

# Diaspora Dynamics: Ethnic Media and Foreign Conflict in Multicultural Canada



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In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, conflicts and events occurring in distant lands can have far-reaching consequences for diaspora communities around the globe. Canada, with its diverse and multicultural population, is no exception. As a nation that prides itself on its inclusivity and tolerance, Canada is home to numerous ethnic communities, each with its own unique cultural heritage, political affiliations, and media consumption habits.

This discussion paper delves into the reactions of ethnic media in Canada to four distinct conflicts: the allegations of election interference, the assassination of a Sikh leader in Canada, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the Israel-Palestine conflict. By comparing and contrasting the coverage of these events in Chinese, South Asian, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern Canadian media outlets, we aim to shed light on the critical role that ethnic media plays in shaping the mindset of Canadian residents.

**Our thesis is that ignoring grassroots community media can have significant consequences on the mindset of Canadian citizens, as evidenced by the reactions to these conflicts in ethnic media outlets. This assertion is grounded in several well-established theories in the field of media and social communications analysis.**

Agenda-setting theory, first proposed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), posits that the media has the power to influence public opinion by focusing attention on specific issues while ignoring others. As McCombs (2014) notes, "*The agenda-setting role of the mass media links journalism and its tradition of storytelling to the arena of public opinion, a relationship with considerable consequences for society*" (p. 1). In the context of ethnic media, this theory suggests that the stories and perspectives prioritized by these outlets can shape the way their audiences perceive and engage with global events.

Framing theory, developed by Entman (1993), further emphasizes the media's role in shaping public discourse. According to Entman, framing involves selecting "*some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation*" (p. 52). The way in which ethnic media frames conflicts and events can significantly influence how their audiences understand and respond to these issues.

The uses and gratifications theory, proposed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973), focuses on the reasons why individuals actively seek out specific media content. As they note, "*The approach suggests that people's values, their interests, their associations, their social roles, are pre-potent and that people selectively fashion what they see and hear to these interests*" (p. 511). In the case of ethnic media, this theory highlights the importance of these outlets in fulfilling the specific informational and cultural needs of their audiences, which may differ from those served by mainstream media.

Finally, cultivation theory, developed by Gerbner (1998), suggests that prolonged exposure to media content can shape individuals' perceptions of reality. As Gerbner et al. (1986) state, "*Television is a centralized system of storytelling. It is part and parcel of our daily lives. Its drama, commercials, news, and other programs bring a relatively coherent world of common images and messages into every home*" (p. 18). While Gerbner's work focused primarily on television, the theory can be applied to other forms of media, including ethnic media outlets, which may cultivate distinct worldviews among their audiences.

The case studies presented in this discussion paper provide compelling evidence for the application of these theories in the context of ethnic media in Canada. In the chapter on Chinese media's reaction to alleged election interference, we see how these outlets frame the issue in ways that prioritize the concerns and perspectives of the Chinese Canadian community, potentially influencing their political engagement and attitudes towards the Canadian government.

Similarly, the chapter on South Asian media's response to the assassination of a Sikh leader highlights the role of these outlets in shaping the community's understanding of the event and its implications for Canada-India relations. As the chapter notes, "*South Asian Canadian media approaches the issue from a distinctly different angle, emphasizing the Sikh narrative and the impact on the Sikh Diaspora in Canada.*"

The analysis of Eastern European media's coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war demonstrates how these outlets serve the specific informational and cultural needs of their audiences, providing perspectives and narratives that may differ from those found in mainstream Canadian media. As the chapter reveals, "*Ethnic media coverage also reflects a broader sentiment of solidarity with Ukraine, whereas Canadian mainstream media aim for a more objective and balanced approach, considering multiple perspectives and stakeholders involved in the conflict.*"

Finally, the chapter on Middle Eastern media's reaction to the Israel-Palestine conflict underscores the power of these outlets in cultivating distinct worldviews and shaping public discourse within their communities. The presentation observes that "*Arabic domestic media coverage tends to emphasize the plight of Palestinian civilians, portraying them as victims of Israeli aggression and occupation,*" while "*Canadian mainstream media coverage of the Hamas-Israel conflict tends to be more balanced and nuanced.*"

These case studies, when viewed through the lens of media and social communications analysis theories, demonstrate the vital role that ethnic media plays in shaping the mindset of Canadian citizens. By ignoring or overlooking the perspectives and narratives presented in these grassroots community media outlets, policymakers, researchers, and the general public risk developing an incomplete or distorted understanding of how global events are impacting Canada's diverse ethnic communities.

As Karim (2003) argues, "*The ethnic media serve as important channels for the sharing of information and opinions within the ethnic communities and for the expression of minority viewpoints in the broader public sphere*" (p. 1). Engaging with and amplifying the voices of ethnic media is essential for fostering a more inclusive and representative public discourse in Canada.

**In conclusion, this discussion paper serves as a call to action for greater attention to and engagement with ethnic media outlets in Canada.**

By recognizing the power of these grassroots community media in shaping the mindset of Canadian citizens, we can work towards a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of how global conflicts and events are impacting our diverse nation. Future research should continue to explore the role of ethnic media in shaping public opinion, while policymakers would be wise to consider the perspectives and concerns expressed in these outlets when crafting inclusive and responsive policies.

Silke Reichrath,

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## Chapter One - Divided Loyalties: How Chinese Media in Canada Reflects Diaspora Sentiments





## Introduction: This Paper is About Diversity of Point of View

This paper is about diversity of point of view. Its focus is not so much the news on Canada – China issues the Chinese Canadian media reports, but how that reporting reflects the lived and learned experience of the Chinese community in Canada as it views the current conflict with their homeland from within that conflict, suffering from “China of the mind” while living in a Canadian reality. That reflection also shows up in the silences and the media diplomacy involved in maintaining relationships with the community, the homeland and Canada.

**One cannot understand nature of China-Canada relations without realizing that the Chinese community in Canada, one of the largest diasporas worldwide, is a focal point for the Chinese Canadian media.**

Regardless of how long overseas Chinese have settled in Canada, and whether from the Mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan or elsewhere, they are still hyper aware and involved in community and/or political activities to advocate on behalf of their home country or speak up on human rights issues in their home country. The Chinese Diaspora in Canada remains divided between the pro-democracy and pro-Chinese Communist Party supporters, and these simmering disputes feed the media reports, if not overtly, in the journalistic omissions of what is the word on the street.

As we prepare the final version of this paper in the shadow of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Foreign Interference, on April 12, 2024, CBC Morning Brief headlines the fact that CSIS Director David Vigneault returns to foreign interference inquiry as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau casts doubt on reliability of the agency's reports. We cannot help but wonder if those CSIS reports would have benefitted from an analysis of how the Chinese community media was responding to the crisis.

We hope this paper helps advance that analysis. Our paper underscores the crucial influence of Chinese media in Canada, which also serves as a vital conduit for information, perspectives, and cultural exchange between the staunchly unilingual Chinese Diaspora and broader Canadian society.

## The Chinese Diaspora in Canada: Diversity and Ideological Divisions

The Chinese media landscape in Canada is vast, with close to 100 Chinese Canadian print and web outlets, as well as Mandarin and Cantonese radio and TV, earning it the nickname "the ethnic mainstream." The MIREMS team of Chinese analysts has been selectively tracking these outlets, collecting over 300,000 stories in the past dozen years on matters related to immigration, diaspora, international relations, and diversity.

This landscape serves as a battleground for narratives, reflecting the ideological divisions within the diaspora, where pro-democracy and pro-Chinese Communist Party (CCP) sentiments vie for dominance.

Chinese media outlets in Canada play a crucial role in shaping perceptions, fostering community cohesion, and potentially swaying public opinion on key issues related to China and Canada's relationship through incidents of censorship, self-censorship, and strategic content dissemination.

