1**
Other	5	-	-	-	-	3	**2**

First, let us consider some of the contributing factors to this ethnic turn in news coverage. Aidin, a frequent media contributor, gives his take on the role of news in the Iranian culture:

> I remember during the Iran-Iraq war, there was a total ban on foreign media in Iran. There was no satellite TV or Internet. Our only way to get some accurate news about the war was through Radio Israel transmitted on shortwave. And the acrobatic moves you had to make to get it to work […] My point is that news is immensely important for Iranians. We probably consume more news than any other nationalities, maybe because we have always been deprived from good sources of news because of state censorship. Maybe because we are a suspicious

> bunch… we don't trust governments and news as a way to keep ourselves informed.

Aidin's assessment of the importance of news culture reflects recent studies of Iranian news media. Based on a survey of Iranians in Tehran, Seyed-Emami (2008) reports a very high interest in news among the younger generation. Specifically, 65% of respondents indicated that they watched television news "several days a week" or "almost every day" as compared to 60% who said they read newspapers "several days a week" or "almost every day" (p. 60).

Second, there is also a rich history of news culture in Iran. For instance, in 2000, The United Nations ranked Iran 14th in terms of daily publications (112 daily publications) and 8th in terms of non-daily and periodicals (906 non-dailies) (Countries Compared by Media, n.d). However, these numbers changed drastically by the mid-2000s after the election of the conservative president Mahmoud Ahmadinedjad. The number of dailies was reported as 32 in 2008 (Khiabany, 2008). Only Turkey in the region surpasses Iran with 52 daily publications. A recent study from the Iran Media Program at University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication supports this orientation to news. The findings from this study, based on a survey of Iranian journalists living outside Iran, suggest that journalists dedicated 77% of their reporting to domestic politics in Iran, while only 14 % of their reporting was dedicated to the domestic politics of the country of residence (Wojcieszak, Brouillette, & Smith, 2013).

The third observation from my content analysis has to do with the conditions of production. The reason there is such a high emphasis on Iranian politics in the majority of Persian-language media in Stockholm is due to the fact that the local shows broadcast daily news programs from international Persian news services, such as *Radio Israel* and *BBC Persian.* If news shows were produced locally, surely the distribution of news topics would look different. For example, *Pejvak, Hambastegi* and *Seday-e Zan* do not rely on international news services and therefore demonstrate a higher emphasis on Swedish news (Table 19). Nima's (a radio producer and host) defensive response to my question about the limited amount of local news in Persian-language media sheds more light on this issue:

> I have no choice. Do I want to cover local news? Yes of course I want to. I have lived in Sweden for over 30 year; this is my home. I read and watch Swedish news all the time. It's not because of lack of care or knowledge that I don't cover local news. It's out of necessity. This is a one-man show. I am the host, the producer, the operator, the DJ, the therapist, the entertainer, the newsreader, and the list goes on. I try to open Swedish newspapers while I'm on air and translate some of the highlights. But that's the extent of it. For example, right now there is a huge protest happening in the city centre in support for Iranian refugees. Can I go and produce a reportage? No! Of course not. I'm here in the studio, answering to your questions while playing BBC News for my listeners.

Evidently, Nima granted me a 30-minute interview during one of his daily shows, while BBC News was airing. Nima's tale is similar to that of Amir and Pourang, two radio producers and hosts who also suffer from the lack of adequate staffing.

Critics of Iranian community media in Stockholm explain the lack of local news differently. Mahan, a sociologist and a former media contributor says,

> [Radio programs] lack a social agenda. They have become a business. Most of them carry ads, for which they charge the Iranian businesses. So, for these radio personalities, it has become a source of income. Many of them have been doing this for years now, with the same format, same ads, same people. I don't think more staff would make a difference. They have tried to work together as co-hosts, but it has never worked. This way, a single host and "owner" of the show, doesn't have to share the ad revenues with another co-host or pay any staff.

Producers I interviewed argue that they can't afford paying staff and trusting volunteers is difficult too as they can be unpredictable and unreliable in terms of their expertise and time commitment.

Subsequently we are left with this gap in local news coverage. Lacking audience research in this project, I have to rely on existing research in the field to develop a hypothesis about diasporic audiences' engagement with local news. Findings from European studies on immigrant media demonstrate a complex news consumption habit. Slade (2010), in her pan-European study of diasporic media, presents a highly complex landscape. Her research on news demonstrates that the participants in her quantitative and qualitative studies, not surprisingly a reliance on multiple outlets for their local, national, and international news. It is reasonable to assume that Iranians in Stockholm rely on multiple news sources and do not rely on Persian community media, per se, for their local news. My findings on news coverage should not be interpreted as a total lack of encounter with local news for Iranian audiences. To the contrary, there is a strong sense of "the local" which manifests itself through other genres.

An area of strength in Persian-language media programming in Stockholm is the pro-social program genre, namely the community bulletin (13.9%) as well as discussions and special topics programming (11.8%). These categories made up a significant portion of the programming (Table 18). I asked Bourna, a radio contributor, about these segments and their significance:

> Do you remember the teahouses (*chay-khaane*) in Iran? There was at least one in each neighbourhood, and people would come and go all day long, drink tea and smoke hookah and talk about politics, culture, gossip, [and etc.]. These daily bulletin programs kind of serve the same purpose. It's a gathering place for people to talk about their needs and hopefully get help from other listeners. It gives a sense of security to people, especially newcomers, because most of the callers are people who are new and call into the programs because they are looking for a job or a place to rent. These programs provide a sense of security that they are not alone, that there is someone out there who's listening to their need and most likely respond; someone who speaks the same language and can relate to the same struggles. […] Like Craigslist, except for radio, and with immediate response in most cases.

Most callers are looking for employment or rental units for housing. Typically such programs run for 20-30 minutes, depending on the radio show and are extremely popular. The radio hosts are very strict about moderating these segments. Each caller gets about 30 seconds to voice their need and leave a contact number. The hosts typically do not accept these types of inquiries outside the bulletin segment and ask the caller to call back the next day during the appropriate segment.

The Metamorphosis Project's[12] concept of "geo-ethnic storytelling" (Lin and Song, 2006) provides a useful framework for understanding the situated role of these bulletin segments. Lin and Song (2006) argue that ethnicity or geographic location alone are not sufficient factors to some distinctive communication patterns (p. 367). Instead, the interplay of ethnicity *and* location produces unique communication behaviour. Lin et al. (2006) define geo-ethnic storytelling as "a practice that aims to produce culturally relevant and locally vital information to immigrants in the host society" (p. 364). They go on describing such storytelling strategy as "ethnically articulated attitudes and practices grounded in a specific temporal and spatial situation" (p. 367). In essence, they argue, geo-ethnicity highlights the contextual factor and allows us to move beyond simply looking at ethnicity as a single independent variable to explain the contemporary social environment (Ibid.). Such a way of thinking about an otherwise totalizing category of "ethnic media" allows for a demystification of the concept and help us to understand the practice of "ethnic" communication within situated contexts. Let me explain this further.

While I agree with Lin and Song (2006) on their notion of geo-ethnic storytelling, I would take their proposition a step further and argue that even the language used, in this case Persian, takes on a different form. At a symbolic level, the Persian used in Iranian radio in Stockholm, is different from the Persian used in local Iranian radios in, say, Vancouver or London. This is not to say that Iranians in Vancouver would not be able to understand local shows in Stockholm. There are subtleties in the language, however, that would only make sense to someone who belongs to that geo-ethnic group, in this case Iranians in Stockholm. These subtleties may include a Persian spoken with a Swedish accent, frequent use of Swedish words by hosts, guests, callers and other contributors, and references to cultural practices, addresses, locations, government agencies and policies that would *only* makes sense to an Iranian in Stockholm. The practice of language becomes a situated practice that is not only ethnically, but also geographically and temporally informed. The hypothesis derived from this is that this contextual use of language creates a sense of community and belonging, in this case for Iranians in Stockholm, more than transnational Iranian satellite radio and television programs would do. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for the continued relevance of local Iranian radio in Stockholm.

Regulatory Oversight of content

The archive of the Swedish Broadcasting Authority contains a collection of regulatory decisions pertaining to Iranian community media. The documents can be categorized into two groups: (1) decisions on license applications or extensions, and (2) decisions on complaints received from the audience on the content of these radio programmes. These documents give important insight into how rigorously community media regulations are enforced by the Broadcasting Agency. In the early years of Iranian radio programming in Stockholm (early 1990s), the regulations were not strictly followed. Sima, one of the local media producers I interviewed, recalls that when she started in 1991, it was much easier to obtain a license or to renew it. Now, Sima adds, your license can get revoked if, for example, the majority of your organisation’s board members do not live in the broadcast area. Indeed, my archival research found numerous cases where Persian-language media producers were denied renewal of their license because of this particular transgression. *Radio Ava*, for example, which has been licensed for over a decade with no hiccups, was denied renewal of its license in May 2013 due to the fact that its producer and board members were not residents of the broadcast area Sollentuna (a district in northern Stockholm) (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2013b). In a November 2013 ruling, the Authority had renewed the license stating that *Radio Ava* had complied with the regulations, meaning that new board members were appointed who had ties with the broadcast area (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2013c).

In other reported cases radio shows were accused of breaching the strict advertising regulations. According to the Swedish Broadcasting Authority's policy twelve minutes of advertising is allowed during each full hour of community radio programming (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, n.d., p. 10). Each advertising segment has to follow and end with a signature announcement, which indicates to listeners that they are listening to advertising and not regular programming. For example, "now it's time for advertising" and "end of advertising." Here are two examples: In an October 4, 2013 ruling *Radio Hamsafar* was found guilty of advertising during regular programming. The details of the case described in the ruling document indicates that the host was interviewing a lawyer who was giving legal advice to listeners and at the end of the interview the lawyer's contact information was announced. The Authority however decided not to fine the radio and issued a warning instead (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2013d). In another ruling from November 13, 2013 *Radio Ava* was issued a warning for advertising more than the allowed twelve minutes and for not properly wrapping the advertising segment in a signature announcement (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2013e).

The name of the plaintiff is never disclosed in the ruling documents. In my interviews with producer it was indicated that the listeners are not the only ones filing these complaints; hosts of other radio shows also file complaints against each other in an effort to undermine rivals.

There are at least two issues with oversight of ethno-cultural media. Firstly, some of the transgressions that may arise in these outlets and can be grounds for complaints are not easily detectable by the authorities due to language barriers. Therefore, many violations can go unnoticed. Secondly, many of the audience members, because of language barrier or lack of knowledge about media regulatory systems, do not file complaints. Iranian radio could play an important role here and educate their audiences about their rights and the appropriate channels through which they can voice their grievances. However, during my research in Stockholm I did not encounter such attempts.

Production barriers

A shortage of trained media personnel, which is tied to lack of economic resources, is a major barrier to production. Ethnic community radio primarily broadcast in areas nearest the larger cities in Sweden. These outlets do not receive any direct subsidies from the state. Some 31% receive economic support from the local authorities or from community organisations and 40% are sponsored or have income from advertising (Hetzler, Persson & Lundin, 2006). Most of the work in minority radio is done on a voluntary basis. Only 9% of the minority organisations have a paid employee (Hetzler et al., 2006). This observation by Hetzler et al. applies to the Iranian radio sector as well. None of the producers I interviewed had paid staff. Many held other occupations in retail, taxi industry, or public transit (as a bus driver, for example).

Advertising revenues are vital for many of these radio stations, especially for those producers who make a living from these radio shows. According to the local

Iranian Yellow Pages, there are about 400 Iranian businesses in Stockholm. According to my observation, an estimated 160 of these businesses actively advertise in the local Iranian radio shows (Table 18). Many of them run multiple ads with different radio shows, and the rate varies from 500 SEK to 1,000 SEK per month, depending on the radio. This fee gives the businesses multiple slots during a week.

Table 18: Advertising in Iranian radio shows in Stockholm for the months of April-June 2011 (%) (N=Number of ads)

Advertising Type (%)	Ava (n=241)	Iran on Air (n=356)	Hamsafar (n=339)	**Total (N=936)**
Restaurants/pubs	16	15	19	17
Entertainment	10	18	12	14
Grocery	13	12	11	12
Real estate	9	12	11	11
Travel agency	15	8	7	9
Translation	5	8	8	8
Media/Technology	9	5	6	7
Employment	4	6	6	6
Accounting/Finance	3	5	5	5
Auto/Auto repair	5	4	4	4
Legal Aid	2	4	5	4
Academies/schools	3	1	1	2
Insurance	1	1	3	2
Other	4	1	1	2

In my interviews, I asked radio owners and hosts about the influence of advertising on the content of Iranian radio shows in Stockholm. Most radio producers did not see this as a threat. Sima, a radio host, however shared her critical opinion about advertising:

> Some of these advertisings are very problematic. I remember once I called into one of these radios to complain about one of their ads. It was an ad from a clothing store, and it was to the effect of: "Do you want your wife to look beautiful? Then shop from [the name of the store]." I was so outraged about the way it portrayed women as this passive creature who need their husbands to buy them clothes in order to look beautiful… FOR THEIR HUSBAND. I remember ranting about this for days to my husband and he proposed that I should call the radio and complain. I did. But nothing came out of. The ad was still on for a long time until the clothing store went out of business. Evidently, I know of the store owner and he moved back to Iran.

According to Sima the effect of advertisings is not so much about their influence on the content, but on how they reproduce certain cultural norms such as gender roles and ethnic identity.

A more structural barrier is access to studio and studio time. For example, Amir pays close to $1,000 in monthly studio rental fees for a 3-hour per weekday radio show. Given his radio's high revenue from advertising, he should not have any trouble covering this cost. However he suggests that the appearance of radio shows making fortunes from ad revenues is deceiving. That in itself is a cultural barrier to production: the perception that Persian-language media producers are just after filling their own pockets. The costs associated with producing a radio show are more extensive than just the monthly studio fee.

> People don't understand that we as hosts also have to make a living. Yes, this is a not-for-profit organization, but that doesn't mean that those involved in the organization should forgo any pay. I spend at least 10 hours of my time every day to prepare and broadcast the show. Some members of the community expect that I should do this for free! I have been doing this for 25 years and you can come and see my home and my car. Nothing fancy. If I had made a fortune, for sure you would notice a change in my living standard. […] People also think that the advertising revenues are coming in in an orderly fashion. I have to run around and pay many of these businesses multiple visits to get the modest fee they pay each month for their ads.

Other producers echo Amir’s frustration. Nima, also an experienced radio personality in Stockholm, says that he has been threatened by members of the community on and off the air, demanding that he disclose his radio station’s financial records--something that is clearly reported to the Swedish broadcasting authorities overseeing local media (*Närradionämnden*) and can be requested through access to information laws.

> The problem is not a lack of information about how these media operate. We are very transparent. We have to be, otherwise we lose our license. The problem is the cultural of mistrust that exist among Iranians when it comes to media. We haven’t had a truly democratic media environment in Iran. Ever. And this mistrust stems from that void. We are constantly thinking that media are scheming something. Plotting to deceive the people. We label [these media]: pro-regime, pro-profit, communist, royalist, Islamist, feminist, chauvinist, racist, and so forth. And then we dismiss them.

Nima regards this sentiment of mistrust as a major barrier for Persian-language media in diaspora. Nima and Amir are both experienced radio hosts and by their own account they have broad support from the Iranian community in Stockholm. However they do express concerns regarding the challenges faced by new media initiatives that need to establish this rapport with the community and face this cultural barrier.