With growing tensions between China and Canada due to allegations of espionage, foreign interference, and the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese media serves as a barometer for diaspora sentiments, influencing not only diplomatic relations but also providing insight into the diverse mindset of the Chinese immigrant cohort. As Canada faces challenges in ensuring national security, maintaining diplomatic relations, and supporting its diverse diaspora community, the role of Chinese media becomes a critical area for scrutiny, policy consideration, and academic inquiry.

Despite the turbulence between the two countries, Canada remains a top immigration destination for Chinese people, with the Chinese Diaspora being one of the largest in Canada and the world. According to the 2021 Census data from Statistics Canada, more than 1.7 million Chinese people reside in Canada, representing 4.7% of the total population. However, as political tensions rise and concerns around foreign interference and infiltration of the Chinese Diaspora grow, governments and community leaders who oppose the CCP's oppressive regime and surveillance tactics are becoming increasingly alarmed.

## Historical Context and Evolving Tensions

Due to political ideology differences and interests, the relationship between China and Canada has not been a smooth-sailing one.

The earliest incident of tension between China and Canada dates to 1949 when Canada refused to recognize the newly established People's Republic of China, maintaining diplomatic relations with the Republic of China government in Taiwan instead. This decision contributed to strained relations between the two countries, although diplomatic ties were eventually established in 1970 by Pierre Trudeau.

Historically, tensions between China and Canada have escalated intermittently, influenced by political, economic, and diplomatic factors. The arrest of Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's CFO, in Vancouver in December 2018 at the request of the United States on charges of violating Iran sanctions sparked a significant deterioration in relations, leading to China detaining Canadian citizens Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor in speculations of retaliation.

Furthermore, Canada's criticism of China's human rights record, particularly the treatment of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang and the crackdown on democracy in Hong Kong, has further strained bilateral ties. Economic disputes, including China's restrictions on Canadian agricultural imports, have also contributed to the tension, resulting in a complex relationship marked by confrontations and diplomatic challenges between the two countries.

On the historical side, we must remember the Chinese Head Tax and the exploitation of Chinese Workers under successive Immigration Acts, leading finally to a Redress Program in the early 2000s, although some in the community feel the legacy of anti-Chinese racism is still being felt today, said *CBC Radio's* Vivian Luk on Canada Day 2023.

## Case Study: Media Coverage of the Hong Kong Protests

The 2019-2020 Hong Kong protests against the extradition bill and the subsequent implementation of the National Security Law by Beijing exposed the divergent views within the Chinese Canadian community. Publications like **Vision Times** and **OMNI TV** featured interviews with activists and dissidents, while outlets like **Sing Tao Daily** and **Ming Pao** reported the actions of the Hong Kong government and emphasized the need for stability.

Canada suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong following the announcement of the Hong Kong National Security Law in 2020, leading to a series of community protests against China, and growing tension between pro-CCP and pro-democracy Chinese community groups.

Toronto's Vision Times newspaper reported on a website that disclosed personal information of demonstrators, journalists, and citizens under derogatory categories during the 2019 anti-extradition movement in Hong Kong. The website's activity, which began less than a month after negative information about the protests was released, was reposted by official microblogs of China's state media, including CCTV.

OMNI TV's Mandarin and Cantonese programs, which have a wide reach among Chinese viewers across Canada, reported on Lai Sung Yan's call for the Canadian government to pay attention to his father Jimmy Lai's detention in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, Vancouver's Chinese-language **Van People** website highlighted that former Hong Kong Internet radio host Edmund Wan, released from a Hong Kong prison, appeared in Greater Vancouver, and expressed his intention to continue fighting for his cause in Canada.

On April 21, 2020, Sing Tao reported that a spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in Canada urged the Canadian side to "abide by the basic norms governing international relations, support the Hong Kong police in enforcing the law, and immediately stop meddling in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs in any form."

## The Pandemic Era: Rising Tensions and Community Response

Entering 2020, this year brought major uncertainty and chaos as the world experienced a global pandemic. Tension continued to grow as the West pointed fingers at China for being responsible for the COVID-19 outbreak when it was revealed that the virus was first discovered in Wuhan, China.

The conspiracy narratives that circulated also led to the rise in hate crimes and anti-Asian sentiments in foreign countries, where the Chinese Diaspora became targets of violence and discrimination. The uncontrolled pandemic in China also prompted overseas Chinese in Canada to compile personal protective equipment to ship back to China, which stirred criticism and raised suspicion that these efforts were coordinated by China to take resources away from foreign countries.

## Xinjiang - Forced Labour and Human Rights

Chinese media in Canada face challenges when reporting on sensitive topics such as the allegations of human rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. While some outlets, like The **Epoch Times**, have been vocal in their criticism of the Chinese government's actions, others have been more cautious in their coverage, potentially due to fears of repercussions or self-censorship, highlighting the complexities faced by Chinese media in Canada when balancing their role as information providers with the potential consequences of critical reporting.

Amid growing tension between Canada and China, Canadian politicians called out China on alleged human rights violations in Xinjiang, further straining relations. As Canada accused China of committing genocide against Uyghurs, China rebutted with calls for the UN to investigate Canada's human rights violations against migrants in detention centers and Indigenous people during the residential school period, coinciding with the discovery of mass graves.

Global Affairs Canada advised Canadian firms of the legal and reputational risks posed to companies whose supply chains engage with entities possibly implicated in forced labour in Xinjiang. CBC quoted a 2022 United Nations report that found China had committed "serious human rights violations" against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities that "may constitute international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity," despite China's denial of all forced labour allegations.

Chinese media outlets in Canada featured the investigation by Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) Sheri Meyerhoffer into whether Walmart, Hugo Boss, and Diesel used forced Uyghur labour in their supply chains. **CFC News** reported that Canada's largest public pension fund faces increased scrutiny over its investments in China amid allegations that some investments fueled China's oppression of Uyghurs.

On March 12, 2024, 51.ca a Chinese-language news website, reported that a Chinese Embassy spokesperson accused the Globe and Mail of publishing an "irresponsible story" that falsely accused Chinese seafood industries of using "forced labor," calling it "an attempt to distort public perceptions through fabricating extremely groundless accusations." The spokesperson recommended that the Canadian media outlet "take a hard look in the mirror and reflect upon the serious human right problems in their own country instead of getting obsessed with spreading disinformation to defame China."

## Meng Wanzhou and the Detained Canadians

The arrest of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou in Vancouver in December 2018 and the subsequent detention of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor in China strained Canada-China relations and significantly impacted Chinese media coverage in Canada. Chinese state media outlets justified the arrests of the two Canadians, while Chinese Canadian media provided diverse perspectives on the case and its implications for the diaspora.

China has repeatedly denied using "hostage diplomacy" in its international relations approach, despite the respective detentions of Meng Wanzhou in Canada and Kovrig and Spavor in China bringing Canada-China relations to a head. After two years of dispute, Meng Wanzhou was released from Canada in September 2021, resulting in the release of the two Michaels shortly after.

However, the relationship between the two countries remained cold, with the Chinese Embassy in Canada repeatedly criticizing Canada for making groundless attacks and vilifying China for arbitrarily detaining Kovrig and Spavor. Even after their release, Chinese state-owned outlets published articles justifying the arrests.

**China News Services** interviewed Professor Li Haidong from the China Foreign Affairs University, who claimed that China had a solid factual basis for arresting Kovrig and Spavor and that the settlement reached by one of them with the Canadian government debunked Canada's accusations of "arbitrary detention" and "hostage diplomacy." This narrative was backed by **Guancha**, a privately owned Chinese news website influenced by government censorship.

Chinese media in Canada have frequently reported on the Meng Wanzhou case as the trigger for tense Canada-China relations. Montreal's **Sinoquebec** Chinese Newspaper noted that Beijing's detention of Kovrig and Spavor was considered retaliation for Canada's detention of Meng Wanzhou.

On November 20, 2023, 51.ca reported that a Chinese Embassy spokesperson accused Canada of hypocrisy for "hyping up" the so-called "arbitrary detention" by China, urging Canada to "face the facts and deeply reflect upon its mistakes."