Competition for studio time with other community programs is also a major challenge. Nima had his program time cut significantly because of other ethnic groups wanting access to the same time slot. He states that the licensing authority, *Närradionämnden*, while very cooperative, tends to favour the less established communities. The Iranian community has a very prominent footprint in the local media landscape, with over 20 programs. Other communities, such as the Somali, are less well served when it comes to media practices. According to Nima, *Närradionämnden,* in an effort to encourage diversity in the media landscape, favours these communities when it comes to time allocation. Nima thinks this is a great idea as long those who share a studio are collegial and professional. Yet Nima argues that this is not always the case.

Most of my interview participants complained about a lack of collegiality among the Iranian radio producers. Even the radio producers admit that they have failed to establish an interest group or a consortium of Persian-language media producers in Stockholm. My interviews point to many reasons, most of which are cultural. A lack of trust, as mentioned earlier in this section, is one. Another reason is the perceived monopoly that the more established radio shows have on preferable studio time and on attracting advertising from local businesses. The less established shows, which also tend to have younger hosts, are therefore facing major obstacles. Most Iranian shows tend to have some form of declared or perceived affiliation with an ideological movement. While all can be regarded as anti-regime, within this category there are many different political leanings. This also prevents radio producers from establishing a common front as an interest group. Any such attempts have derailed in the past due to a lack of political consensus.

There are also external barriers to producing quality programming. Hultén’s studies (2009a & 2009b) suggest a lack of ethnic diversity in journalism schools in Sweden. The repercussions of this are not only a lack of ethno-cultural diversity in the Swedish mainstream media, but also a lack of trained journalists in the ethnic media landscape. Even informal, non-credit programs are very rare. This lack of proper training has been most prominent in policy literature on ethnic media (Fleras, 2015). We do however need to be cautious to not reinforce a colonial binary of “ethnics” and “natives.” I am not suggesting that the “ethnic” reporter needs to learn proper codes of conducts from the “native” population about journalism as a profession. Many media professionals in the ethnic media landscape are trained journalists, with extensive experience from their country of origin. However, journalism is not just about storytelling techniques. There are laws and policies such as access to information and conflict of interest laws that are sometimes unique to jurisdictions and journalists ought to be familiar with these policies. Therefore, some form of provision by way of access to education, formal or informal, is needed for ethnic media practitioners to overcome this barrier to production.

Iranian community radio's role

One of the earliest Iranian radio programmes was produced in the 1980s by one of my interview participants, Amir. In our conversation, he mentioned some of the reasons for radio's popularity among Iranians in Stockholm:

> When I started in the 1980s there was one other Iranian radio programme which was mainly political. It used to run programmes once a week. Then came *Pejvak* in early 1990s. And again, it was a very serious programme with news. It was during this time that the Iranian population in Stockholm started to increase. When I started my show in mid-1980s, there were maybe 1,000 Iranians in Stockholm. By 1990 there were over 20,000. You also have to remember that this was a very difficult time for us. We had fled a repressive regime and a war [with Iraq]. So people were extremely sad and depressed. I felt that serious shows like *Pejvak* were only adding to this sorrow. Yes, they were informative. But people needed happiness. Plus, there was another issue with *Pejvak*: under the banner of impartiality, their journalists interviewed political figures in Iran. And this was a very controversial issue for many Iranians who had fled the country for political reasons. They felt that *Pejvak* was betraying them by airing the voices of Iranian politicians. […] Another reason for the expansion of the Iranian community media sector is the deregulation of media that took place [in 1993] which allowed community media in Sweden to carry advertising. All of a sudden we had 20-30 radio programs. It had now become a source of income for many.

This quotation from Amir encompasses the two overarching roles that Iranian ethnic media play in Stockholm: symbolic and instrumental. The symbolic role of ethnic media is in their ability to appeal to the emotive aspect of resettlement (Matsaganis et al, 2010). In other words, this refers to the ability of media to foster a sense of belonging to culture and community. It is also closely related to Nick Couldry's assertion about media practice as a ritualistic practice that is culturally and socially situated. In *Why Voice Matters?* Couldry (2010) poses the simple, yet important question: who, under what condition, and with which identity orientation consume and engage with their media environment? This statement departs from not only a media-centric analytical framework, but also questions an ethno-centric framework, meaning that we cannot speak of the symbolic meaning of ethnic media in general terms without paying close attention to geo-cultural context within which these media operate. Therefore, the symbolic meaning of Iranian ethnic media in Stockholm might be different from those of Los Angeles or London.

Without a framework for audience research in this dissertation, it becomes difficult to discuss the symbolic role Iranian community media play in Stockholm. The findings presented here are based on my observation of the content and the interviews with media personalities. First let us consider the "media as ritual" hypothesis from Couldry (2010). Local Iranian radio is ubiquitous in Stockholm. It is very difficult to turn on the radio during any time of the day and not be able to find a live show or a re-run of Iranian programs. This is very unique for an Iranian diasporic community. To my knowledge, no other Iranian community outside of Iran has access to such variety of local Iranian radio shows. Even in Los Angeles, which functions as a media hub for Iranian diasporic communities, Persian-language media tend to operate in a transnational space, catering to a global Iranian audience. Tuning into Persian-language media in Stockholm becomes part of a daily routine for many members of the community. Amir elaborates on this:

> You know why I have survived 30 years as a radio host? It's not because being a good journalist. It's because people trust me. Some of them have grown up with me, people your age. Some have confided in me their deepest and most troubling secrets, calling me after the program about their struggles. And most have overcome their sense of alienation in a new country by listening to my show over

> the past three decades. Did you know that I am probably the only radio host who can joke with my listeners and prank them when they call into show, without them getting offended? This is not very common in our culture, as you know. All other radio hosts walk a very fine line to not offend their listeners. But I like to think that I'm banking on the trust that have in the community. You know why this is? I think that the Iranian community here has accepted me as a member of their family. […] Do I want to be a better journalist? Sure. I always wanted to be a better journalist. I like journalism. But being trusted as a member of this community is more important to me, and I think to my listeners.

This readily available mediascape in Stockholm bonds the community together in ways that would have been difficult without the existence of such platforms. As it has been argued in media and cultural adaptation research literature, these media outlets add a sense of familiarity to the otherwise chaotic and alienating experience of resettlement (Fleras, 2015; Veronis & Ahmed, 2015; Matsaganis et al., 2010; Ahadi et al., 2009; Karim, 2002b). As Dana, one of my interview participants, argues, "these outlets sometimes function as a refuge, a place of escape for many Iranians to reconnect with their roots, to feel that they are not alone." Without the existence of such place of temporary escape, the process of adaptation would certainly be much more complicated.

Parallel to this symbolic function, there exists a much more tangible role that media play as informers and educators. My content analysis demonstrates an emphasis on news (about 25% of the overall content). As such, these media outlets keep the Iranian community informed about the news in Iran, Sweden and elsewhere in the world. While many in the community may have access to other means of communication, such as the Internet to access news from and about Iran, radio still plays a vital role for certain demographic groups, such as the seniors, international students, and newcomers who tend to have less access to new information technologies (Haight, Quan-Haase, & Corbett, 2014). Similarly they act as important cultural ambassadors and promoters of Iranian language, music, and culture, reaffirming the value of their culture for members of the diaspora in Sweden (for example, about 16% of the content is dedicated to music).

From a normative point of view, these outlets also fulfill a civic duty by informing their audiences about policies in Sweden, offer them a venue for political engagement, and provide general civic literacy. Based on my interviews, I found out that some of the programs had extensive coverage of the Swedish election that took place 7 months prior to my visit (in September 2010). During my visit there were a number of stories covered by the Iranian local media about Iranian politicians in Sweden. One such story from April 2011 was about the dismissal of an Iranian member of the Swedish parliament, Maryam Yazdanfar, as the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Civil Affairs by the leader of the Social Democratic party, the opposition party at the time. While Ms. Yazdanfar's dismissal did not receive much coverage in the Swedish press, the local Persian-language media paid considerable attention to the story. The coverage however was not particularly favourable. She, along with two other MP's with Iranian backgrounds, were criticized by reporters, radio hosts, and callers as oblivious to the Iranian community and their cause. In short, they were not being Iranian enough and nothing in their personal political platform addressed the plight of the Iranian community in Sweden (Stockholmian, 2011a). The coverage of this story and the conversation it generated in the Iranian community is an example of the role media, especially radio, can play in the local Iranian community as mediators of civic literacy.

Persian-language media in Stockholm have also served as community watchdogs, reporting on the misconduct of community organizations and leaders. According to my interview participants, over the years there have been numerous cases of dubious and sometimes illegal practices in the Iranian community. Community organizations have several times been audited and fined for mismanagement of funds. During my fieldwork the Iranian National Foundation in Sweden was under scrutiny for subscribing to questionable practices in order to attract funding from the Swedish government.

Stockhomian, an Iranian online publication in Stockholm in an article entitled, "*It's raining money on the Iranian National Foundation"* accused the organization for exaggerating its membership numbers in order to attract more funding from the government (2011b). In the article *Stockholmian* claim that the organization had to adjust the number of its members from 7,000 down to 4,000 since many of the originally reported members were no longer active members in the organization (government funding is allocated based on membership numbers). If done correctly, following the conventions of investigative journalism, this is an enormously important exercise in investigative journalism and accountability.

Lastly, Iranian local media in Stockholm sustain a sense of community. They are not only providers of news, entertainment, and civic literacy, they also serve as a solid anchor for the community in that they provide real time updates on community events, gatherings, and collective actions. However, serving as a strong advocate for culturalism comes at a cost. The discourses of identity and belonging that these media outlets foster, if they uncritically promote nostalgic forms of nationalism (Naficy, 1993), can result in a particular kind of "Iranianness" that lends itself to ethno-centricity that rejects Arab/Muslim identifications, as I discuss below, rather than intercultural citizenship.

The role community radio has in mediating Iranian identities

Identity is a slippery term. Often in academic circles its use in singular form is met with criticism. Earlier in this dissertation I established my epistemological stance on identity and identity formation, arguing that speaking of *one* identity for an individual or a community is fraught with misconceptions of the existence of a cohesive and essentialised self. Contemporary scholars of identity and identity formation speak of the concept as plural and emphasise the fluidity of it. Similarly in media studies we have departed from a linear media effect model, according to which media are at the centre of fostering identities and cultural sensitivities. Instead critical approaches have conceptualised a subtler role of media. Stuart Hall's (1994) work on media and identification has highlighted the complex system of interpretation where audiences' various subject positions play a significant role in how media are consumed and processed and thus mediate their identities (Hall, 1994).

Bridging this theoretical work with actual media use, many scholars have noted the importance of ethnic identity. Liebes and Katz's (1990) study of the different responses to the television drama *Dallas* among different ethnic groups is one example. However, other media scholars have seriously challenged Liebes and Katz's assumption of fixed ethnic groups and the authors' media-centric approach (Schiller, 1996; Boyd-Barrett, 1998; Harindranath, 2006; Dhoest, Cola, Brusa, and Lemish, 2012). But as Tsagarousianou (2001) argues, the very practice of conducting ethnic media research could potentially result in reinforcing a notion of fixed identities and ignoring cultural complexities.

As a consequence, many later media scholars have relied on the "transnational" lens, rather than the "ethnic" one, arguing that the former is more sensitive to the complexities of media use and effect across national and ethnic boundaries (Georgiou, 2005a; Karim, 2006; Madianou, 2005). By far, the most cited definition of transnational subjectivity comes from Basch et al.'s *Nations Unbound* (1994), wherein transnationalism is defined as:

> the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. Immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships-- familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political-- that span borders we call

> “transmigrants.” An essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants’ sustain in both home and host societies. [...] Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states (Basch, Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc, 1994, p. 8).

This description of transnationalism, the authors argue, allows for an analysis of the lived and fluid experiences of transmigrants that act in ways that challenge our previous conflation of geographic space and social identity. This definition also will enable us to see the way people are transformed (or not) by their transnational experiences and how these experiences effect the nation-states of the transmigrants’ origin and settlement (Basch et al.,1994).

As far as this study is concerned, this approach underlines the creation of multiple identities in diasporic communities and allows for an analytical framework to assess media’s role in the construction of these identities. As Madianou (2005) argues, media, while not determining identities, do contribute in the creation of symbolic communicative spaces that either include or exclude, thereby affecting audiences’ lives and discourses about identities and belonging. Media’s role in this regard is not limited just to the act of listening, reading or listening but goes beyond these measures, as messages become subjects for discussion and retelling in everyday context. In this sense, media text can become a common point of reference within communities, large and small (p. 75). According to Dhoest et al. (2012) this both undermines assumptions of “powerful media” (shaping culture) and assumptions about “powerful audiences” (whose culture determines media use), rather suggesting a dialectic relation between media and culture (p. 377).

Considering the scope of this research, and my focus on identity construction, I have limited my analysis of media discourse to the following: what symbols, metaphors, imagary and practices are used in the media that point to the fostering of particular national or transnational identities. The peril of creating categories is that it inadvertently creates simplistic identity boxes and ignores other signifiers such as gender, sexual orientation, language, socio-economic class, age, and so forth. I am not arguing that members of the Iranian community in Stockholm identify themselves solely according to set identity orientations. Nor do I suggest that the content of Persian-language media in the city is framed according to a handful of identity orientation. What I simply present here is *the most dominant narrative* of "Iranianness" observed in the Persian-language media content during my four months fieldwork in Stockholm.

Dominant identity orientation: Iranian "the Persian" versus Iranian "the Muslim"

The USA-based Iranian actor and comedian Maz Jobrani has a segment on Iranian identity as part of his *Axis of Evil* stand-up comedy show in which he makes fun of Iranian subjectivity:

> I tell my American friends that I'm Iranian and they go "so you're Arab." I say, "no we're actually different, we're not Arab, but you know we're similar.... we all get shot at [by the American police]. But Iranians are actually ethnically Aryan. We're white. So stop shooting." [...] Iranians don't even say they're Iranian. Iranians say they're "Persian". We say we are Peeeeeersiiiiiian. You know. It sounds nicer and friendlier. Even as we say we are Persian, we smile: "I am Peeeeeersiiiiiian" (he says with a grin). "I am not dangerous. I am Peeeeeersiiiiiian. Like the Cat: *Meow*. Or the rug: hand-woven and colourful."

This widely circulated segment of the show in many ways epitomizes the melancholic relationship Iranians have with "Iranianness", "Persianness", and "Arabness," and, by extension, "Muslimness." Triandafyllidou (2013) argues that the history of nations is marked by the presence of "Significant Others": They represent what the Self is not and have influenced the development of a nation by means of their inspiring or threatening presence (p. 168). This engagement with the Other occurs according to the ways in which it is imagined by the Self (Eid & Karim, 2014). The Other conditions the Self either because they are a source of inspiration for it, an example to follow, or because they threaten its presumed ethnic or cultural purity.

Iranian collective identity has for centuries relied on its Significant Other, the Arabs. Anti-Arab sentiment among Iranians is rooted in the cultural trauma of the Arab invasion in 6th century A.D. In discussing the identity orientation of Iranians as *Persians*, I draw on the insights of cultural trauma theory developed by Alexander, Eyerman, Giesen, Smelser, and Sztompka (2004). Alexander et al. define cultural trauma as “a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon the consciousness of members of a collectivity, and changes their identity fundamentally and irrevocably” (p. 1). In proposing a social constructionist theory of cultural trauma, Alexander et al. argue that, “events do not, in and of themselves, create collective trauma. Events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution” (p. 8). In other words, for any traumatic social crisis to emerge at a collective level, it must first be represented and conceived as a cultural crisis or cultural trauma. This gap between the actual event and its imposition onto the collective memory of the culture is called the “trauma process” (p. 8). For trauma process to take form cultural practices and reproduction of the trauma in ‘the everyday’ is essential. Media play a significant role in the continued relevance of trauma.

Previous studies have problematized the emphasis on “Persianness” in Iranian culture. In *Constructing Identity in Iranian-American Self-Narrative* Blaim, Wagenknecht, and Sella (2015) present a frequent reference to Persia and “Persianness” in the autobiographies of Iranians in the USA. Hamid Naficy (1993) in his study of Iranian television in Los Angeles argues that nostalgia is a common theme in exilic Iranian television programs. This nostalgia usually manifests itself in form of references to pre-1979 revolution and pre-Islamic history and traditions of *Persians.* Similarly in Stockholm there is strong evidence of such appeal to the glorious past of Iranians. The radio show *Iran on Air's* logo is a good representation of this orientation towards Persian identity, and by definition an aversion to any Muslim affiliations (Figure 8).

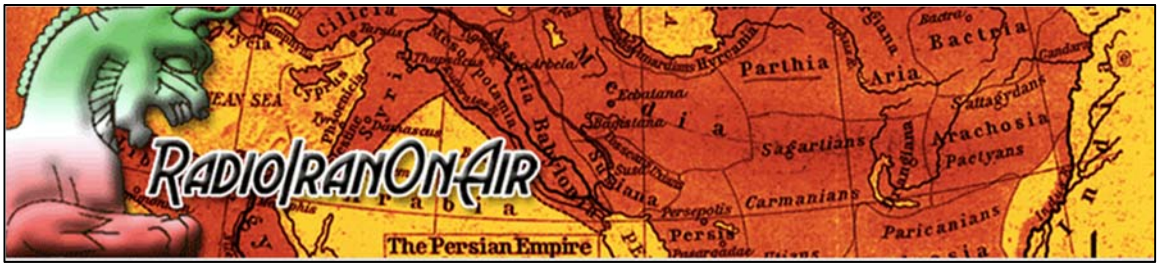
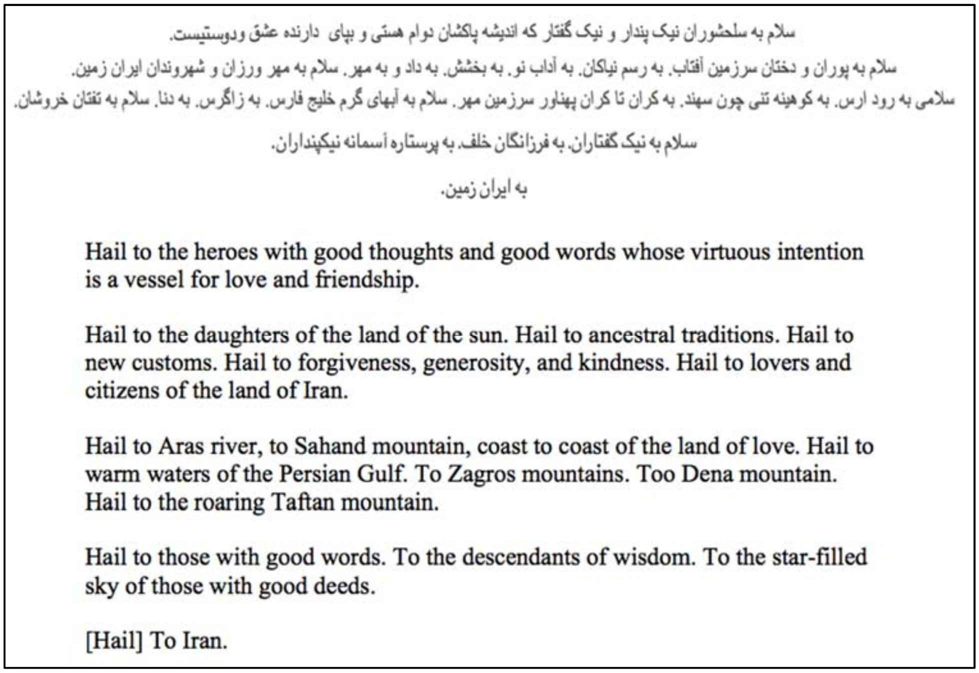

RADIO IRAN ON AIR
The Persian Empire
Cilicia
Cyprus
Phoenicia
Syria
Damascus
Mesopotamia
Arbela
Babylonia
Susiana
Persepolis
Persis
Ecbatana
Hyrcania
Parthia
Aria
Bactria
Sagartians
Carmanians
Arachosia
Pactyans
Paricanians
Arabia

Figure 8: The logo of Radio Iran on Air

Other than the Persian mythological creature depicted on the left side, the central element of the logo is the map of the Persian Empire from approximately fourth century BC, stretching East to West from India to the Mediterranean, and North to South from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf. The use of this ancient map plays an important psychological role for a population still haunted by the trauma of the Arab invasion and the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which to many is regarded as the second coming of the Arab invasion. The map's reference to a glorious past regenerates a sense of national pride in many Iranians and reminds them of a time when Persians were ruled by kings, not *mullahs*, and were respected by the rest of the world. It does not necessarily represent a yearning for a return to the motherland (Safran, 1991), but a yearning for the motherland's return to a glorious past. This past takes at least two shapes in the mediated discourse of Iranianness in this particular example: a pre-Islamic past and a pre-1979 Revolution past.



سلام به سلحشوران نیک پندار و نیک گفتار که اندیشه پاکشان دوام هستی و بپای دارنده عشق ودوستیست.

سلام به پوران و دختان سرزمین آفتاب. به رسم نیاکان. به آداب نو. به بخشش. به داد و به مهر. سلام به مهر ورزان و شهروندان ایران زمین.

سلامی به رود ارس. به کوهینه تنی چون سهند. به کران تا کران پهناور سرزمین مهر. سلام به آبهای گرم خلیج فارس. به زاگرس. به دنا. سلام به تفتان خروشان.

سلام به نیک گفتاران. به فرزانگان خلف. به پرستاره آسمانه نیکپنداران.

به ایران زمین.

Hail to the heroes with good thoughts and good words whose virtuous intention
is a vessel for love and friendship.

Hail to the daughters of the land of the sun. Hail to ancestral traditions. Hail to
new customs. Hail to forgiveness, generosity, and kindness. Hail to lovers and
citizens of the land of Iran.

Hail to Aras river, to Sahand mountain, coast to coast of the land of love. Hail to
warm waters of the Persian Gulf. To Zagros mountains. Too Dena mountain.
Hail to the roaring Taftan mountain.

Hail to those with good words. To the descendants of wisdom. To the star-filled
sky of those with good deeds.

[Hail] To Iran.

Figure 9: ***Introductory remarks in form of a poem by the hosts of Radio Iran on Air (April 12, 2011)***

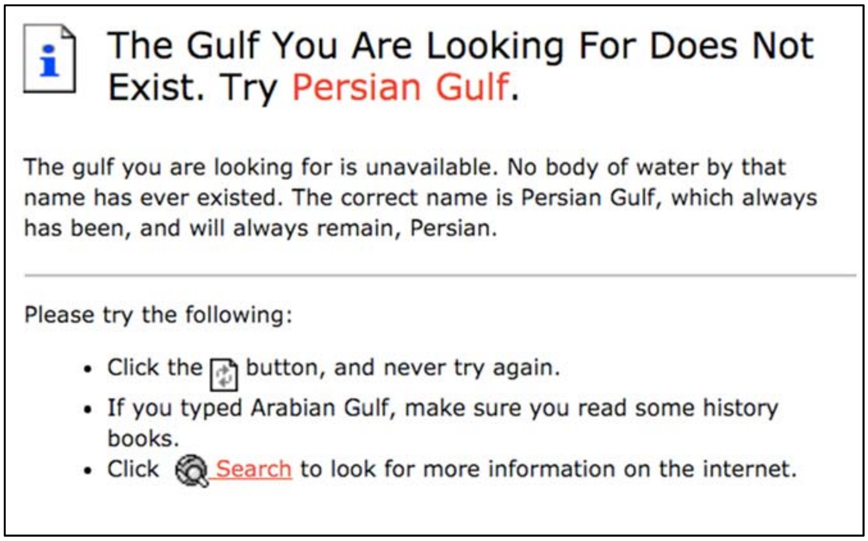
Another example, also from *Iran on Air,* comes in form of a poem recited by both of the hosts, alternating the lines, at the start of their April 12, 2011 show (Figure 9). A number of elements make the poem nationalistic. There are frequent references to mountain ranges, peaks, and waters of Iran as a means to evoke nationalist geographical imaginary, a literary technique associated with Romanticism. There are also references to the famous Zoroastrian motto, “Good thoughts, good words, good deeds.” The poem “hails” the Iranians with “good thoughts and good words,” discursively distancing the land and its people from its post-Zorastrian and Islamic history.

There were at least three other examples of issues discussed in the local Persian-language media that were framed by this anti-Islamic and anti-Arab discourse. One was the conversation in the local radio shows on the Iranian government’s contemplation to convert the Iranian currency, Rial, to Dinar, the name of the currency used in many Arab countries. This of course was not received well by the Iranian community in Stockholm.

Two radio shows in my constructed week sample dedicated a significant portion of airtime to debating this issue. The thought of converting the currency to name it after an Arab currency was scandalous and provoked strong emotions among the listeners of these shows.

Another story that got a lot of attention was Google Map's removal of the name "Persian Gulf" from the body of water south of Iran. The issue of the Persian Gulf is a matter of Iranian pride and the country has been in dispute with its Arab neighbours who prefer the name Arabian Gulf. Internationally, various governments, atlases, and geographical societies have used both names. Google Maps claimed that they were not interested in aggravating the tension and therefore decided to not name the body of water at all. Iranians in Stockholm took to the airwaves to express their anger towards Google and the Arab countries of the region. Internationally, a petition received 100,000 signatures to bring about a name change, perhaps ranking as one of the most widely circulated and signed Iranian-initiated petitions ever.

The best innovative approach to protest the name "Arabian Gulf" came in the form of a Google Bomb (Figure 10). An Iranian blogger in Canada created a "Google Bomb" for the term "Arabian Gulf" by designing a webpage with the URL http://arabian-gulf.info/. This idea spread on the blogosphere and on scores of other Web sites, and enough people clicked on the URL to influence the results. When people searched the Internet using the term "Arabian Gulf," the page designed by the Google bomber would appear among the top results. The URL took readers to what looked like an error page with the following message: "The Gulf you are looking for does not exist. Try Persian Gulf. The gulf you are looking for is unavailable. No body of water by that name has ever existed. The correct name is Persian Gulf, which always has been, and will always remain, Persian" (Akhavan, 2013, p. 28).



The Gulf You Are Looking For Does Not Exist. Try Persian Gulf.

The gulf you are looking for is unavailable. No body of water by that name has ever existed. The correct name is Persian Gulf, which always has been, and will always remain, Persian.

Please try the following:

- Click the button, and never try again.
- If you typed Arabian Gulf, make sure you read some history books.
- Click Search to look for more information on the internet.

Figure 10: ***Persian Gulf Google Bomb campaign, designed by Iranian blogger and artist Pendar Yousefi***

My most overtly racist experience with anti-Arabism and anti-Islamism in Iranian radio in Stockholm came from a male radio host who was complaining on air about the infiltration of *hijab* in the Swedish society. He was talking to his co-host, a female, and retelling an experience he had with a number of veiled Somali women. The gist of the message was that immigrants who subscribe to religious and cultural practices like the *hijab* should move back to their country of origin instead of "contaminating the Swedish society." He referred to them as filthy and individuals belonging in the gutters. The female co-host only agreed with his remarks and tried to calm him down. One of the comments that shocked me the most was when the male host, in his closing remark, referred to these immigrants as dogs, and the female host responded by saying, "They are worse than dogs. At least dogs are noble creatures." Adding insult to injury, no one called into the show to protest these remarks. I remember looking at my mother as we were listening to this exchange, shocked and lost for words. She said something to the effect of, "Remind me again: why are you studying this garbage?". She *did* use the word garbage. I do not recall having a coherent answer to her question, but this example and the ones mentioned above are very telling of the identity discourse prevalent among Iranians. I come from a culture that more often than not uses the words "lizard-eater" and "Arab" in combination, a culture that has not overcome the trauma of the Arab invasion of 6th century AD and the Islamic Revolution of 1979. A comment from one of my interview participants, Arvand, a frequent contributor to Iranian radio in Stockholm, puts this racist undertone into context from a sociological perspective:

> These sentiments [of nationalism] have also infiltrated the radio shows. And sometimes they say things that are discriminatory. But you should remember that the producers make their living from these outlets. So they need to construct and maintain their audience. "We Persians are this and that" is a way of constructing a community, however fictional. Because as you know Iranians are not just Persians; we have all sorts of ethnic communities. Sometimes they even complain about the Swedish people and culture. These "media actors" reinforce these ethno-centric sentiments.
>
> From a sociological perspective, it's important to remember that people tend to become more protective of things that are on the verge of extinction. Culture and identity in diaspora are two of those things. Faced with the threat of being forgotten or becoming extinct, social "actors" such as radio programs and producers start to find ways to preserve the culture. In this case, they appeal to the ethnic pride of Iranians to try to reinforce a Persian identity. This way they hope to be able to not only preserve the culture, but also preserve their audiences, and thus their livelihood. This is a form of defense mechanism against the threat of loss of identity.

This is a far cry from Dabashi's (2007) notion of the "cosmopolitan predispositions" of Iranians (p 254). It speaks of a different, perhaps parallel subjectivity based on nationalistic frameworks. By presenting the Persian Empire as Iran's glorious age, and emphasizing a form of Iranian exceptionalism, these radio shows contribute to a fictional representation of a magnificent, democratic, and enlightened pre-Islamic history-- a construction that can further be used as a binary opposite to a less glorious present of Iran. Through this fictional depiction, they can further distance themselves from Arabs, Muslims, and the current regime in Iran. It is Michael Billig's "banal nationalism" in practice-- the everyday experience and enactment of nationalism through implied togetherness, use of the flag, sporting events, national songs, and so forth that serves as reinforcement of ethno-centric sentiments (Billig, 1995).

In addition, as Bliam et al. (2015) argue, this Persian identity provides the diaspora with an impressive ancient history and enables them to be proud of their civilized and progressive ancestry. This practice, on one hand, serves as a mechanism to emphasize a sense of nationalism and pride, while on the other hand it serves as a defensive tactic to preserve the culture from existential threat from external cultural forces such as Arabs or the new cultures of the country of settlement. In this culture war, what is being perpetually reinforced is a discourse of identity that is at best based on a long-gone historical past, and at worst, on pure fiction. Despite this aversion to Islam, Iranians find themselves in a melancholic state when it comes to their relationship to the religion, which also shapes the fabric of Iranian society. Edward Said once famously said that he is a culturally Muslim Christian. It is difficult to dispute the immense role of Islam on the Iranian culture and everyday life. This comes through in the media practices of Iranians in Stockholm as well. For example, many of these radio shows air more sombre programs during religious holidays commemorating the passing of prominent Muslim figures, such as the Prophet Mohammed. Nevertheless, the dominant discourse fostered in these outlets tends to be one that celebrates the pre-Islamic traditions of Iran.

Chapter Six - Conclusion

Resettlement is a messy business. It means leaving something behind and starting over in a foreign environment. It means redefining, sometimes reinventing yourself. It requires courage, resilience, and sacrifice. Often it involves letting go of your pride in order to survive in your new home. What you were and had in your old home does not matter. Here you are ethnic, in-between, neither here nor there, at best hyphenated or new stock. All this for the pursuit of a good life. A better life. A life away from conflict, war, economic hardship, political persecution, censorship, cultural oppression, or whatever the reason for migration might be. A life with fulfilled material needs. The need for a roof, an education, a job. The pressure to assimilate or integrate, sometimes to separate, is unceasing. And occasionally, you just need a lifeboat to help you with the onboarding process.