On March 8, 2024, iask a Chinese-language news website, reported a Chinese Embassy spokesperson who claimed that recent Canadian media reports proved that "Canada's hyping up of the so-called China's 'arbitrary detention' is a completely false narrative."

Asked to comment on Chinese state media reporting that the resolution of Spavor's legal matter was an indication of wrongdoing, Trudeau told CTV news "there was absolutely no justification, no reason, no excuse" for the pair's detention [...] The fact that the Chinese government thinks that because we actually believe in supporting and taking care of citizens who go through hardship, as somehow proof for letting them off the hook, just demonstrates the depths to which China does not understand what it is to be a rule of law country that takes care of its citizens."

Our research was not able to find any rebuttal of the Chinese Embassy statements in major Chinese Canadian media.

## Chinese Interference in Canadian Elections and the Proposed Foreign Agent Registry

Canada's accusation of Chinese interference in its 2019 and 2021 federal elections has garnered widespread attention as leaked reports showed that certain candidates were backed by CCP affiliates, while anti-China candidates were attacked by disinformation on Chinese social media platforms. This has led to calls for the establishment of a Foreign Agent Registry to monitor individuals and organizations acting on behalf of foreign entities.

On November 7, 2022, the Guardian reported Conservative Michael Chong's statement: "We had evidence of interference in the last general election through proxies that were spreading disinformation on Chinese language social media platforms, which interfered in a number of [electoral districts] with significant Chinese communities."

A January 6, 2023 article by the Council on Foreign Relations stated: "Online, Beijing is also playing a much larger role on major social media platforms, spreading increasingly sophisticated disinformation, in Canada and many other countries, about China itself, and often about the politics and societies of targeted countries."

Former Ontario Liberal minister and current Markham Deputy Mayor Michael Chan, one of the individuals revealed by CSIS to have ties with Beijing, has denied allegations of CCP backing and launched a lawsuit against CSIS for public humiliation stemming from "stereotypical typecasting of immigrants born in China as being somehow untrustworthy."

The path to investigating foreign interference has been challenging. After Special Rapporteur David Johnston's resignation, Quebec judge Marie-Josée Hogue was appointed to facilitate the public inquiry. Concerns were raised over the safety of testifying witnesses, and ethnic minority groups like the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project withdrew from the investigation due to lack of confidence in the process after Hogue granted permission to independent MP Han Dong, Michael Chan, and Senator Woo to participate and cross-examine witnesses, as they were previously accused of taking pro-CCP stances.

In January 2024, Canada announced it would stop funding research with countries posing national security risks, including China, Iran, and Russia. Stricter screening at the border and on immigration applications, especially for international students in sensitive academic fields, has also been implemented. The Globe and Mail reported on January 4, 2024, that Chinese engineering student Yuekang Li's student visa application was rejected on suspicion of being a potential spy for China, despite no evidence of espionage or military applications in his research. This case heightened awareness of foreign infiltration through academics, prompting researchers to be cautious in protecting intellectual property rights and considering national security when conducting research, while also worrying prospective Chinese international students.

As Canada cracks down on foreign interference, tension between Canada and China and the divide within Chinese Canadian communities are expected to grow. During the inquiry hearings, Canadian politicians' distrust in the Liberal government has raised challenges to achieving unity within Parliament. Former Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole and MP Kenny Chiu have testified, criticizing the Liberal government for knowing about China's interference but choosing inaction.

In an interview with **Sing Tao A1 Chinese Radio's Newsbeat (Cantonese)**, Chiu mentioned that the inquiry process "lacks confidence from the public" and blamed the current situation on the Liberal government's inaction. **Canada News Network**, a Chinese-language website in Vancouver, wrote that Canadians are likely unaware of Trudeau's actions towards China in recent years, including the "illegal" detention of Meng Wanzhou, spreading rumors attacking Xinjiang's political strategy, and banning Huawei and ZTE.

In an article titled "Chinese media: China interfering with Canadian elections? Are you kidding me?", Canada News Network – a Chinese-language website in Vancouver – wrote that Canadians are probably unaware of the things that Trudeau did to China over the past years, including the illegal detention of Meng Wanzhou, spreading rumours attacking Xinjiang's political strategy, and banning Huawei and ZTE.

While some Chinese Canadian community members, like Cheuk Kwan of the Toronto Association for Democracy in China, support the Foreign Agent Registry as a means to protect Canadian democracy, others, such as Senators Victor Oh and Paul Woo, argue that it could lead to the stigmatization and marginalization of the Chinese Canadian community, highlighting the challenge of balancing national security concerns with minority rights and freedoms.

Conservative candidates and MPs targeted for their vocal stance against China's oppressive tactics have shared their experiences with foreign interference, leading to calls for a Foreign Agent Registry to filter out individuals and organizations affiliated with foreign principals in Canada. However, Senators Yuen Pau Woo and Victor Oh have pushed back, claiming that such a mechanism will perpetuate anti-Chinese sentiments in Canada. Woo compared the proposed registry to "a modern form of Chinese exclusion" in interviews with mainstream Canadian news outlets, which was also captured by **Vancouver-based CHMB AM 1320 Cantonese**.

The proposal has led to mixed feelings within the Chinese Canadian community. Cherie Wong, executive director of Alliance Canada Hong Kong (ACHK), called for the registry's establishment, believing it would "foster trust, resilience and transparency to ensure Canadians have confidence in the country's democratic institutions." Wong has been frequently interviewed by CBC and cited on Vancouver's Van People Chinese website.

**Rise Weekly**, a Chinese community newspaper in Vancouver, acknowledged that the registry's purpose aligns with Canada's national interests in preventing foreign interference but noted potential unintentional negative impacts on ethnic minority communities. An article on Toronto's **51.ca**, a Chinese-language news website, believes the registry is necessary and beneficial for Canada, guaranteeing transparency in foreign agents' activities and preventing wrongful convictions and arrests.

Another 51.ca article noted that Senators Woo and Oh view the registry as a resurgence of the Chinese Exclusion Act, accusing CSIS officials of attacking Chinese Canadians and considering strengthened national security as persecution against Chinese people. The writer questioned the senators' loyalty to Canada.

On June 21, 2023, Epoch Times reported that the Canadian government and Opposition parties are calling for a Foreign Agent Registry due to media reports about CCP interference in Canada's elections and communities, particularly the Chinese community, yet there hasn't been a similar response from other immigrant communities.

On April 11, 2024, a Chinese Embassy spokesperson published remarks and emphasized China's adherence to non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, stating that China has never interfered in Canada's internal affairs and has no interest in doing so. The spokesperson accused some Canadian politicians of targeting China in the public inquiry based on self-interest, labeling and casting aspersions on China without substantial evidence, and characterized the inquiry as a "politically orchestrated farce."

## Homeland Censorship and Self-Censorship in Chinese Canadian Media

Media censorship in China is seen by the West as a barrier to freedom of expression, with the Chinese government arguing it's essential for maintaining social stability, national security, and the authority of the Communist Party (CCP). Censorship is defended as a means to prevent the spread of harmful or destabilizing content, including political dissent and sensitive historical events. This concept extends to "cyber sovereignty," where China asserts its right to regulate the internet within its borders to protect national interests and uphold Communist values.

There are concerns about self-censorship within Chinese Canadian media, particularly regarding sensitive topics like Canada-China relations. Factors such as advertiser backlash, fear of reprisal, and the desire to maintain good relations with China may pressure media outlets to avoid critical reporting. The extent of self-censorship varies, with some journalists still providing critical coverage, while others are more cautious. This complexity is influenced by their editorial stances, ranging from pro-CCP to pro-democracy.

Social media, especially WeChat, plays a significant role in information dissemination and opinion shaping within the Chinese Canadian community. These platforms are crucial for discussions and news sharing but also raise concerns about misinformation, censorship, and surveillance due to their ties to the Chinese government.