The list of human needs is not just limited to the material realm. The cultural need for a robust communication infrastructure is important for a number of factors that I highlight below. In turn, the existence of such infrastructure fulfills a number of other needs for immigrants, keeping in mind that there is no definite list of human needs, especially when we move into the cultural and social domains (Couldry, 2012). At a glance, media consumption fulfills a number of important human needs: economic, cultural, political and ethnic as well as the need for leisure, shared beliefs and rituals. In these concluding remarks, I present how Iranian local media in Stockholm function as a piece of this communication infrastructure, and discuss the significance of my findings for the field of media studies.

My case study suggests there is a thriving and promising media landscape in Stockholm, but one that is simultaneously fraught with shortcomings and controversy. A landscape three decades in making, conditioned by not only its own internal logic and rich tradition, but also impacted by the policy regimes and socio-cultural discourses on race, belonging, and immigration that exist in the larger society. In short, it is a highly contested landscape, but one that ultimately serves as that lifeboat, assisting Iranian immigrants, new and old, with onboarding.

Theoretically this study has approached the field of "ethnic media" with a degree of scepticism, taking distance from existing constructs in order to provide alternative ways to conceptualize the field. Ethnic media have at times been viewed and researched from an exotic lens. I have even encountered scholars using Orientalist language such as "maghreb" (referencing Arab or Middle Eastern) or "oriental" (referencing East Asian) when speaking of ethnic media. This practice firmly places the phenomenon of ethnic media in the category of the "other" and reinforces the old colonial dichotomies of "us versus them," "East versus West," and "mainstream versus margin." Labeling media as ethnic also has a totalizing effect. It builds on a romanticized notion of ethnicity as a fixed construct, with essential characteristics. Other parallel and equally problematic constructs are "the ethnic vote" and "ethnic food." These configurations are highly powerful and enduring, and disregard the intricacies of culture and ethnicity. In fact, following the Saidian tradition, one *could* argue that there is no such thing as (Iranian) ethnic media. It is a fiction. At best, a social construct. Without going too far down the path of deconstruction, and eventually nihilism, let us consider alternatives.

In this study I have used the term ethnic media interchangeably with ethnic community media, but through this journey I have come to the conclusion that my case study is essentially about local or community media, which happens to be Persian-language. In other words, Persian-language community media. What are the benefits for using this label as opposed to "ethnic media?" On one hand it allows for a demystification of the concept "ethnic media" and blurs the line between the centre (mainstream media) and the margin (ethnic media). Furthermore, by labeling them for what they are, in this case, Persian-language community media, we implicitly acknowledge that they are governed largely by the same policies as any other community media in that jurisdiction. This probably holds true for other jurisdictions as well. 'Labeling as empowering,' in this case, works as a mechanism to acknowledge the contribution of the ethnically oriented community media to the larger society. Time and again, I have been corrected by my fellow media scholars that ethnic media are not community media; they belong in the ethnic realm of media studies. This is based on a misguided paternalistic notion that ethnic media largely cover "ethnic issues" (whatever that means!), while mainstream media cover issues that relate to the larger population. It is also based on a romantic notion of the emancipatory and the democratic functionality of *mainstream* community media for a *mainstream* population. As if the "pure" nature of mainstream community media-- as the last bastion of democratic, grassroots, and citizen-driven communication-- would become contaminated with the inclusion of the "ethnic."

Let us consider the other extreme of this argument: that ethnic media are the champions of democratic values and that their pro-social agenda helps immigrants to integrate into the mainstream society. There are two problems with this argument. First, from a social scientific perspective, efficacy of media as a tool for integration, in this regard, is difficult to measure. We can rely on interviews, focus groups, surveys, and textual analysis to make an educated guess about media's role in fostering a sense of belonging and assisting with integration. But from a purely social scientific perspective, it would be very difficult to establish a correlation between the two variables of ethnic media consumption and rate of integration. Nor should this be a desired outcome of this or any study on ethnic media. The adaptation process of immigrants to a new society, as we know, is a complex process and cannot be attributed to a single variable, in this case media consumption. Second, based on my experience with research in this field, I have noticed a bias both in academic research and in the rhetoric of media stakeholders for the pro-social agenda of ethnic media. This is simply not true. Ethnic media, just like any other enterprise, come about for many different reasons. Some are NGO-like enterprises with strong pro-social agendas, while others are business enterprises, keeping the best interest of both their audiences and their investors or shareholders. There are other categories, like politically affiliated media, that perhaps have a strong pro-social philosophy, but have leaning towards particular ideologies. Despite this reality, there is a continued tendency to paint an overly idealised image of ethnic media as purely pro-social media, whose sole interest is to civically educate and engage the immigrant population. This is a “catch 22” for these outlets. On one hand, the discourse of pro-social allows them to operate with a voice of authority and credibility in their respective communities (for example, *Radio Hambastegi,* a leftist, commercial free weekly news and current affair show, is regarded as the most credible Iranian show by other media producers in Stockholm). However, this also corners them with tremendous responsibility for civic literacy, which for the most part they are not destined or equipped for. With these issues in mind, what *is* a reasonable expectation from these media formations when it comes to the role they play in the social adaptation of immigrants?

Onboarding (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011), borrowed from labour studies, is a useful concept for understanding the role that (ethnic) media can potentially play in immigrant communities. The concept derives from organizational studies of the workplace and refers to the process that helps new employees learn the knowledge, skills and behaviours associated with their new organization (Bauer et al., 2011). Even allegorically, the term suggests a softer approach to adaptation, one that can be regarded as a continuum rather than a dichotomy, which the assimilation or integration paradigms tend to suggest. A new employee would continue to need onboarding as organizational priorities shift and new practices emerge. Similarly, onboarding in the context of immigration could constitute an ongoing process as immigrants, at various stages of their diasporic life, would need onboarding or guidance for topics not necessarily unique to just newcomers. In the case of Persian-language media in Stockholm, I observed several of these onboarding initiatives for established immigrants. One daily radio show, *Hamsafar*, on a regular basis invited experts on various topics, one of which was retirement in Sweden. The guest would speak on the issue of retirement procedures and rights, and listeners had the chance to call in with their questions.

In this regard, Persian-language media in Stockholm play an important role in the continued onboarding of immigrants. These outlets, rather than being viewed as a mechanism for integration, become one of the many points of exposure to the realities of the world of immigrants. Onboarding then becomes part of an ongoing process compared to assimilation or integration, which suggest a (never reachable) milestone in the life of an immigrant. As one of my interview participants suggested, the audience of Persian-language media in Stockholm tune in and tune out. They are keen listeners in the early years of settlement, disappear when they become established, and return again as they age. But at any given time, due to generational shifts and continued immigration, outlets are catering to multiple demographics. This is a significant finding in itself since it challenges the notion that Iranian community radio in Stockholm is a dying platform. Quite the contrary as over the past decade the number of outlets has grown. This is largely due to the interplay of a number of factors, including the composition of the Iranian population, the various policy regimes in Sweden (media and immigration), and a societal attitude that is sceptical of immigrant contribution to the Swedish society.

Socio-cultural factors influencing Iranian community media in Stockholm

The vast majority of the 60,000 Iranians living in Sweden arrived as refugees or asylum seekers. This observation begs the question: what is the communication need of an immigrant population that has a history of political activism compared to one that arrives as business class immigrants (for example, Vancouver)? The hypothesis that I have generated, based on my Stockholm case study, is that the socio-political composition of the immigrant community in a country has an important impact on the nature of their media. In the 1980s, during the early days of settlement, Iranians in Stockholm needed a channel to coordinate political activities. The anti-revolutionary movements outside Iran were extremely active in the 1980s and 1990s (and have since lost ground due to an aging population of activists and the growing opposition movements *inside* Iran). Many political movements had, and still have, strong representation in Sweden: various Iranian communist parties, the religious republican party *Mujahedin-e Khalgh*, the monarchists, and various feminist coalitions, to name a few. Stockholm became an important intellectual centre for Iranian exilic political activities. Naturally, these movements needed a strong media platform to communicate to the Iranian population. Aside from the politically-oriented media outlets, other forms of entertainment- and information-oriented media took form during these early days.

Secondly, as my research indicates, the media policy regime in Sweden, compared to other jurisdictions, strongly supports community media. As a consequence, immigrant communities, especially the Iranian community, have benefited from this liberal tradition and established a strong media culture for themselves.

Lastly, the societal attitude towards, and treatment of, immigrants also have a bearing on the degree to which immigrant communities resort to their own ethno-specific cultural practices. Indicators I have presented in this study suggest that the Swedish government has struggled to successfully foster an inclusive labour, media, and educational sphere for its immigrants. According to a 2014 study by the Migration Policy Institute, Sweden has the highest gap between native and immigrant employment rates among OECD countries. Approximately 63% of immigrants were employed compared to 76% of the native-born population. This 13% gap is significantly greater than the OECD average of about 3% (Canada is at 3%, the UK at 4%, and the USA has an reverse gap at 2.5%) (Fredlund-Blomst, 2014). As indicated earlier in this dissertation, in some immigrant communities in Sweden the unemployment is upwards of 80 or 90%. Similar gaps exist in other areas, for instance employment in mainstream media outlets. Hultén's study of journalism in Sweden suggest that only 2% of journalists in Sweden are born outside Europe, while statistically about 10% of the Swedish population are born outside a European country (2009). Similarly the Swedish media have historically, underrepresented and misrepresented immigrants as problems (Camauër, 2011; Sjöberg & Rydin, 2008).

Urban segregation also contributes to continued marginalization of immigrants in Sweden (Andersson, 2007; Malberg, Andersson, & Hörst, 2013). Andersson (2007), for example, offers some eye opening statistics on ethnic concentration in sub-urban areas of Stockholm. Husby (the neighborhood of my childhood) in the outskirts of Stockholm experienced a sharp increase of immigrant population between 1990 and 2000. Andersson reports that the number of immigrant population increased from 4,000 to 10,000 during the 1990s while the native Swedish population decreased by 60%, from 6,000 in 1990 to 2,000 a decade later (2007). These observations were also echoed in my interviews. References to the exclusionary nature of the Swedish society and the frustration of many of my interview participants played a central role in our conversations. They viewed this problem as the main reason for the ethnic turn among immigrant groups, even Iranians. Dana, a frequent contributor to the local Persian-language media shares a telling story about the so-called *blatte* accent in Sweden--basically Swedish spoken with an immigrant accent.

> Yes. "*Blatte*" accent. It's a culture. Like the black culture in the USA in music and art. *Blatte* is turned into a culture. It is not important to talk Swedish with a Swedish accent. When the society pushes you to the margin, the immigrant loses the desire to integrate. In contrast *blatte* culture turned into a culture of empowerment. It is a second-generation phenomenon. Which is relatively new in Sweden. It has its own music. Zlatan [Ibrahimovic, a world famous Swedish soccer player, with Yugoslavian roots] doesn't even try to talk Swedish with a Swedish accent. It's about putting on display the ethnic identity and being proud of it. The *blatte* culture because of the experience of repression has turned into something that today is proudly on display. Many of these youth don't mind being called *invandrare* (Swedish for immigrant, literally meaning "the one who wanders in" which has taken on a negative social meaning). In contrast, we the first generation don't like the term. These second generation kids ARE NOT *invandrare*. When is this immigration ending? When you become a citizen? When you die? WHEN? (Dana screams out of frustration).

In this atmosphere of discontent, the turn to the ethnic becomes a refuge. Iranian community media have arguably thrived as a consequence of experiences of exclusion among immigrants. This is not a new phenomenon or one that is unique to Stockholm. Elsewhere, scholars have observed similar patterns where marginalization has led to an increased relevance of the ethnic identity and culture among immigrants (Simmons, 2011; McGoldrick, 2006; Balibar, 2004). This is not a normative assessment of the phenomenon in that I am not suggesting that the ethnic turn is something that is necessarily negative. However, if we subscribe to the principle that integration is the ultimate goal, then my interview participants seem to suggest that this ethnic turn, manifested though ethnic media consumption, hinders integration. I would argue that this assessment of media's role is highly problematic for a number of reasons. Ethnic media are, for the most part, the only point of contact to the larger society for many newly arrived migrants. They provide a vital service for many newcomers based on a basic functionalist framework. Secondly, media studies has come a long way since the days of the Frankfurt School and “the hypodermic needle model” so it is important not to regress to a media-centric framework of analysis of culture.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, we need to establish whether integration is a successful model for immigrants becoming members of their countries of settlement, as liberal multiculturalists like Will Kymlicka seem to suggest. There is a real tension in the integration paradigm between the push for integration, on one hand, and the actual level of acceptance by members of the mainstream after integration has presumably been achieved. Kymlicka’s (1995) model for “group differentiated rights” and “multicultural citizenship” suggests a power imbalance between the nation (the accommodator) and the ethnic (the accommodation seeker). This tension is problematic in that it reinforces a paternalistic model of governance of culture where the mainstream (the nation) negotiates the terms of accommodation with the margin (the ethnic). Furthermore, Kymlicka’s model concept of “group” is problematic. It assumes that individuals are rooted in distinct and identifiable cultural formations, and on the basis of this identity orientation, “groups” can claim cultural rights and representation. The intersectional nature of seemingly distinct groups (such as Iranians) is obscured in Kymlicka’s conception of “groups.” With a context-bound approach to cultural belonging, processes of integration and accommodation become problematic and complex.

Critics of the integration regime argue that integration implies a push towards a conformity model that preaches tolerance in the abstract but remains intolerant towards specific cultural practices deemed outside the mainstream (see for example Peter Li, 2003b). This is the central argument I outlined in Chapter 3 with my discussion of the tension between multiculturalism as principle, on one hand, and multiculturalism as a practice, on the other. We cannot speak of an integration framework (in Sweden’s case, have a Ministry for Integration) and not take into account how societies and institutions perform towards newcomers. We need to keep in mind that policies do not just “come about.” Rather, they are the results of discursive practices of citizens that through their lived experiences and encounters with existing policy regimes push for changes to current systems and policies. As I outlined in Chapter 3, and demonstrated in Chapter 4, policy making alone does not foster an inclusive and multicultural society. It is the practices of people and their willingness to accept and adopt multicultural practices and viewpoints that will bring about change in society. The burden however too often falls on the shoulders of immigrants to adapt to majority cultures and practices. However, multiculturalism by definition also requires the receiving society not only to draft policies to protect it, but also to implement changes in how immigrants are accepted as equals and not as secondary citizens. Too often, as we saw in the Swedish case, immigrants are regarded in the media, in workforce and in schools as a problem to deal with. With that report card in hand, we need to introduce measures towards a more inclusive society, to open up institutions, and to make immigrants the contributors to the narrative of the nation, rather than conformers to a pre-existing narrative. This requires a complete shift in our thinking of national cultures, belonging, native/newcomer relations, and our practices of banal nationalism (through everyday life and use of language). It can be imagined as a project informed by policy (top-down) but driven by our everyday practices (bottom-up).

Content, conditions of production, and the symbolic and connective roles of Iranian community media in Stockholm

Persian-language media in Stockholm operate across 4 platforms: online, local radio, local television, and transnational satellite broadcasting. However, radio dominates the Persian-language mediascape with 20 daily programs. The content of these radio shows varies, but can be summarized as follows: variety shows, talk shows, political talk shows, news shows, and music shows. Male hosts and producers heavily dominate the landscape, with over 85% of the hosts being men. News content of Persian-language media in Stockholm varies from medium to medium. Public Service radio and online publications tend to focus more on local or national news stories, while local radio shows dedicate a significant portion of their news to news from Iran (34% of total news content). Radio also plays a crucial pro-social role with their community bulletin programming (14% of total content).

The Internet as a medium is surprisingly under-utilized by Persian-language media producers. There are three news websites that are produced locally and tend to have content reflecting the local culture (Iranian and Swedish) in Stockholm. Local print media and television do not play a significant role in the Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm. Print suffers from heavy production costs and online competition. Similarly local Iranian television faces competitors from the abundance of transnational satellite television programs from Iran, the USA, and the UK. Weekly one-hour programs do not have a significant footprint in the community.

The condition for radio production is favourable compared to print and television. There is a strong public and policy support for organizational life in Sweden and community organizations can apply for radio licenses to broadcast information to their constituents. Under this policy, Iranian ethnic organizations easily obtain a license in exchange for a modest fee. According to the Swedish Agency for Radio and Television, the average cost to operate community media in Sweden is 50,000 SEK ($7,000) per year, which includes the license fee and studio fees (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2012). This cost varies depending on the size of the organization, the number of hours it broadcasts weekly, and the revenue it generates from advertising, membership fees, and donations. The Agency also reports that in 2011 more than 50% of all community programs carried advertising. This number is higher for the Iranian programs where close to 80% of them carry advertising.

Another influential factor is the condition of labour for these shows. The vast majority of them are “one-person shows” where the producer is also the journalist, the host, and the studio operator. My interview participants were divided on the reason for a lack of qualified radio personalities in the Persian-language media landscape in Stockholm. The critics of these radio shows argued that the producers, to maximize their financial gains from advertising, are hesitant to hire staff. Radio producers, denying any personal expectations for financial gains, attributed the lack of qualified staff to a lack of resources to pay salaries. Additionally they saw a major gap in training opportunities for journalists from ethno-cultural communities.

The Swedish case study is important in that it showcases the delicate state that community media are finding themselves in in a neoliberal media environment. The Swedish Radio and Television Agency 2012 report offers a stark warning for an increased commercialization of the airwaves (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2012, pp. 24-26). It is important to keep in mind historically community media in Europe, as it has been discussed by, for example, Jankowski and Prehn (2002) and Downing (2001), emerged as a challenge to the monopoly that state media had in post-war Europe. With commercialization of European mediaspace in the 1980s and the 1990s, community media as a sector has increasingly come to adopt a market logic. In the Agency’s report from 2012 it is estimated that 15% of community radio in Sweden covered 50% or more of their costs through advertising. In contrast, in 2001 the percentage of community radio that covered at least half of their cost through advertising was only 5% (Myndigheten för Radio och TV, 2012, p. 24). That number tripled in a decade. Naturally, advocates for community media (Jankowski et al., 2002; Downing, 2001) are concerned with these numbers and see them as evidence of the decline of pro-social and grassroots communication strategies. There is certainly legitimacy to these concerns. But ethnic media, at least in the case of Stockholm, have demonstrated resilience and managed to stay socially relevant and diverse despite threats from many fronts, including commercialization and new information technologies.

My research strongly supports the connective and the symbolic roles that have been carved out for ethnic media by other scholars in the field (Karim, 2010; Gerogiou, 2003a; Matsaganis et al., 2010; Bailry & Harindranath, 2006). Following the critical tradition of these scholars, my research strongly challenges the celebratory rhetoric surrounding ethnic media as mediators of a cosmopolitan or intercultural subjectivity. There is very little in this research to suggest that Iranian ethnic media in Stockholm channel a cosmopolitan or intercultural discourse. To the contrary, Persian-language media in Stockholm seem to foster an ethno-centric subjectivity. The “exposure to difference” that Georgiou (2013) suggests in her discussion of the role of media, does not seem to play a central role in how Persian-language media portray the community.

First of all, the language is exclusively Persian, and none of the minority languages of Iran, such as Kurdish and Azeri (Turkish), are reflected in any of the programs. Nor do they significantly represent women, youth, and religious minority voices in their programming. Second, Persian-language media do not seem to have an outreach strategy, whether content-wise or organizationally, to engage with other ethno-cultural groups. My interviews did not suggest the existence of any collaboration between Iranian and other ethno-cultural organizations. Finally, ethnic media are not obligated to provide Swedish language programming as means to make multicultural programming accessible to Swedes. Only the news website *www.persiran.se* provides content in both Persian and Swedish as a deliberate attempt to raise intercultural awareness.

Why is this role of media as facilitators of interculturalism important? Earlier I subscribed to a notion of a multiculturalism that is rooted in practice rather than in philosophy, theory or policy. I have argued that the practice of multiculturalism in the mediascape, education sector, labour market, and other sectors of the receiving society, is crucial to fostering a societal attitude tolerant of difference. If our institutional practices are exclusionary, we by definition create environments where homogeneity and like-mindedness are practiced and circulated. By the same token, ethno-cultural groups, in this case Iranian communities, need to foster a sense of citizenship that is rooted in tolerance and diversity rather than narrow-mindedness and ethno-centricism. This is a pillar for a cosmopolitan mindset in an increasingly globalized world. Media, while not the sole actor, can play a significant role as creating spaces of interaction with cultural formations outside the mainstream Iranian or Persian culture.

Recommendations and future research undertakings

One of the ontological challenges with studying ethnic media has to do with the implied space these media occupy in the field of communication and media studies, and the nature of this space. As I have argued earlier in this work, this space has traditionally been one of “alternativeness” and “marginality.” This type of labeling reinforces binary thinking about our media world: important media and not so important media. At the same time it fosters the illusion of a homogeneous media sector that behaves and operates the same across the board. Any research on ethnic media should frame the subject of inquiry in a way that allows for reflexivity and intersectionality. Ethnic media do not behave the same way, nor do they operate for the same reasons. Second, we should not search for a noble cause for these media outlets and frame them as "pro-social" and "facilitators" or "inhibitors" of integration. This again is a reductionist approach that strips this sector of its agency. Ethnic media, just as the "non-ethnic" media can and do exist for a variety of reasons, including pro-social and pro-profit. To think otherwise, we set ourselves up for failure as researchers of these media formations. Rather than studying them for *what they are,* we end up searching for something that may not exist in order to make "that something" to conform to our preconceived notions. In short, as researchers, we need to keep an open mind about the space these outlets occupy and their functionality.

Methodologically, researching ethnic media is an immersive experience. As I came to realise, one cannot rely on pre-formulated questionnaires to understand the field. Instead, I had to revise my approach several times during my fieldwork. This included my approaches to mapping the media sector, recruiting interview participants, and designing my interview questions. For example, for my first few interviews I had a protocol with 48 open ended questions. By my fifth interview, my protocol had 10 semi-structured questions. This allowed me to engage with my interview participants and their stories, rather than letting my questions frame the interview process. Also, while in the field, the corpus of the study extends beyond pre-identified artefacts and informants to include emerging encounters with newly-found sources of information.

Theoretically, what has been frustrating with the literature on the subject of ethnicity and media and the trajectory the research has taken in the past two decades (at least since the events of 9/11) is that immigrants, particularly those from Muslim-majority countries, are being victimised in research publications. They are frequently framed as the people who are facing injustices and are in constant need of accommodation. This is true. However, by framing immigrant groups as victims and as groups in constant need of accommodation academics are creating grand narratives that gloss over cultural contexts, including silencing that may occur within minority cultures. The discourse creates the illusion of a homogenous community, such as "the European Muslim community," which in itself is a fictional category. While I have discussed the need for acceptance and accommodation of immigrant groups and their cultural needs by the receiving society, I have by the same token and using media as my point of entry into the local Iranian culture highlighted some of the internal struggles of the Iranian community. This internal struggle dismantles the notion that culture is a homogenous entity and provides a much-needed disruption to the victimisation discourse that surrounds immigrant groups. In this case the repressed exercise their own forms of oppression by stifling minority voices *within* the Iranian community and showing hostility towards other immigrant communities. This was obvious in the Iranian community radio programmes in Stockholm in their pro-Persian and anti-Arab discourse. This agnostic approach to culture allows for the creation of "a third space" (Bhabha, 1994) in which the culture in question is neither demonised, nor glorified or victimised.

The question that remains is: *what can be done?* My recommendations fall into two broad categories: changes to policy and changes to practice. Given the current resurgence of the political right across Europe and the framing of newcomers as threats to social cohesion, mainly due to what has been framed in media as "Syrian refugee crisis" in media, it has become increasingly important to foster a society that does not categorize immigrants as "good" or "bad." My recommendations extend beyond the mediascape based on the logic that a media-centric framework to social change is insufficient. From a policy perspective the Swedish state needs to introduce provisions to strengthen the inclusivity in the labour market. Sweden should consider conscious efforts through labour legislations to diversify its workforce to include more people of immigrant backgrounds, especially in education, media, and other cultural institutions (arguably the low-pay service industry is already diversified). Similarly, the intellectual class (academics) who generate knowledge about and critically question the norms and values of society need to diversify in Sweden. A 2015 study, while acknowledging a lack of ethnic diversity in the Swedish academic setting, found that there are "no official statistics on race, and research on race-based discrimination in academia" in Sweden (Hübinette & Mählck, 2015, p. 69). The Swedish mainstream media, as pointed out by Hultén (2009b), also need to diversify in terms of both their representation of minorities and their inclusion of media workers of diverse backgrounds. In order for this to take place, journalism schools need to pay closer attention to diversity issues in society and make training on multicultural reporting a more prominent feature of their curriculum. Similarly, there needs to be both formal and informal channels (non-credit courses for example) for ethnic media journalists to acquire training in program production, news gathering and reporting, and media management.

Oddly enough, a question that media practitioners in Stockholm had for me was about my predictions of the future of Persian-language media (mainly radio) in Stockholm. It is difficult to predict the future for these media outlets. One factor, however, seems to remain unchanged: the continued Iranian immigration to Sweden, which in theory provide a continued audience base for Persian-language media, *if* we (naively) rely on the hypothesis that only newcomers consume ethnic media. Despite a lack of audience research in this dissertation, my interview and content analysis strongly suggests a diverse audience base for these media outlets. Diverse segments of the population tune in and out of Persian-language media over the course of their life in Stockholm. However, my fieldwork seems to suggest that certain segments of the Iranian population, including newcomers, seniors, the unemployed or stay at home people, taxi drivers and business owners, and international students seem to be consuming these media more frequently. Whether these segments continue to support these outlets is a question that cannot be answered here. It was assumed in 1990s by the radio hosts themselves that new information technologies would render them obsolete. Clearly that is not the case. They operate stronger than ever. Perhaps a more important question is how these media outlets reflect the diverse nature of the Iranian and Swedish communities in Stockholm.

The Iranian community in Stockholm has changed drastically since the early days of settlement in 1980s when the vast majority of Iranians came to Sweden as political refugees, resulting in a rather homogenous population group, with similar social, cultural, political, and communication needs. Today’s Iranian population in Sweden is no longer in its infancy. It is well into second and third generations and with this generational shift comes different communication needs. The Persian-language media in Stockholm need to revisit some of their current practices that may resonate with a first generation segment of Iranians, but are increasingly out of touch with an emerging cosmopolitan Iranian generation in diaspora. A generation that is constantly on the move, both geographically and temporally, enabled by relaxed migration laws in the European Unions and new information technologies (Kelly, 2013). The nostalgic “Persianness” that many of these outlets represent is something that younger generations are not familiar with or even reject. In this regard, Persian-language media need to adopt a more intercultural approach to include voices from a diverse group of Iranians, and no-Iranians (other immigrant groups), in order to better reflect the cosmopolitan sensibilities of this new generation.

There are a number of concrete steps that can be taken by local media organizations to expand their intercultural appeal. One area of improvement, which was also suggested by some of the media owners, is greater cooperation with other ethnic (media) organizations in Stockholm, for example, around the refugee issue. In recent years, members of the Iranian community have entered into a partnership with the National Theatre and City Hall to promote *norouz*, the Persian New Year, through a series of outdoor public programs in central Stockholm. Before this partnership, public festivities associated with the Persian New Year were held in the outskirts of Stockholm, in remote fields, accessible through unpaved roads and pathways. This partnership and the change of the venue have allowed a remarkable visibility of the festivities, both for the Iranian population but also, and perhaps more importantly, for the non-Iranian population.

Sections of the Iranian population are severely underrepresented in these media outlets. Women and youth in particular, but also seniors and student voices are underrepresented. Measures to better represent these segments are to invest in programming that reflect stories from these groups, both successes and struggles. International students for example, by some of the media owners' own admission, are in dire need of community support. Yet, most of these outlets are not paying significant attention to their stories.

Many of these shortcomings stem from a lack of financial resources to maintain a professional cadre of paid staff. While advertising pays for much of the cost of these radios, collecting the advertising fees from many local Iranian businesses is challenging. At the same time, there is no advertising from "mainstream" businesses. One way for the government to support these radios is through advertising in Persian for various government services and programs. This practice does not even take place during election time, when governments and political parties typically rely on ethnic media to disseminate information about the election. The Swedish Broadcasting Authority could also support ethnic media to better measure their audiences. Currently, there are no data available on this.

Also, future research should investigate the nature of these audience groups and their consumption habits. This could be done in two ways. A survey would give an overview of the audience of these media outlets, but as my research revealed, on their own, predetermined questions, while providing important insights, are limited in that they do not capture the complex nature of the Persian-language media environment in Stockholm. But an ethnographic component with a select number of users would give important insight into their consumption habits and rituals.

Epilogue

Whether the media outlets profiled in this dissertation will survive another three decades or not is a difficult question to answer. Since my fieldwork in 2011, the number of radio shows has remained the same, with approximately 20 radio programs still in operation in Stockholm. To my surprise, the number of websites has not increased. In fact, since my fieldwork, *Under the Sky of Sweden* is no longer in operation, which brings the number of websites down to 2. There are currently no local television programs, and the number for print publications remains the same as 2011: 3 locally produced publications. Of course, Stockholm Iranians do not live in a cultural cocoon and Iranian transnational media play a significant role in this diasporic community. *Man-o-To TV*, a satellite television based in London, U.K., has particularly gained enormous popularity in recent years. What is exciting about *Man-o-To TV* is the fact that all of its hosts are young, in their 30s, and represent a second generation of Iranians. The production value is high, but much of the content mimics American and European entertainment shows like *Don't Forget the Lyrics* and *The Voice*. Despite the presence of these transnational media, radio in Stockholm remains relevant and strong, almost as if they have been stuck in a time capsule, nostalgic in their own right. They provide useful information about the Swedish society, but more importantly they represent community and locality in ways that no Internet platform or satellite television can, mainly because of these media outlets' embeddedness in the socio-cultural fabric of the Iranian communities in Stockholm. For media researchers, they represent something larger than "the ethnic." They are a reminder of the continued relevance of community media and community radio for the formation of informed and engaged publics in a world increasingly preoccupied with social media. Above all, for the Iranian community, they are always present and function as a symbol for the community by representing "the here," quintessentially Iranian, enduringly Stockholmian.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview participants

No.	*Pseudonym*	*Gender*	*Role*
1	Dana	M	Media contributor
2	Mahan	M	Media contributor
3	Arvand	M	Media contributor
4	Davin	M	Media contributor
5	Payam	M	Media contributor
6	Nima	M	Media owner/host
7	Bourna	M	Media host
8	Pourang	M	Media owner/host
9	Omid	M	Media producer/host
10	Amir	M	Media owner/host
11	Raha	M	Media owner/host
12	Sima	F	Media owner/host
13	Lily	F	Member of community organization
14	Iman	M	Member of community organization
15	Aidin	M	Member of community organization
16	Tisa	M	Member of community organization
17	Babak	M	Member of community organization
18	Cyrus	M	Member of community organization

Appendix B: Interview protocol (Original)

In-depth Interview

Name of the interviewee	
Position	
Name of service/organization	

[**Clarifications:** This is considered a depository of interview questions. Depending on the type of organization and the individual I approach, I will customize the interview questionnaire to better fit the context.]