## Conclusion - Navigating the Labyrinth: Chinese Media's Crucial Role in Decoding Canada-China Relations

As tensions between China and Canada continue to escalate, fueled by allegations of espionage, foreign interference, and divergent stances on human rights issues, our conclusion is that the Chinese media in Canada has played a pivotal role in navigating these complexities. By providing comprehensive coverage and a range of perspectives on critical developments in Canada-China relations, Chinese media has not only kept the Chinese Canadian community informed but also shaped community sentiments and potentially influenced diplomatic relations.

The Chinese media's coverage of sensitive topics, such as the alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang, the Hong Kong extradition protests, and the high-profile Meng Wanzhou case, underscores its crucial role in deciphering the intricacies of international relations and their impact on domestic concerns.

While some outlets, like The Epoch Times, have taken a more critical stance against the Chinese government's actions, others have opted for a cautious approach, possibly due to fears of repercussions or self-censorship. This highlights the delicate balance Chinese media must strike between their duty to inform and the potential consequences of reporting on controversial issues.

Moreover, the ongoing debate surrounding foreign interference in Canadian elections and the proposed establishment of a Foreign Agent Registry has brought to the forefront the challenges of maintaining national security while safeguarding the rights and freedoms of minority communities.



The Chinese media's coverage of the foreign interference issue, including the diverse opinions expressed by community leaders, politicians, and media outlets themselves, emphasizes the need for a nuanced approach that considers the concerns and aspirations of the Chinese Canadian community.

What is striking in contrast is how little attention Canadian decision makers have paid to “what makes the Chinese community tick” as represented in that community media’s diverse trends and opinions.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential challenges faced by Chinese media in Canada, such as the pressure to maintain good relations with China and the risk of self-censorship. As Canada navigates its relationship with China and seeks to build a more inclusive and cohesive society, engaging with and understanding the role of Chinese media will be crucial in achieving these goals.

In the face of these multifaceted challenges to Canadian unity, the role of Chinese media in fostering cross-cultural understanding and facilitating dialogue between the Chinese Canadian community and the broader Canadian society cannot be overstated. By providing a platform for the expression of diverse viewpoints and experiences, Chinese media serves as a bridge between cultures, promoting mutual understanding and cooperation.

As the Chinese Canadian community grows and diversifies, the role of Chinese media in Canada will become increasingly significant. Challenges like foreign interference and censorship persist, but these media outlets also have the potential to foster mutual understanding and cooperation between Canada and China.

Acknowledging the pressures of maintaining good relations with China, some media may shy away from controversial topics to protect their interests, while others strive for balanced and independent reporting, contributing diverse perspectives on Canada-China relations.

Looking ahead, the Chinese media landscape in Canada is poised to evolve further, shaped by the ever-changing dynamics of Canada-China relations, technological advancements, and the generational diversity of the Chinese Canadian community. To harness the power of Chinese media in promoting cross-cultural understanding and contributing to informed public discourse, it is imperative for policymakers, researchers, and community leaders to engage in open dialogue, foster media literacy, and support responsible journalism.

By embracing the vital role of Chinese media in Canada and working towards a more inclusive and transparent media ecosystem, Canada can strengthen its multicultural fabric, promote informed public debate, and navigate the complexities of its relationship with China in a manner that upholds its values and interests while respecting the diversity and aspirations of its citizens.

## Chapter Two - The Fault Lines of Identity: The Impact of the Nijjar Assassination on Canada-India Relations



## Introduction: The South Asian Media Mosaic

The MIREMS database of South Asian outlets numbers over 320 outlets in Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil and Urdu, in addition to South Asian media in English – one of India’s official languages. These various languages represent religious differences – Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam, cultural differences that include mutually unintelligible alphabets and mutually understandable speech, and to be blunt, war, both civil and international.

Canadian ethnic media and Indian homeland media prominently reported on the diplomatic tensions between Canada and India, focusing on the fallout from the assassination of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the subsequent mutual expulsion of diplomats, and its impact on trade relations and public perception in both countries.

Our tracking of this issue started in June 2023, but our daily monitoring of South Asian media in Canada and India has captured everything from the Air India bombing trials to the farmers’ rebellion in India, leading up to the most recent diplomatic fallout between the two countries.

**Key insights are provided below into the escalating diplomatic rift, showcasing varied perspectives from the Canadian South Asian and Indian media landscape, including reactions to Trudeau's allegations against India, the cancellation of trade missions, and the broader implications for Canada-India relations which include the plight of international students of Indian origin.**

## Punjab: A Region Shaped by Historical Disputes and Trauma

The Punjab region, situated in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, has been a site of historical disputes and conflicts. The region, which is now divided between India and Pakistan, has witnessed several key events that have shaped its history and continue to influence current tensions.

One of the most significant historical events in the Punjab region was the Partition of India in 1947. During this time, British India was divided into two independent nations: Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. The partition led to mass migrations, communal violence, and the displacement of millions of people across the newly-formed border. The Punjab region was particularly affected, as it was split between India and Pakistan, leading to a tragic loss of life and a deep-rooted trauma that continues to impact the region's politics and social fabric.

Another significant historical dispute in the Punjab region is the Khalistan movement, which seeks to create an independent Sikh homeland. The movement gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s, leading to a period of insurgency and counter-insurgency operations in Indian Punjab. The Indian government's response to the Khalistan movement, particularly the storming of the Golden Temple in Amritsar during Operation Blue Star in 1984, further escalated tensions and led to the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards.

The aftermath of these events, including the anti-Sikh riots in 1984, has left a lasting impact on the Sikh community worldwide and continues to shape the discourse around Sikh identity and self-determination.

## Canada and India: A Complex Tapestry of Diaspora, Diplomacy, and Distrust

Canada and India have a long-standing relationship that has been shaped by historical, cultural, and economic ties. The two countries are both members of the Commonwealth and share a commitment to democracy, pluralism, and the rule of law.

One of the key aspects of Canada-India relations is the significant Indian Diaspora in Canada. According to the 2016 Canadian census, there are over 1.3 million Canadians of Indian origin, making them one of the largest non-European ethnic groups in the country. The Indian Diaspora in Canada has made significant contributions to various sectors, including business, academia, and politics.

However, Canada-India relations have also been affected by the Khalistan movement and its perceived support among some sections of the Canadian Sikh community. The Indian government has expressed concerns over the activities of Khalistani groups in Canada and has urged the Canadian government to take action against those involved in anti-India activities.

In recent years, Canada and India have sought to strengthen their economic ties through various initiatives, such as the Canada-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations. However, progress on this front has been slow, and the current diplomatic tensions surrounding the Nijjar assassination have further complicated the relationship between the two countries.

## The Nijjar Assassination: A Catalyst for Polarization and Reflection

The current tensions between Canada and India, particularly in the context of the Nijjar assassination, are rooted in a complex history of cultural and political conflicts and reconciliations.

One of the key historical factors shaping this relationship is the legacy of British colonialism in India. The British Raj, which ruled over the Indian subcontinent for nearly two centuries, employed a "divide and rule" strategy that exploited religious and ethnic differences to maintain control over the population. This policy contributed to the strengthening of communal identities and laid the groundwork for future conflicts, including the Partition of India in 1947.

The Partition, which led to the creation of Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan, was a traumatic event that resulted in widespread violence, mass migrations, and the displacement of millions of people. The Punjab region, which was divided between India and Pakistan, was particularly affected by the Partition, with Sikhs and Hindus facing persecution and violence in Pakistani Punjab, and Muslims facing similar challenges in Indian Punjab.

These tensions came to a head in the 1970s and 1980s with the rise of the Khalistan movement, which sought to create an independent Sikh homeland in the Punjab region. The movement was fueled by a sense of grievance and alienation among Sikhs, who felt that their rights and aspirations were not being adequately addressed by the Indian government.

The Indian government's response to the Khalistan movement, particularly the storming of the Golden Temple in Amritsar during Operation Blue Star in 1984, further escalated tensions and led to a period of insurgency and counter-insurgency violence in the Punjab region. The assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards later that year, and the subsequent anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and other parts of India, deepened the sense of trauma and alienation among the Sikh community.