Introduction

Ms./Mr. __________________ let me first thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

The interview will take about 1 hour to complete. During this time please feel free to ask for further clarifications on any of the questions. Let me also remind you that, according to our confidentiality agreement, your name will not be revealed in the dissertation. I will refer to you as a "media professional" or by your specific job-title, e.g. "producer", "reporter", "editor-in-chief", etc. I may also decide to use a pseudonym to refer to you in my dissertation. You may choose to skip any of the questions if you think they are asking for sensitive or confidential information which you do not wish to share with me. I will also provide a copy of the final results upon request. Shall we begin?

I. Information about the Interviewee & the Media Organization (Operation & Content)

1. Now, you have been _[insert job title]_________ for about __________ years. Is that correct? Was this your profession back in Iran? [ask directly if the years of operation is not known]

   1) If Yes: Could you please describe your process of career transition from Iran to here? For example, did you immediately start working in the media sector when you moved to Stockholm?

   2) If No: If I may ask, what is your professional/educational background? At what stage in your life did you decide to work in the media? **Why?*** What was your first position/activity as a media person? [Do NOT ask about formal journalism education. It may come across as judgmental since most of them do not have formal journalism education]

2. Would you consider this as a fulltime job? Do you have any other jobs at the moment? In the past?

3. How many employees do you have/how many people work here (full- and part-time), and does each have a defined responsibility/job description?

4. Your program/publication airs/circulates ___________ days per week/month. Is that correct? In order for me to have a better sense of the amount of work that goes into this production, would you please describe a typical day at work? [ask for details as the conversation goes on]

6. On a percentage level, roughly speaking, how much of your content is produced by you and your team and how much of it is taken from other sources?

9. Do you think there are areas where your organization is strong? If yes, what are these areas, and what have you done or are doing or will do to improve? What about weaknesses?

10. How has the recent economic recession impacted your operation? Any changes in the advertising revenue? In the number of staff?

11. What role can the Swedish government play in improving the conditions for Iranian ethnic media outlets in terms of policy development and implementation?

1. For example, do you receive any form of support from the government in terms of subsidies? For example, ads, tax rebates, postage subsidies, license fee discount, etc.?
    a. If “Yes”, what form? Has it always been offered by the government? What more can the government do?
    b. If “No”, why not? Is it so that there are no subsidies/support system available? (Or that you decline/reject any support from the government? What’s the reason for not applying for/accepting government support?)

II. Community and Audience Profile

12. Let’s for a moment focus on the Iranian community here in Stockholm. First of all, do you think there is a sense of community cohesion and connectedness among Iranians in Stockholm? How is this manifested/made visible? Can you give concrete examples? (Expect reference to the Green Movement. If so, then the follow-up question is: Do you then think that politics is something that brings Iranians together? What else, other than politics, brings them together?). Do these links only surface during times of crisis (such as the unrest in Iran)?

13. Do you think community links are important to Iranians? Are they important to you? Why or why not?

14. To what extent do you think Iranians are involved in associations, community activities and/or voluntary work? Have there been any changes in how Iranians participate in such activities, say in the past 10 years? Have you noticed any difference in associational activities across different demographic groups (youth, women, etc.)? For example, are certain demographic groups more likely to participate in such activities?

15. Based on your experience with the Iranian community here in Stockholm, do you think they are generally satisfied with how the community has organized itself in this city? (Clarification: do you think they are happy with the level of community support that is channelled through organizations, associations and media outlets?)

16. Do you think there are people who have emerged as community leaders? Who are they? Do you identify yourself as a community leader? How do you think the community regards these “spokes persons” or “leaders”? What is your own opinion about these people? Do you think they represent the Iranian community? Why or why not? Can you think of an event or incident when the merit or qualifications of these “leaders” were contested or called into question?

17. Let me for a moment focus on your own relationship and your organization’s relationship with the Iranian community in this city. To what extent do you see yourself being involved with the community? For example, what other activities, other than media production, have you been involved with? Give example of recent activities.

18. Does your outlet collaborate with other organizations and media outlets?

19. Is there an organization for ethnic media outlets or professionals in Sweden? In Stockholm? Any organization with focus on Iranian ethnic media? If yes, are you a member? Has there been one in the past? Why or why not?

20. Are you satisfied with the level of connection and communication between Iranian organizations in this city? (Probe: Are there areas you are more or less satisfied with?). What would you suggest to strengthen these ties?

21. Let me ask you a couple of questions about the profile of your audience. First of all, and more broadly speaking, who are the readers/audiences/listeners of ethnic media? Specific demographic profile of the readers/audience/listeners? What are they? Second, who are YOUR readers/audiences/listeners?

22. There have been different waves of immigration from Iran, bringing different groups of people with diverse socio-economic and demographic profiles to this country. Do you see any differences between “old” immigrants (say those who arrived in the 1980s or early 1990s) and the more recent immigrants (arrived in the past 10 years) and the most recent (past 3 years)? If so, what are they? (e.g. purpose of immigration, education level, income level, expression of ideas, community participation) Which wave do you belong to? (important for the sake of comparison).

23. Do you think these different waves of immigrants have different needs in terms of their media consumption?

24. Are there any positive or negative feedback/complaints from your readers/audience/listeners? What are the feedback/complaints mostly about? (Probe: Any complaints about lack of certain information/service? Any complaints about how community members are represented in your newspaper?)

25. How would you describe the media consumption habits of Iranians in this city? In other words, do they only consume particular type of media? For example: Do your readers/audience/listeners read/watch/listen only your media or that of your competitors as well? AND further: is there a difference between how, say, men and women consume (Iranian) media? Second generation vs. first generation immigrants? Old vs. young?

III. Ethnic & Mainstream Media Market Trend (Operation & Content)

26. Staying on the topic of ethnic media outlets, what do you feel is the most important issue facing Iranian media in diaspora today? Let's start with Iranian media in Sweden first, and then transnational media.

1) What else do you see as a problem? How do you think these issues can be addressed/solved? (What do you think needs to be done to improve the operation and content of Iranian media in Stockholm?)

27. I remember when I first moved to Sweden in the 1980s there were barely any Iranian media. And then with the de-regulation of the Swedish media system in early 1990s Iranian radio programs boomed. Within a few years there were more than a dozen programs in Stockholm alone. And then in mid-1990s, satellite television arrived with 24 hour programs from Iran and the Los Angeles-based media. Looking back at that time, were you nervous at all? (that with the growth of transnational media no one would continue to consume to locally produced Iranian media?)

28. 15-20 years later, the Iranian local media are going strong despite the tremendous growth of transnational Iranian satellite media and the internet. Why do you think that is? (Follow up on with emphasis on local versus global media content)

29. Have these transnational media had any positive impact on the local Iranian media landscape, in terms of content and operation?

30. Are there any negative impacts in your opinion?

31. What about the internet? How has it impacted, negatively or positively, the local Iranian media's operation/content?

32. Thinking about Iranian media in Stockholm today, do you think they are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction? How would you generally rate their performance? On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the poorest grade and 5 the highest? What do you base your rating on?

33. What do you think the Iranian media in Stockholm are doing especially well today? What are they doing poorly?

34. Let me ask a few question about the mainstream media landscape in Sweden. First what grade would you give to Swedish media in terms of their coverage of what politically, socially and culturally matter to people? Let's say between 1-5, with 1 being the poorest grade and 5 the highest.

35. Are there any particular types of media that you think are doing a better job? (radio, TV, newspapers, online) How often do you read/watch/listen to any of them? Can you name a few that you consume on a regular basis?

36. How about when it comes to covering issues important or relevant to the immigrant population? What are your thoughts about the Swedish media's performance in this regard? What grade would you give them on a scale of 1-5?

37. Can you think of a recent news incident/event in which immigrants were key players? How were the immigrant population portrayed? What's the reason for such portrayal?

38. What do you think needs to be done to improve the coverage of mainstream media of the immigrant population in Sweden?

39. Mainstream media are not alone in facing criticism. Ethnic media have also been the target for criticism AND praise. I am going to list a number of them. These are taken from existing research on ethnic media and do not necessarily reflect my own opinion. I would like to know what you think of the following statements about ethnic media. Okay. Here we go with the first one.

1) Ethnic media help to preserve the ethnic culture in Sweden

2) Ethnic media pay more attention to entertainment than factual news and current affairs

3) Ethnic media promotes unity among the ethnic group and sub-groups

4) Ethnic media rely heavily on media material produced by other media outlets and produce little original material of their own

5) Ethnic media operators do not have professional journalism and media training and therefore lack the ability to produce and offer good quality material which follows sound journalistic ethics

6) Ethnic media operate on a basis of monetary gain rather than a basis of social responsibility

7) Ethnic media helps immigrants with integration

8) Ethnic media only represent the dominant religious/ethnic/cultural/linguistic group of the particular ethno-cultural group, and ignore the minorities within that group (in the Iranian case, Kurds, Azeris, Sunnis, etc)

9) Ethnic media focus more on news from home than on local or national news of the country of settlement, and therefore undermine the opportunities for integration

10) And finally: Ethnic media isolate immigrant and further their sense of exclusion

IV. Citizenship, Political Engagement & Sense of Belonging

40. Let us continue on this topic of ethnic media's role in fostering a sense of belonging to the Swedish society, which is the last portion of this interview. First let me start by asking you a broad question: What does it mean to be an Iranian? What is it about an Iranian that makes her or him distinct from other groups of people? (is it culture, religion, nationality, language, etc.) Does religion play a role in the identity formation and the sense of belonging of Iranians? Why or why not?

41. How do you think Iranian people's identity is influenced by moving to a new country like Sweden? What does it become of the identity? How is it changed, reshaped, challenged?

42. How do you think a sense of belonging is established to the new society? What are some of the strategies used by the Iranians to achieve this? What is the role of Iranian media in fostering a sense of belonging to the Swedish society? What do you think are indicators of successful adaptation to the larger society? Do you see any difference between the different demographic groups, in terms of how they identify themselves in their new country of settlement (Sweden)?

43. How weak or strong is the connection between the Iranian community here and the home-country? Can you give examples of the weakness or strength of this connection? (Expect reference to the "Green Movement")

44. What does it mean to be a "good citizen" in your opinion?

45. Let me for a moment focus on a specific example where issues of belonging and citizenship surface: Last year there was a general election in Sweden [or focus on last general election in Canada]. Did you notice more coverage in the Iranian media of local and national news/issues/events during election time?

1) Would you say that the coverage of previous elections has been about the same or did you notice an increase in coverage compared to previous elections?

2) What were some of the main issues that surfaced in the Iranian media regarding the election?

3) **(Ask only if the outlet covers news and politics)** Did you have a greater focus on the most recent election compared to previous years?

4) What issues surfaced in the Iranian media regarding the election? (e.g. Iranian candidates; the right and responsibilities of Swedish citizens; how to vote; policy issues important to immigrants/Iranians)

5) Do you think it's important to cover political events such as the election? Why?

(Ask only if the outlet covers news and politics) How important is it for you to promote political engagement and good citizenship through your media content? On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are with your performance in this regard? What can you do to improve this aspect of your coverage?

6) Do you think the audience would rather see more coverage of current issues in Sweden or more coverage of issues related to Iran (be it political, social or cultural)? Why do you think that is?

7) How much trust do you have in the wisdom of your fellow Iranians to make an informed decision at election times here in Sweden?

VI. Closing

46. How do you see the future of this sector (in this city)?

    1) How about your outlet specifically? Where do you see yourself and your outlet in 10 years from now?

47. If you would do it all over again, would you do anything differently? If so, what?

48. This brings me to the end of this interview. Is there anything you would like to add to our conversation?

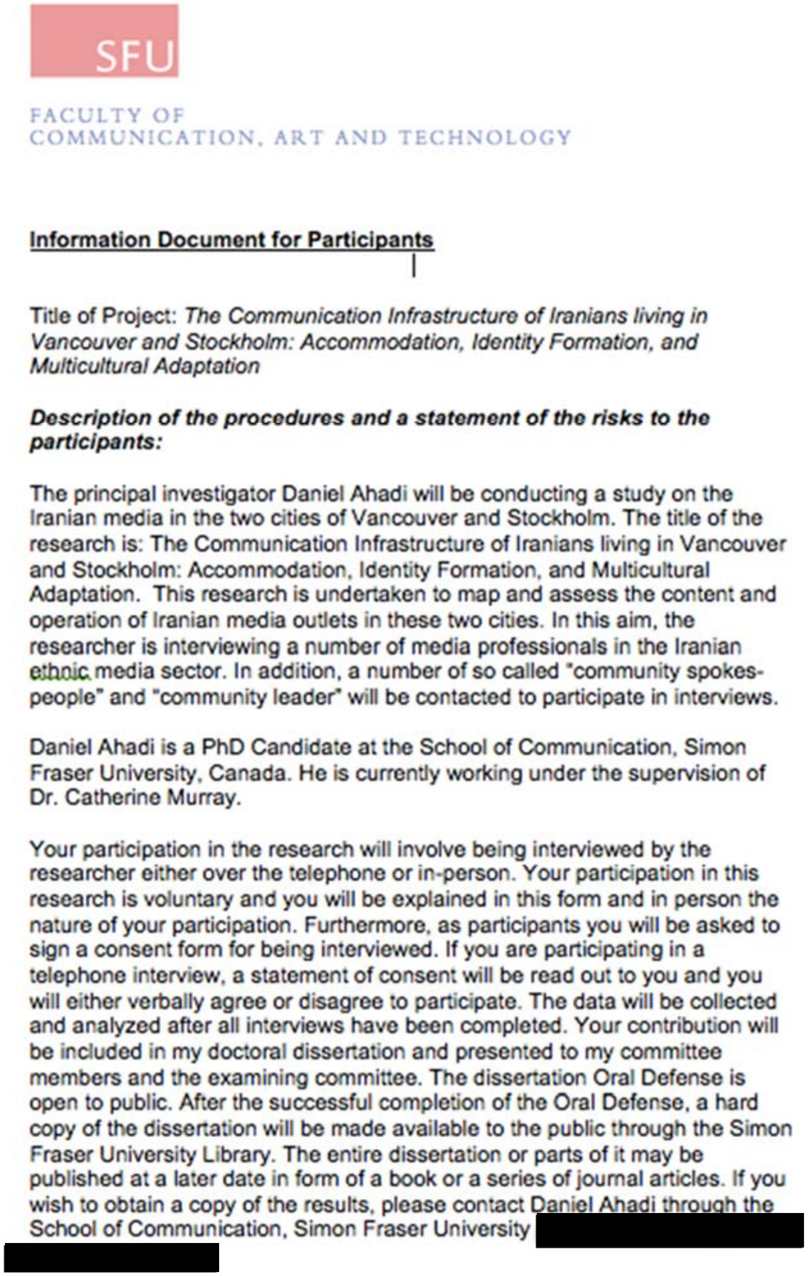
Thank you for your time.

Appendix C: Interview protocol (Revised)

Questions were not asked in this specific order.

1. Tell me about yourself and your professional career as a journalist/community organizer? How did you start? When? Why?
2. What do you think the role of Iranian media in Stockholm is or should be?
3. What are some of the biggest issues facing Iranian media in Stockholm?
4. Do you receive any government subsidies? If yes, in what form. If no, why not?
5. What do you think the impact has been on the local media scene since the arrival of the Internet and satellite television?
6. How do you think Swedish media are doing to represent diversity? Iranians?
7. How do you think Iranian media are doing in repressing diversity?
8. Do you think Iranian media play a role in enabling integration into the Swedish society? Or do they have a marginalizing effect?
9. Who are you listeners? Do you receive any feedback from them?
10. Why do you think Iranian radio has remained so popular in Stockholm? Why not TV/print/Internet equally popular?
11. Are Iranians active participants in the Swedish society? Politically? Culturally?
12. Do you cooperate with other (media)organizations?
13. Do you feel that Iranians have integrated into the Swedish society?
14. How so you see the future of Iranian media in Stockholm?
15. If you were to start over again, what would you have done differently?

Appendix D: Study information documents in English and Persian



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Information Document for Participants

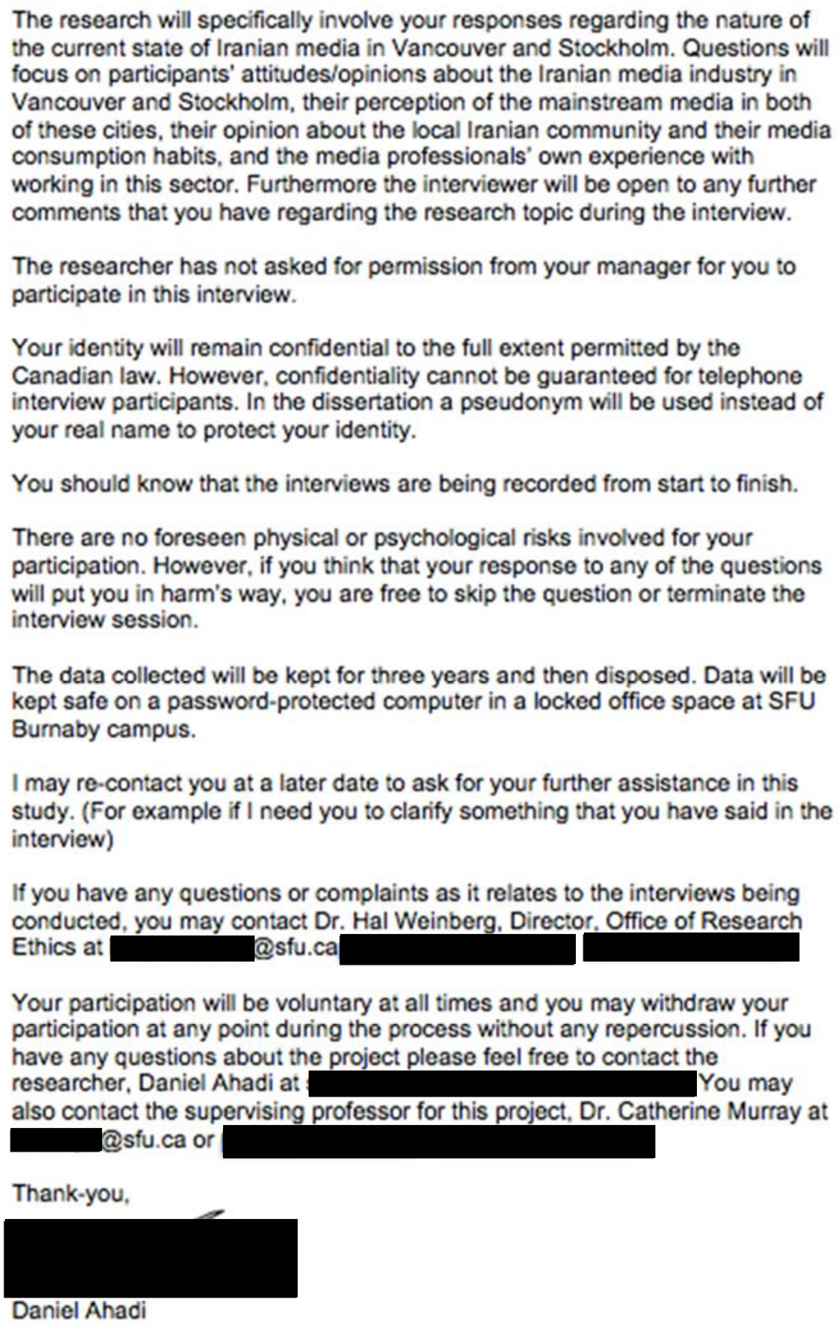
Title of Project: *The Communication Infrastructure of Iranians living in Vancouver and Stockholm: Accommodation, Identity Formation, and Multicultural Adaptation*

Description of the procedures and a statement of the risks to the participants:

The principal investigator Daniel Ahadi will be conducting a study on the Iranian media in the two cities of Vancouver and Stockholm. The title of the research is: The Communication Infrastructure of Iranians living in Vancouver and Stockholm: Accommodation, Identity Formation, and Multicultural Adaptation. This research is undertaken to map and assess the content and operation of Iranian media outlets in these two cities. In this aim, the researcher is interviewing a number of media professionals in the Iranian ethnic media sector. In addition, a number of so called "community spokes-people" and "community leader" will be contacted to participate in interviews.

Daniel Ahadi is a PhD Candidate at the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University, Canada. He is currently working under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Murray.

Your participation in the research will involve being interviewed by the researcher either over the telephone or in-person. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you will be explained in this form and in person the nature of your participation. Furthermore, as participants you will be asked to sign a consent form for being interviewed. If you are participating in a telephone interview, a statement of consent will be read out to you and you will either verbally agree or disagree to participate. The data will be collected and analyzed after all interviews have been completed. Your contribution will be included in my doctoral dissertation and presented to my committee members and the examining committee. The dissertation Oral Defense is open to public. After the successful completion of the Oral Defense, a hard copy of the dissertation will be made available to the public through the Simon Fraser University Library. The entire dissertation or parts of it may be published at a later date in form of a book or a series of journal articles. If you wish to obtain a copy of the results, please contact Daniel Ahadi through the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University [redacted]



The research will specifically involve your responses regarding the nature of the current state of Iranian media in Vancouver and Stockholm. Questions will focus on participants' attitudes/opinions about the Iranian media industry in Vancouver and Stockholm, their perception of the mainstream media in both of these cities, their opinion about the local Iranian community and their media consumption habits, and the media professionals' own experience with working in this sector. Furthermore the interviewer will be open to any further comments that you have regarding the research topic during the interview.

The researcher has not asked for permission from your manager for you to participate in this interview.

Your identity will remain confidential to the full extent permitted by the Canadian law. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for telephone interview participants. In the dissertation a pseudonym will be used instead of your real name to protect your identity.

You should know that the interviews are being recorded from start to finish.

There are no foreseen physical or psychological risks involved for your participation. However, if you think that your response to any of the questions will put you in harm's way, you are free to skip the question or terminate the interview session.

The data collected will be kept for three years and then disposed. Data will be kept safe on a password-protected computer in a locked office space at SFU Burnaby campus.

I may re-contact you at a later date to ask for your further assistance in this study. (For example if I need you to clarify something that you have said in the interview)

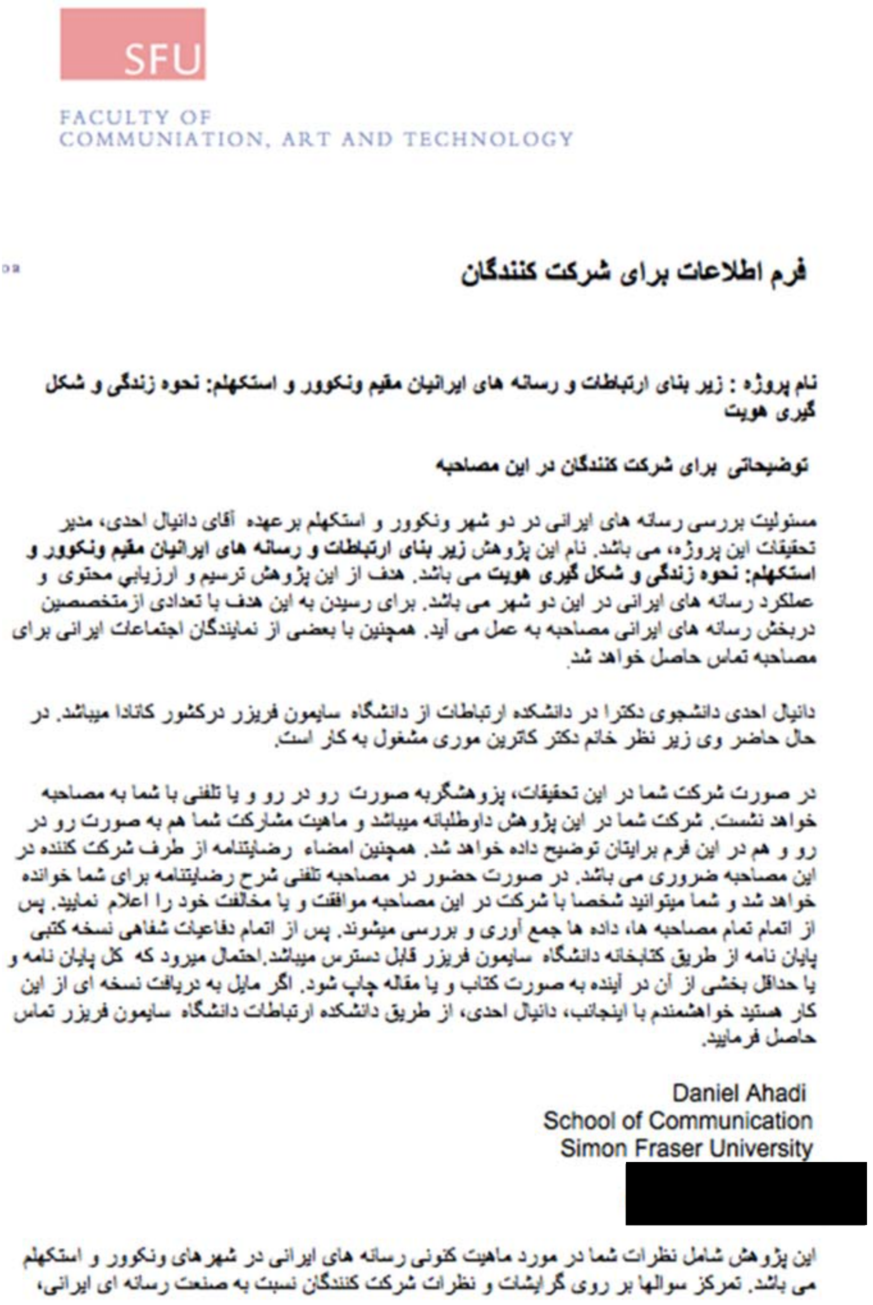
If you have any questions or complaints as it relates to the interviews being conducted, you may contact Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics at [redacted]@sfu.ca[redacted] [redacted]

Your participation will be voluntary at all times and you may withdraw your participation at any point during the process without any repercussion. If you have any questions about the project please feel free to contact the researcher, Daniel Ahadi at [redacted] You may also contact the supervising professor for this project, Dr. Catherine Murray at [redacted]@sfu.ca or [redacted]

Thank-you,

[redacted]

Daniel Ahadi



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فرم اطلاعات برای شرکت کنندگان

نام پروژه : زیر بنای ارتباطات و رسانه های ایرانیان مقیم ونکوور و استکهلم: نحوه زندگی و شکل گیری هویت

توضیحاتی برای شرکت کنندگان در این مصاحبه

مسئولیت بررسی رسانه های ایرانی در دو شهر ونکوور و استکهلم برعهده آقای دانیال احدی، مدیر تحقیقات این پروژه، می باشد. نام این پژوهش **زیر بنای ارتباطات و رسانه های ایرانیان مقیم ونکوور و استکهلم: نحوه زندگی و شکل گیری هویت** می باشد. هدف از این پژوهش ترسیم و ارزیابی محتوی و عملکرد رسانه های ایرانی در این دو شهر می باشد. برای رسیدن به این هدف با تعدادی ازمتخصصین دربخش رسانه های ایرانی مصاحبه به عمل می آید. همچنین با بعضی از نمایندگان اجتماعات ایرانی برای مصاحبه تماس حاصل خواهد شد.

دانیال احدی دانشجوی دکترا در دانشکده ارتباطات از دانشگاه سایمون فریزر درکشور کانادا میباشد. در حال حاضر وی زیر نظر خانم دکتر کاترین موری مشغول به کار است.

در صورت شرکت شما در این تحقیقات، پژوهشگربه صورت رو در رو و یا تلفنی با شما به مصاحبه خواهد نشست. شرکت شما در این پژوهش داوطلبانه میباشد و ماهیت مشارکت شما هم به صورت رو در رو و هم در این فرم برایتان توضیح داده خواهد شد. همچنین امضاء رضایتنامه از طرف شرکت کننده در این مصاحبه ضروری می باشد. در صورت حضور در مصاحبه تلفنی شرح رضایتنامه برای شما خوانده خواهد شد و شما میتوانید شخصا با شرکت در این مصاحبه موافقت و یا مخالفت خود را اعلام نمایید. پس از اتمام تمام مصاحبه ها، داده ها جمع آوری و بررسی میشوند. پس از اتمام دفاعیات شفاهی نسخه کتبی پایان نامه از طریق کتابخانه دانشگاه سایمون فریزر قابل دسترس میباشد.احتمال میرود که کل پایان نامه و یا حداقل بخشی از آن در آینده به صورت کتاب و یا مقاله چاپ شود. اگر مایل به دریافت نسخه ای از این کار هستید خواهشمندم با اینجانب، دانیال احدی، از طریق دانشکده ارتباطات دانشگاه سایمون فریزر تماس حاصل فرمایید.

Daniel Ahadi
School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

[redacted]

این پژوهش شامل نظرات شما در مورد ماهیت کنونی رسانه های ایرانی در شهرهای ونکوور و استکهلم می باشد. تمرکز سوالها بر روی گرایشات و نظرات شرکت کنندگان نسبت به صنعت رسانه ای ایرانی،

نظرات آنها در ارتباط با انجمنهای محلی ایرانی و روش استفاده این انجمنها از رسانه ها، و تجربیات شخصی متخصصین رسانه ای می باشد.

هویت شما تا حد امکان بر اساس قوانین کانادا محرمانه باقی خواهد ماند. هر چند امکان ضمانت کامل در مورد مصاحبه تلفنی مقدور نمی باشد. در پایان نامه از اسمهای مستعار به جای اسم واقعی شرکت کنندگان استفاده خواهد شد. لازم به ذکر است که مصاحبه ها از ابتدا تا انتها ضبط خواهند شد.

شرکت در این مصاحبه منجر به هیچگونه زیان جسمی یا روحی برای شما نمی شود. در صورت هر گونه عدم رضایت اجازه دارید از جواب دادن به سؤال مربوطه پرهیز کرده و یا مصاحبه را متوقف کنید.

داده های جمع آوری شده برای ۳ سال محفوظ باقی می ماند ولی بعد از این مدت دور ریخته می شود.
نتایج جمع آوری شده توسط یک کامپوتر مجهز به کلمه رمزدر یک دفتر کار در دانشگاه سایمون فریزر حفظ میشود.

احتمال دارد در آینده اینجانب مجددا با شما برای کمک های بیشتر در زمینه این تحقیق تماس حاصل کنم. به عنوان مثال برای بیشتر روشن شدن برخی از بیانات شما در این مصاحبه.

در صورت بروز هرگونه نا رضایتی و یا پیش آمدن هر نوع سؤال در ارتباط با این پژوهش لطفا با

Dr. Hal Weinberg
Director, Office of Research Ethics
[redacted]

تماس حاصل فرمایید.

شرکت شما در این مصاحبه از هر نظر داوطلبانه میباشد و شما میتوانید از ادامه این مصاحبه بدون هیچگونه بازخواستی در هر لحظه صرفه نظر کنید. در صورت داشتن هر گونه پرسشی در مورد این پروژه لطفا با محقق این پژوهش، آقای دانیال احدی، تماس بگیرید.