These events had a profound impact on the Sikh Diaspora, particularly in Canada, which is home to one of the largest Sikh populations outside of India. Many Sikhs who fled India during this period sought asylum in Canada and other countries, bringing with them a sense of grievance and a desire for self-determination.

## Assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar and Diplomatic Tensions

In June 2023, Nijjar was shot and killed in Surrey, British Columbia, outside of the gurdwara where he was the president. Nijjar, a pro-Khalistan activist, was declared a terrorist by the Indian government in 2020, a claim he and his supporters denied.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused India of possible involvement in the assassination of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia, which led to tensions between Ottawa and New Delhi rising to new levels. Trudeau made an explosive statement before the Canadian Parliament, alleging that Ottawa was pursuing “credible allegations” gathered by Canadian Intelligence against New Delhi for playing a role in Nijjar’s assassination.

In Toronto, **CHLO 530 AM Des Pardes** (Punjabi) commented on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusations against India concerning Nijjar's assassination, noting the gravity of such allegations and their potential to provoke diplomatic tensions, reflecting on the impact on Canada-India relations. Radio host Simroz Sidhu said that this is not a small issue and any country can take it as “an act of provocation.”

The Edmonton-based **Connect FM 101.7 Shaam Wala Show** (Punjabi) underscored that Trudeau's statement is serious and could significantly impact bilateral relations.

The aftermath of Trudeau’s accusation resulted in the mutual expulsion of diplomats from both countries and a war of words. Especially vocal were Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar and then Foreign Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi. Canada and India both expelled a senior diplomat following the accusations, with India canceling visas for Canadians and Canada trying to calm the diplomatic clash.

There was a broad spectrum of reactions and analyses from Canadian ethnic media regarding the expulsion of diplomats between Canada and India, highlighting the significant impact of these events on diplomatic and community relations. The coverage reflects concerns about escalating tensions, the implications for bilateral trade, and the broader geopolitical ramifications of the conflict.

Reporting on the expulsion of an Indian diplomat from Canada, Toronto's **Radio 770 AM Saaz-O-Awaz** (Urdu) highlighted that foreign interference has become a burning issue between India and Canada.

Brampton-based **Radio Humsafar 1350 AM Khabarsar** (Punjabi) analyzed the expulsion of diplomats as a result of Trudeau's shocking allegations against the Indian government concerning Nijjar's killing, pointing out that relations between the two countries have hit rock bottom.

## Navigating the Khalistan Question: Perspectives from South Asian Canadian Media

In the decades since, the Khalistan movement has remained a sensitive issue in Canada-India relations, with the Indian government accusing some Sikh groups in Canada of supporting separatism and extremism. The Canadian government, for its part, has sought to balance its commitment to freedom of expression and human rights with its desire to maintain strong economic and strategic ties with India.

Recent incidents, such as the Nijjar assassination and the ongoing farmers' protests in India, which have drawn support from Sikh groups in Canada, have further complicated this relationship. The Indian government has accused some Canadian politicians, particularly those of Sikh origin, of pandering to Khalistani separatists and interfering in India's internal affairs.

Despite these tensions, Canada and India have also made efforts to reconcile their differences and build a stronger bilateral relationship. The two countries have engaged in high-level diplomatic exchanges, including visits by Prime Ministers Justin Trudeau and Narendra Modi, and have sought to strengthen economic and cultural ties through initiatives such as the Canada-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the Canada-India Track 1.5 Dialogue on Innovation, Growth, and Prosperity.

However, the current diplomatic fallout from the Nijjar assassination underscores the ongoing challenges in navigating the complex historical and political dynamics that shape Canada-India relations. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort by both governments to engage in dialogue, build trust, and find common ground on issues of concern, while also respecting the rights and aspirations of minority communities in both countries.

Sikh media outlets in Canada have widely covered the Nijjar assassination, with many expressing concerns over the alleged involvement of the Indian government. The World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) issued a statement condemning the assassination and calling for a thorough investigation into the incident.

The Sikh Press Association, a UK-based Sikh media outlet with a significant Canadian audience, published an article titled "Canadian Sikh Activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar Assassinated", which highlighted Nijjar's activism and the concerns within the Sikh community regarding the potential involvement of foreign actors in his killing.

Hindu media outlets in Canada have generally been more cautious in their coverage of the Nijjar assassination, with some expressing concerns over the potential impact on Canada-India relations. The Hindustan Times, a popular Indian newspaper with a significant Canadian readership, published an article titled "Canada-India relations strained after Sikh leader's killing", which highlighted the diplomatic tensions between the two countries following the assassination.

The Hindu Forum of Canada, a prominent Hindu advocacy group, issued a statement expressing condolences to Nijjar's family and calling for a thorough investigation into the incident.

Punjabi media outlets in Canada, which cater to both Sikh and Hindu audiences, have provided extensive coverage of the Nijjar assassination and its impact on the community. Chardikala Time TV, a popular Punjabi news channel, aired a segment titled "Hardeep Singh Nijjar's assassination: A blow to the Sikh community", which featured interviews with community leaders and activists discussing the implications of the assassination.

Punjabi Radio USA, a prominent Punjabi radio station with a significant Canadian listenership, hosted a panel discussion on the Nijjar assassination and its potential impact on Canada-India relations.

Homeland Indian media and international media outlets have closely followed the Nijjar assassination and its impact on Canada-India relations, with many expressing concerns over the alleged involvement of Khalistani groups in Canada.

The Times of India, one of India's largest English-language newspapers, published an article titled "Canada's Khalistani problem: How the Nijjar assassination has strained ties with India", which discussed the Indian government's concerns over the activities of Khalistani groups in Canada and their alleged role in the assassination.

The Hindustan Times, another prominent Indian newspaper, published an editorial titled "The Nijjar assassination: A test for Canada-India relations", which called for a collaborative effort between the two countries to address the issue of Khalistani extremism and its impact on bilateral relations.

Indian news channels, such as **NDTV** and **Republic TV**, have also provided extensive coverage of the Nijjar assassination and its diplomatic fallout, featuring interviews with political analysts and former diplomats discussing the implications for Canada-India relations.

## The Khalistan Movement and its Impact on Canada-India Relations

The Khalistan movement, advocating for an independent Sikh homeland in India called Khalistan, has been a central issue causing rifts between Canada and India. Tensions began escalating in 2015 after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau added four Sikh ministers to his cabinet, perceived by India as Canada fostering sympathy toward the Khalistan movement.

Canadian and Indian mainstream media have highlighted the role of the Khalistan movement in affecting bilateral relations, with incidents such as the vandalism of Hindu temples and the depiction of violent acts in parades causing public concern. The Sikh Martyrdom Parade in Brampton and the controversy around the depiction of Indira Gandhi's assassination have also been sources of tension. The media coverage underscores how the Khalistan movement, and Canada's response to it, remains a critical factor in diplomatic interactions between the two countries.

In India, **Navbharat Times** (Hindi) wrote an opinion piece that discusses Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of relations with India, particularly in light of the Khalistan movement. It criticized Trudeau's approach as indifferent or supportive towards the Khalistan movement, which has been a significant point of contention between Canada and India.

Toronto's **Hamdard Daily** (Punjabi) newspaper discussed the cancellation of Canada's trade mission to India, citing the Khalistan issue as a significant point of friction between the two countries, and noting that diplomatic relations have been strained, partly due to Canada's perceived soft stance on Khalistani activism within its borders.

**PTC North America TV** (Punjabi) criticized the Canadian government for putting political interests, presumably referring to domestic political calculations related to the Khalistan issue, ahead of national interest. It mentioned the impact of the cancellation of trade talks on the Sikh community in Canada and criticized Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of the issue, suggesting it has poisoned the relationship between Canada and India.

## Impact on Indian Students and Visa Policies

Trudeau's accusations have impacted immigration for potential Indian students seeking to study in Canada, with several Indian media outlets suggesting Canada may limit the number of Indian students it accepts going forward.

Indian students comprised 41% of total study permits issued in 2022 and contributed an estimated \$6.2 billion to the Canadian economy in 2021. Indian mainstream media accused Khalistani forces in Canada of trafficking wanted Khalistani terrorists to Canada under the cover of international students.

Speaking with radio host Rajinder Saini as a guest on Mississauga's **Sauga 960 AM Radio Parvasi** (Punjabi), Nakul Jay Raath claimed that if ties with India continue to be tense, Canada will suffer greatly as it gains a lot from trade and from Indian international students, so improving ties between the two countries would be preferable.

On **Red FM 106.7 Good Morning Calgary** (Punjabi), attorney Raj Sharma discussed the effects of India's suspension of visas with radio host Amanjot Singh Pannu, saying there will be very interesting repercussions for international students who seek Indian police clearances when applying to become permanent residents in the future. No Canadian leader, according to Pannu, has ever levelled the same allegations against another country as Trudeau did.



## The Politics of Perception: How Media Narratives Shape Bilateral Relations

Concerns were prominent in both Canadian South Asian media and Indian homeland media regarding the potential impact of the diplomatic fall out on trade between Canada and India. The coverage reflects a blend of disappointment, concern, and critique towards the handling of diplomatic relations and trade negotiations, underscoring the complexity of Canada-India ties amid the controversy.

Toronto's **CMR FM 101.3** (Tamil) covered Canada's postponement of a trade mission to India, which was considered key to the government's Indo-Pacific strategy. This decision reflects the strained diplomatic relations' direct impact on trade initiatives and opportunities.

In India, the **Business Standard** newspaper highlighted the postponement of Canada's trade mission to India and stalled negotiations for a free trade agreement. It underscored the broader impacts of diplomatic disputes on bilateral trade efforts and the potential for missed economic opportunities.

Also in India, the **Dainik Bhaskar** (Hindi) newspaper focused on the paused India-Canada Free Trade Agreement talks following Trudeau's allegations against India and highlighted the condition set by India for resuming talks only when action is taken against Khalistanis, pointing to a diplomatic standoff with trade implications.

The Toronto-based **Hamdard Daily** (Punjabi) discussed the cancellation of the trade mission to India amidst tensions, directly attributing the decision to the Khalistan issue. This source suggests that the political strains have tangible effects on economic discussions and trade potential between the two countries.

However, despite the tensions, there have been efforts between Canada and India to continue trade and military cooperation, with news of trade talks resuming that were indefinitely called off following Trudeau's accusations.

## Conclusion - Charting a New Course: The Future of Canada-India Engagement in Canada and Abroad

In conclusion, the fallout between Canada and India has sparked diverse reactions within both Canadian ethnic media and Indian media, echoing the sentiments and concerns of their respective diaspora communities.

**The impact of this diplomatic rift on diaspora communities in Canada cannot be overstated. It has generated heightened awareness and engagement among Canadians of Indian descent, prompting discussions about identity, allegiance, and the role of the diaspora in shaping foreign policy.**

**Additionally, it has underscored the importance of ethnic media in providing a platform for diverse voices and perspectives within these communities. These are crucial to decision makers who wish to understand the nuances of negotiation.**

Moving forward, it is mutually convenient for both Canadian and Indian authorities to prioritize diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving the tensions diplomatically and fostering understanding. Moreover, it is essential for ethnic media outlets to continue facilitating dialogue and promoting informed discourse to navigate the complexities of this issue and its implications for diaspora communities in Canada and beyond.

## Chapter Three - Echoes of War: Ethnic Media's Role in Shaping the Narrative of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict



## Introduction

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has captivated global attention, with media outlets across the world providing extensive coverage and analysis. This section of the paper examines reactions to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict from various media sources, including Ukrainian, Russian and Latvian homeland media, as well as Canadian mainstream and ethnic media, with a specific focus on Ukrainian and Russian Diaspora media in Canada. By analyzing coverage from these diverse sources, it aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how different media outlets are portraying and responding to the war.

**The coverage of the conflict by Ukrainian and Russian homeland media reveals starkly contrasting narratives, reflecting the opposing stances of their respective governments and the deep-rooted tensions between the two nations.**

Over the course of our 7-year media tracking of Canada's involvement in the Ukraine-Russia conflict, opinions of the Canadian based Russian and Ukrainian media outlets have changed as the conflict has evolved into a war. The scope of our research covered over 200 Canadian and international media outlets, from which articles and radio/TV broadcasts were extracted on a daily basis and summarized into a database.

The conflict has impacted the diaspora media from neighbouring countries, and by way of illustration we have included a section on the Polish Canadian media's reaction.

**To fully understand the Ukrainian Canadian and Homeland Ukrainian media reactions to the Russian War in Ukraine, it is essential to consider the complex historical and cultural context that has shaped the relationship between Ukraine and Russia.**

## A Historical Perspective: The Roots of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict and Its Impact on the Diaspora

Ukraine and Russia share a long and intertwined history, with their origins traced back to the medieval state of Kievan Rus', which existed from the 9th to the 13th century. Kyiv, now the capital of Ukraine, was the center of this East Slavic civilization. Over the centuries, the territories of present-day Ukraine were divided among various powers, including the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Ottoman Empire, and the Russian Empire.

In the early 20th century, Ukraine briefly gained independence following the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the collapse of the Russian Empire. However, this independence was short-lived, as the Soviet Union emerged and absorbed Ukraine as one of its republics. During the Soviet era, Ukraine suffered greatly under the policies of collectivization and Russification, which aimed to suppress Ukrainian language and culture.

One of the most tragic events in Ukrainian history occurred during the 1930s, known as the Holodomor. This man-made famine, orchestrated by the Soviet regime under Joseph Stalin, resulted in the deaths of millions of Ukrainians. The Holodomor is recognized by many countries, including Canada, as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people.

During World War II, Ukraine found itself caught between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Some Ukrainian nationalists, such as Stepan Bandera and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), initially collaborated with the Germans in the hope of achieving independence from the Soviet Union. However, they soon faced persecution from both the Nazi and Soviet forces. The complex legacy of this period still resonates in modern Ukraine and its relations with neighboring countries.

Ukraine gained its independence in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Since then, the country has sought to forge its own identity and maintain its sovereignty in the face of ongoing tensions with Russia. The 2004 Orange Revolution and the 2014 Euromaidan protests were pivotal moments in Ukraine's recent history, reflecting the population's desire for closer ties with the West and resistance to Russian influence.

The current conflict between Russia and Ukraine can be traced back to the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of a separatist war in eastern Ukraine, supported by Russia. These events have deepened the divide between the two countries and have had a significant impact on the Ukrainian Diaspora worldwide, including in Canada.

## From the Frontlines to the Diaspora: Contrasting Perspectives in Ukrainian and Russian Media

Canada is home to one of the largest Ukrainian Diaspora communities in the world, with over 1.3 million Canadians claiming Ukrainian ancestry. The Ukrainian Canadian media has been closely following the events in Ukraine and has been vocal in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Ukrainian Voice**, a weekly newspaper published in Winnipeg, has consistently reported on the conflict, highlighting the resilience of the Ukrainian people and the need for international support. In an article titled "Two Years of War: The Strength and Resilience of Ukraine" -March 1, 2023, the newspaper praised the courage of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians in the face of Russian aggression.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) has emerged as a prominent voice in advocating for continued support for Ukraine. On their website (<https://www.ucc.ca/>), the UCC regularly posts updates on the situation in Ukraine, as well as news about the community's efforts to raise awareness and provide humanitarian aid. Toronto's **Novy Shliakh** newspaper reported on the UCC's efforts to ensure that Canada maintains its commitment to Ukraine: "The UCC calls on the Government of Canada to designate Russia a state supporter of terrorism - as the Islamic Republic of Iran has been designated." The organization also urges the Canadian government to seize Russian assets and provide them to Ukraine, demonstrating the Ukrainian Canadian community's push for stronger actions against Russia.