[redacted]

شما همچنین میتوانید با سر پرست این پروژه خانم دکتر کاترین موری تماس بگیرید:

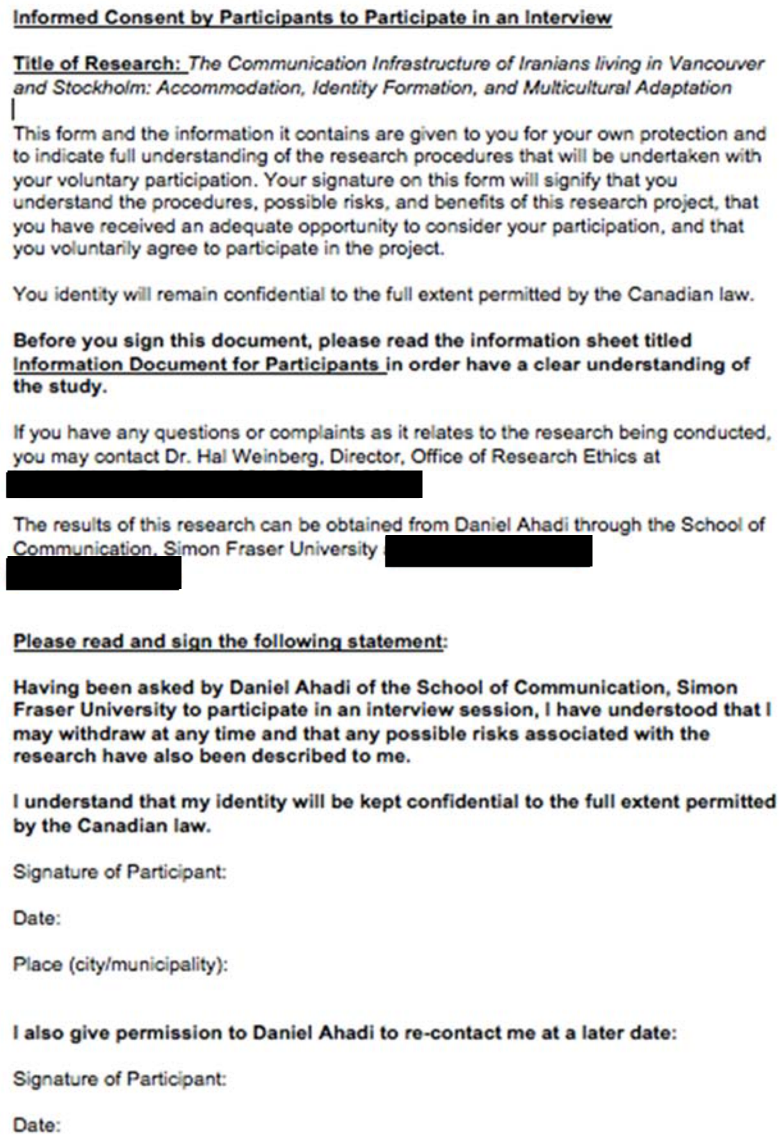
[redacted]

با تشکر فراوان،

[redacted]

دانیال احدی

Appendix E: Consent from in English and Persian



Informed Consent by Participants to Participate in an Interview

Title of Research: *The Communication Infrastructure of Iranians living in Vancouver and Stockholm: Accommodation, Identity Formation, and Multicultural Adaptation*

This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and to indicate full understanding of the research procedures that will be undertaken with your voluntary participation. Your signature on this form will signify that you understand the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider your participation, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

You identity will remain confidential to the full extent permitted by the Canadian law.

Before you sign this document, please read the information sheet titled Information Document for Participants in order have a clear understanding of the study.

If you have any questions or complaints as it relates to the research being conducted, you may contact Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics at [redacted]

The results of this research can be obtained from Daniel Ahadi through the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University [redacted]

Please read and sign the following statement:

Having been asked by Daniel Ahadi of the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University to participate in an interview session, I have understood that I may withdraw at any time and that any possible risks associated with the research have also been described to me.

I understand that my identity will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the Canadian law.

Signature of Participant:

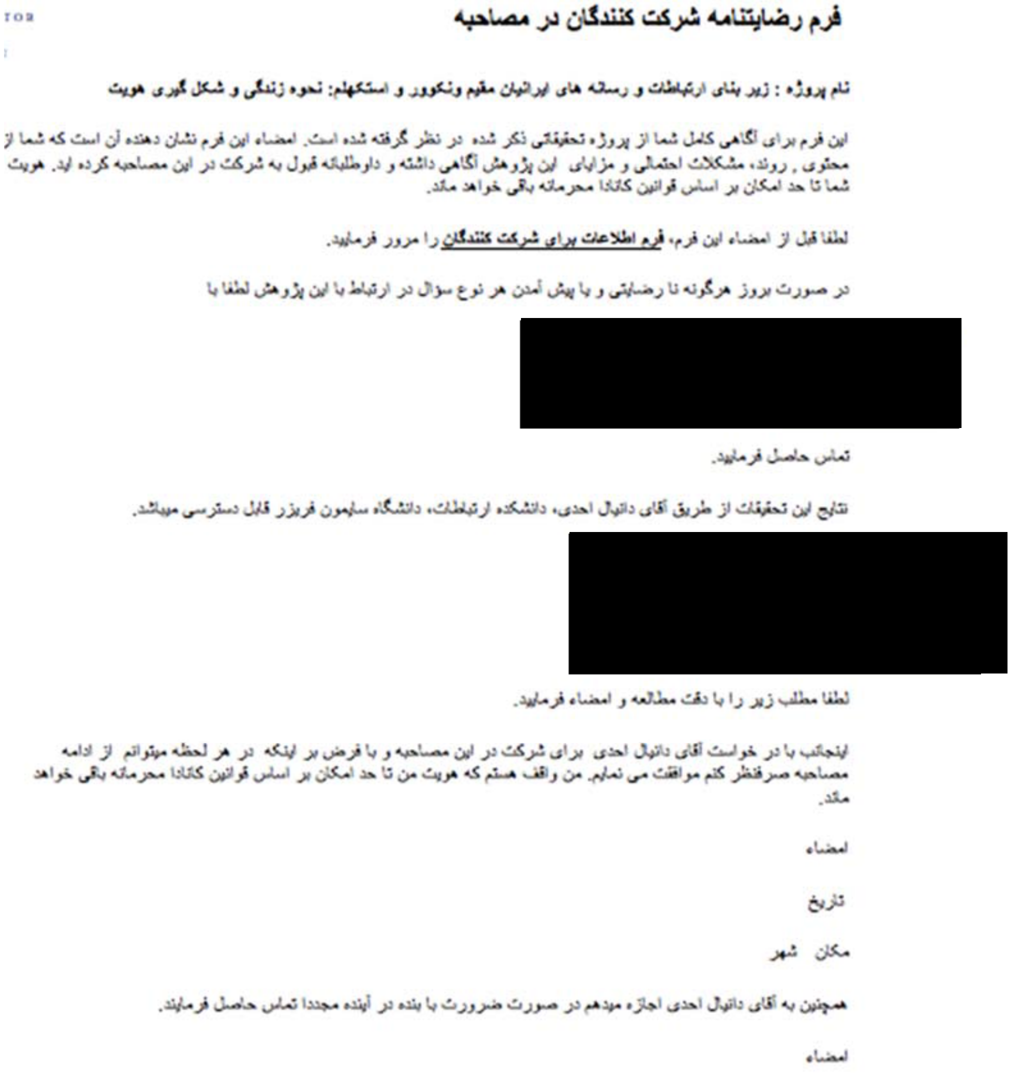
Date:

Place (city/municipality):

I also give permission to Daniel Ahadi to re-contact me at a later date:

Signature of Participant:

Date:



فرم رضایتنامه شرکت کنندگان در مصاحبه

نام پروژه : زیر بنای ارتباطات و رسانه های ایرانیان مقیم ونکوور و استکهلم: نحوه زندگی و شکل گیری هویت

این فرم برای آگاهی کامل شما از پروژه تحقیقاتی ذکر شده در نظر گرفته شده است. امضاء این فرم نشان دهنده آن است که شما از محتوی , روند، مشکلات احتمالی و مزایای این پژوهش آگاهی داشته و داوطلبانه قبول به شرکت در این مصاحبه کرده اید. هویت شما تا حد امکان بر اساس قوانین کانادا محرمانه باقی خواهد ماند.

لطفا قبل از امضاء این فرم، **فرم اطلاعات برای شرکت کنندگان** را مرور فرمایید.

در صورت بروز هرگونه نا رضایتی و یا پیش آمدن هر نوع سؤال در ارتباط با این پژوهش لطفا با

[redacted]

تماس حاصل فرمایید.

نتایج این تحقیقات از طریق آقای دانیال احدی، دانشکده ارتباطات، دانشگاه سایمون فریزر قابل دسترسی میباشد.

[redacted]

لطفا مطلب زیر را با دقت مطالعه و امضاء فرمایید.

اینجانب با در خواست آقای دانیال احدی برای شرکت در این مصاحبه و با فرض بر اینکه در هر لحظه میتوانم از ادامه مصاحبه صرفنظر کنم موافقت می نمایم. من واقف هستم که هویت من تا حد امکان بر اساس قوانین کانادا محرمانه باقی خواهد ماند.

امضاء

تاریخ

مکان شهر

همچنین به آقای دانیال احدی اجازه میدهم در صورت ضرورت با بنده در آینده مجددا تماس حاصل فرمایند.

امضاء

Appendix F: Content Analysis Protocol

Protocol for Analysis of News and Ads in Iranian Media in Stockholm

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Protocol

- The protocol is the result of a study of existing protocols for content analysis. Bailey and Hackett's *Newswatcher's Guide to Content Analysis* (1998); World Association for Christian Communication (2005) report *Who Makes the News: Global Media Monitoring Project 2005*; Strategic Research and Analysis (2003) report on *Diversity and Broadcasting*; Chicago Media Action (2004) *Chicago Tonight: Elites, Affluence, and Advertising*; European Union's (2002) study *Tuning into Diversity: Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in Mass* Media; Cora Voyageur (2003) " In from the Cold: Aboriginal Media in Canada"; Charles Stewart Mott Foundation's (2006) study, *Revealing Race: an analysis of the coverage of race and xenophobia in the South African print media*; and *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Media in B.C.* (2007).

1. **Unit of Data Collection:**

    1. Radio: One segment or story covered in a specific newscast or program.
    2. Internet: Defined as a story from a specific Internet URL

2. **Media Item Title: ____**

3. **Date of Publication/Broadcast:** year/month/day (or pick one from a list depending on time frame)

4. **Media Source:** (Preliminary list)

    1. Radio Iran on Air
    2. Radio Ava
    3. Radio Hambastegi
    4. Radio Sedaye Zan
    5. Radio Pejvak
    6. Radio Hamsafar
    7. Pejvak online
    8. Stockholmian

5. Geographical Focus: The primary location or focus of the item.

1. Local (Regional): Geographical locality (In-group news from here)
2. Local (In-group): Ethnic locality (In-group news from home)
3. Local (out-group): Local news that do not involve the specific ethnic group
4. Provincial
5. National

6. International: In-Group (International news about "home")
7. International: Out-Group (International news about other places than "home")

8. Cannot be determined
9. Not applicable to the item
10. Other: ________________________

6. Topic Category:

1. Business/Economics
2. Employment News
3. Swedish Politics
4. Iranian Politics
5. International politics
6. Immigration
7. Social Policy and Programs
8. Unrest, Conflicts and War
9. Education
10. Health
11. Environment
12. Sports
13. Entertainment
14. Other: ____________________

7. Type of Advertisements:

1. Academies/schools/tutor/private lesson
2. Employment
3. Auto/Auto repair advertising
4. Classified ads
5. Entertainment (e.g. pubs, karaoke, video rental)
6. Media (e.g. TV, radio, newspaper, satellite TV)
7. Real estate agency
8. Restaurants
9. Translation/Interpretation
10. Law
11. Accounting
12. Bank/Finance
13. Insurance
14. Beauty (hair/nail care)
15. Technology (telecommunication/computers)
16. Supermarket
17. Travel
18. Politics (Municipal)
19. Politics (BC)
20. Politics (National)
21. International Politics
22. Politics (Ethnic)
23. Other: ___________

Appendix G: Constructed Week Sampling Frame for Radio

<table>
<tr><th>Time</th><th colspan="3">Monday May 16
Tuesday April 12
Wednesday May 18
Thursday April 21
Friday April 29</th><th>Saturday May 7</th><th>Sunday May 15</th></tr>
<tr><td>7:00</td><td colspan="3"></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>8:00</td><td colspan="3">Iran on Air</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>9:00</td><td>Iran on Air</td><td colspan="2">Ava</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>10:00</td><td>Iran on Air</td><td colspan="2">Ava</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>11:00</td><td>Iran on Air</td><td>Ava</td><td>Pejvak</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12:00</td><td colspan="3">Iran on Air</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td>Sedaye Zanan</td></tr>
<tr><td>13:00</td><td>Iran on Air</td><td colspan="2">Hamsafar</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td>Sedaye Zanan</td></tr>
<tr><td>14:00</td><td colspan="3">Hamsafar</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>15:00</td><td colspan="3">Hamsafar</td><td>Hambastegi</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>16:00</td><td colspan="3">Hamsafar</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>17:00</td><td colspan="3">Hamsafar</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>18:00</td><td colspan="3"></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>19:00</td><td colspan="3"></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Notes:

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[1] The name Peacock Throne refers to a Mughal throne of India, which was later taken by the Persian king Nader Shah Afshari in his raid on India in 1738-1739

[2] Broadly defined here as the time from the conquest of the Americas in the fifteenth and sixteenth century to the decolonisation movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

[3] The recent (2011) uprising in the Arab world could possibly be an indication of this.

[4] The term "heresiographers" is used by Saeed Rahnema, 2006, p. 31.

[5] For example, the national unemployment rate in Canada was 6.3% in 2006. The rate for recent immigrants for the same year was 12.3 (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2012).

[6] The aim of the welfare state was expressed in 1928 by Social Democrat Per Albin Hansson as *folkhemmet,* "the home of the people", an idea that united contemporary streams of socialism, nationalism and family values. The vision of *folkhemmet* marked Sweden for many years to come. Socialist efforts culminated during the 1970's under international slogans of solidarity and equality, but then had to face a harsh economic and political reality in the 1980's (Wiik, 2010).

[7] Falun Detention Centre has become notorious as the final stop for rejected refugees and asylum seekers before deportation. So, when one hears that "someone has been transferred to Falun" it implies that the person is being deported within days.

[8] The limitations of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) work as a largely eurocentric model that falls short in capturing the complexities of an increasingly globalised media environment is acknowledged here. However, the model provides a useful taxonomic system that allows comparison between Sweden to and other Western democracies.

[9] No current scholarly work maps Iranian media in Los Angeles. The website Pars Times provides the most up-to-date inventory of Iranian media in the Los Angeles region.

[10] Vancouver alone has seven weekly newspapers in Persian, with an average self-reported circulation of more than 3,000 per newspaper (Murray, Yu, and Ahadi, 2007).

[11] Ong (2003, p. 269) defines a hypercapital citizen to be one who "submits more readily to the governmentality of fraternally based network capitalism than to the political sovereignty of a democratic nation."

[12] Metamorphosis Project is hosted at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication. Researchers looked at the role ethnic media played in the life of immigrants in the Los Angeles region, and other parts of Southern California. Principle investigator: Sandra Ball-Rokeach.