**The New Pathway**, a Toronto-based Ukrainian Catholic newspaper, has also been covering the conflict extensively. In an editorial titled "The Importance of Unity in the Face of Russian Aggression" (April 15, 2023), the newspaper emphasized the need for the Ukrainian Canadian community to remain united in its support for Ukraine and to continue putting pressure on the Canadian government to provide military and humanitarian assistance.

## Ukrainian Canadian Media: United in Solidarity and Support for Ukraine

Analysis of Ukrainian Canadian media reveals that the Ukrainian community in Canada has been actively engaged in supporting Ukraine since the full-scale Russian invasion began.

Toronto's Ukrainian Echo newspaper reports on various initiatives, such as rallies, fundraising events and donation drives organized by Ukrainian Canadians to aid Ukraine. For example, one such article reported that the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) joined the annual Halifax International Security Forum, where all discussion panels this year were dedicated to Ukraine. The Ukrainian community's efforts demonstrate strong solidarity with Ukraine and a commitment to assisting the country in its fight against Russian aggression.

Ukrainian Canadian media also sheds light on the challenges faced by Ukrainian refugees who have sought shelter in Canada under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) program. The Ukrainian Echo reported on the difficulties these individuals encounter, such as language barriers, adjusting to a new way of life, securing employment, and being separated from their families. Additionally, Ukrainian media have raised concerns about the perceived lack of adequate support from the Canadian government, suggesting that the settlement of Ukrainians in Canada relies heavily on volunteer and non-governmental organizations.

The Ukrainian Canadian community has been active in commemorating important events and milestones related to the war in Ukraine. *Novy Shliakh* reports on the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with rallies and demonstrations held in over 40 communities across Canada. Alexandra Chyczij, President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, stated, "For two years, the heroic Ukrainian people have stood up to Russia's brutal, barbaric aggression. To ensure that Ukraine defeats Russia, Canada and our allies must urgently provide Ukraine with more weapons and ammunition."

Furthermore, Ukrainian Canadian media has covered instances of anti-Ukrainian sentiment in Canada and other countries. The Ukrainian Echo covered a story about a European parliamentarian expressing outrage at the behavior of Ukrainian refugees in Austria. "It is difficult to consider Ukrainian refugees who drive around Austria in cars worth more than 250,000 euros as those in need of protection." The parliamentarian's comments were met with criticism from the Ukrainian community, highlighting the challenges faced by Ukrainian refugees and the need for greater understanding and support.

Asking what's next for Putin, Novy Shliakh wrote that as we enter the third year of Putin's "Special Military Operation" to "de-Nazify" Ukraine, there is no shortage of speculation as to what Putin will do next. Clearly, his over-ambitious plan to bring Ukraine back into Moscow's orbit as a subservient satellite has evaporated faster than his crumbling military might and inventory of tanks and other military technology.

## Voices from the Homeland: Ukrainian Journalists' Resilience and Challenges in Covering the Conflict

Since the start of the war with Russia, Ukrainian homeland media has maintained a resolute focus on the military aspects of the conflict, providing updates on the situation on the frontlines. Ukrainian homeland media present a narrative that appreciates and acknowledges the support and solidarity offered by Canada to Ukraine amidst the conflict. They focus on the training and assistance provided by Canada, as well as Canada's stance against Russian aggression, and provided little coverage on the plight of Ukrainian refugees overseas.

In Ukraine, the media has been at the forefront of covering the conflict, often at great personal risk to journalists. Ukrainian media outlets have provided in-depth reporting on the frontlines, as well as analysis of the political and social implications of the war.

**Ukrainska Pravda**, one of Ukraine's most popular online news sources, has been a reliable source of information throughout the conflict. In an article titled "The Invisible Front: The Psychological Toll of Russia's War on Ukraine" (June 10, 2023), the outlet explored the mental health challenges faced by Ukrainian soldiers and civilians as a result of the ongoing war.

**Hromadske**, an independent Ukrainian media organization, has been producing high-quality journalism, including investigative reports and interviews with key figures in the conflict. In a series of articles titled "Donbas Diaries" (<https://en.hromadske.ua/posts/donbas-diaries>), Hromadske journalists provided a firsthand account of life on the frontlines, giving voice to the experiences of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians.

**The Kyiv Independent**, an English-language news outlet based in Ukraine's capital, has been a vital source of information for international audiences. In an article titled "The Human Cost of Russia's War: Stories of Loss and Resilience" (August 5, 2023), the Kyiv Independent highlighted the personal stories of Ukrainians who have lost loved ones or been displaced by the conflict.

Ukrainian media has also been instrumental in countering Russian disinformation and propaganda.

**StopFake**, a Ukrainian fact-checking organization, has been debunking false narratives and exposing misleading information spread by Russian media outlets and social media accounts.

It should be emphasized that the reporting by Ukrainian journalists during this conflict has been remarkable, as they navigate unique challenges to provide critical information to both local and global audiences.

Ukrainian journalists face emotional distress, safety concerns, and restrictions on independent media, yet they continue to produce impactful journalism. Unlike foreign correspondents, they are living the story themselves, working under curfews, blackouts, and the constant threat of violence.

Some have even lost their lives, like cameraman Yehvenii Sakun who was killed in a missile attack. Despite these hardships, Ukrainian journalists are fighting on their own front, ensuring the world remains informed about the unfolding crisis in their homeland.

## Voices from the Homeland: Canadian Military Support

Ukrainian media often report on Operation UNIFIER, Canada's military training and capacity-building mission in support of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**Army Inform**, the information agency of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, emphasized the significant contributions of Canadian instructors who have trained over 39,000 Ukrainian soldiers and security personnel since the operation's inception. It discussed Canada's condemnation of Russian missile and drone attacks on Ukraine, underscoring Canada's strong support for Ukraine in various domains including military, financial, humanitarian, and political assistance.

**Ukrinform** – the national news agency of Ukraine - featured the Canadian Armed Forces' training of Ukrainian defenders to detect hidden explosive devices, showcasing Canada's ongoing commitment to enhancing the capabilities of the Ukrainian military. It also highlighted Canada's demands for Russia to cease attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine, reinforcing Canada's stance against Russia's actions and its solidarity with Ukraine.

The Kyiv-based **UNIAN** news agency quoted Canadian Defence Minister Bill Blair on the possibility of stationing Canadian soldiers in Ukraine for training purposes, stressing that such an action would be discreet and limited to avoid any combat roles. It reported on Canada's readiness to send military instructors to Ukraine under certain conditions, with a focus on non-combat tasks and the continuation of training outside Ukraine due to current circumstances.

## The Kremlin's Narrative: Russian Homeland Media's Control, Censorship, and Disinformation Campaigns

In Russian homeland media, the conflict is often framed in a way that emphasizes Russia's perspective, portraying Ukraine as unstable and casting doubt on the legitimacy of its government. The conflict is often portrayed as a struggle for influence in a region historically tied to Russia. Coverage may emphasize Russia's cultural and historical connections to Ukraine and frame its actions as defensive or protective.

**Russia Today** (RT) and **Sputnik News** are international media outlets funded by the Russian government and are known for presenting the Kremlin's perspective on the Ukraine conflict, emphasizing the justification of Russia's actions based on security concerns and the protection of Russian-speaking populations in Ukraine.



**Channel One, Russia-1 and Rossiya 24** are major state-run TV channels that dominate the Russian media landscape. They portray the Ukraine conflict in a light favorable to the Russian government, highlighting themes of "denazification" and "protecting ethnic Russians." **TASS** and **RIA Novosti** are state news agencies that provide coverage aligned with the Kremlin's views, often focusing on the illegitimacy of the Ukrainian government and alleging Western interference.

As an example, **Vedomosti** – a Russian-language daily business newspaper - reported on the Russian Ministry of Defence's claims of destroying Ukrainian military assets and highlighted the involvement of foreign mercenaries fighting alongside Ukrainian forces, emphasizing the international aspect of the conflict and possibly aiming to portray it as an aggression against Russia.

*RIA Novosti* - one of Russia's largest state-owned news agencies - conveyed statements from Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of the Russian Security Council, who accused NATO of training mercenaries and saboteurs for anti-Russian operations and claimed that NATO has de facto become a party to the conflict in Ukraine. This coverage aims to position Russia as responding to Western aggression and involvement in the conflict.

Russian news agency **Regnum** criticized Western military aid to Ukraine, suggesting that the weapons provided are outdated or dangerous, and claimed that arms supply to Ukraine only prolongs the conflict and affect stability in Europe and the world. This narrative may serve to undermine international support for Ukraine and portray Russia's actions as a response to Western provocations.

The Kremlin's control over the media has led to widespread censorship and suppression of dissenting voices. Just days after the invasion, President Vladimir Putin signed a law making it illegal to "discredit" the Russian army. This has resulted in over 6,500 cases of arrests or fines for ordinary Russians who questioned the war or expressed sympathy with Ukraine. Citizens are even being prosecuted for small gestures, like wearing blue and yellow clothing.

Independent media in Russia face significant challenges, including censorship, fines, and in some cases, being labeled as "foreign agents" or being outright banned. Before facing increased pressure, bans, or having to operate from abroad, **Meduza, TV Rain (Dozhd), and Novaya Gazeta** were known for their critical coverage of the government's policies, including the Ukraine conflict. They provided investigations into military activities, human rights abuses, and the impact of the conflict on civilian populations in Ukraine and Russia.

The Kremlin's crackdown on dissent has also extended to anti-war protests. As the atrocities committed by Russian soldiers in Bucha came to light, the government's denials enraged some Russians. However, public anti-war protests have become rare, as the tough penalties for spreading "disinformation" about the war and police harassment of activists have deterred people from taking to the streets.

Furthermore, Russian state media has engaged in a disinformation campaign, publishing false reports about the widespread surrender of Ukrainian troops. There are also reports that Russia plans to threaten the families of Ukrainian soldiers to induce their surrender. These strategies aim to discourage the Ukrainian forces and sway the narrative in Russia's favor.

Russian state media conducts disinformation campaigns using techniques such as false accusations, misrepresentation of events, propaganda and false claims. For example, Russian-backed media reports have falsely claimed that the Ukrainian government is conducting genocide of civilians and falsely accused Ukrainian forces of being incapable of operating military equipment supplied by their western allies. The Russian media has also been reported to use authentic images and videos to push false narratives.

Russian state media often downplay or deny Russia's involvement in the conflict, portraying it as a civil war initiated by Ukraine's government against ethnic Russians or Russian-speaking populations in Eastern Ukraine. The media might distort or selectively report events to fit a pro-Russian narrative, such as portraying Ukrainian military actions as unprovoked aggression or exaggerating the threat posed by Ukrainian nationalist groups.

## Russian Canadian Media: Diverse Perspectives in Seeking Balance

Russian Canadian media offers a variety of perspectives depending on the specific outlet and its audience. Russian Canadian media outlets serve a diverse audience, including both Russian immigrants and Canadians of Russian descent. As such, their coverage of the conflict may vary based on the viewpoints of their audience and editorial policies.

Russian homeland media has largely reflected the viewpoint of the Kremlin, aligning its coverage with the government's narrative. Recently, Russian Canadian media outlets have not presented a sympathetic view of Russia's actions in Ukraine, but in the past, they have highlighted concerns about the treatment in Canada of Russian-speaking population.

Russian Canadian media sometimes emphasizes Russia's security concerns, particularly regarding NATO expansion, and perceives Western interference in former Soviet territories.

The perspectives of those in the Russian Diaspora who sympathize with Russia's actions in Ukraine are frequently voiced through readers' comments on articles discussing the conflict. Many express their support and provide rationales for Russia's invasion.

While the Russian Canadian media often covers initiatives by the Ukrainian community aimed at aiding Ukraine in the conflict, such as fundraising, festivals, protests, donation drives for clothing and medications, there is minimal coverage of similar efforts within the Russian community.

Notably, there are Russian Canadian outlets that provide a balanced perspective, considering the viewpoints of both Russian Canadian and Ukrainian Canadian communities. These outlets offer critical analysis of Russia's role in the conflict while also acknowledging the complexities of the situation. In many opinion stories that discuss the war, there is an intense sense of disapproval of the conflict.

There is a notion that the Russian-Ukrainian relations following the collapse of the USSR could have been different, potentially averting the present conflict. Following this crisis, it is very unlikely positive relations between Russian and Ukrainian people will be restored. This situation is tragic, as it disrupts longstanding familial and societal connections between Russians and Ukrainians.

## Latvia's Media: Solidarity with Ukraine in Debunking Russian Propaganda

In the Baltic region, Latvian media sources, both Latvian and Russian-language outlets, have largely concurred with the official government position of supporting Ukraine and condemning Russia's aggression. The war in Ukraine continues to occupy a significant portion of the Latvian mediascape two years into the full-scale invasion, with active coverage of the developments on frontline being produced daily across multiple sources.

**Sargs.lv** – the official web portal of the National Armed Forces of Latvia - highlighted Latvia's participation in an Ottawa Security Conference focused on security and defense issues, including Russia's war in Ukraine, and discussed Latvia's support for Ukraine in cybersecurity and resilience against hybrid threats.

Based in Riga, the **Apollo** news website reported on Canada's potential transfer of CRV7 air-to-surface missiles to Ukraine, underlining coordination between Canadian and Ukrainian authorities to ensure the military transfers meet Ukraine's needs.

Additionally, numerous Latvian media articles discussed the Ukraine conflict considering its impact on the situation in Latvia in terms of security, economics, social relations between linguistic communities within the country, Ukrainian refugees etc. Latvian media have closely followed the political situation in Russia itself, and frequently reported on similar developments in Ukraine.

Of note, various sources have also made efforts to debunk Russia's propaganda narratives by publishing materials targeting disinformation campaigns. At the same time, Latvian media have also frequently relied on international publications, re-printing or summarizing articles by globally renowned outlets such as the BBC, Financial Times, Bloomberg and The New York Times. These articles highlight problems with international assistance to Ukraine, sanctions on Russia, internal political strife within countries marked as key allies of Ukraine, as well as less optimistic analyses of the situation on the front.

**Neatkarīga Rita Avize** – a daily newspaper published in Riga - featured an article debunking Kremlin propaganda against Ukraine and highlighting the international support for Ukraine, including military aid.

## Unwavering Support: Poland's Continued Alliance with Ukraine Amidst Historical Complexity

Poland and Ukraine share a complex history marked by moments of tension, yet the enduring solidarity between the two nations prevails. Historical grievances, such as differing perspectives on figures like Stepan Bandera and past conflicts, occasionally resurface in ethnic media. However, these issues are contextual elements that help understand certain reactions, like the controversy surrounding Yaroslav Hunka, a Ukrainian Canadian recognized in Canada, whose past affiliations with the SS Division Galicia sparked significant debate.

Despite these historical complexities, Poland has consistently supported Ukraine, particularly following Russia's recent aggressive actions. As the conflict continues, Poland's commitment remains unwavering, though economic interests sometimes diverge, sparking discussions within Polish media on the best forms of support for Ukraine. The primary narrative, however, emphasizes Poland's dedication to Ukraine's sovereignty and security.

Poland's strategic position as a NATO member adjacent to Ukraine underscores its significant role in regional security. Polish leaders, including Prime Minister Donald Tusk, have expressed the need for vigilance and preparation for potential broader conflicts, highlighting the serious implications of Russian aggression. The sentiments of fear and determination are echoed by influential voices within Poland, arguing for a robust defense strategy and support for Ukraine to prevent further escalation in the region.

Writing for Canadian Polish newspaper **Zycie** on April 4, 2024, W. Werner-Wojnarowicz commented “After two years of the murderous war in Ukraine, Prime Minister Tusk talks about the war as a coming reality. Fear grips people because of Putin. But Putin has been there since 2000!” Why are people surprised now? Wojnarowicz included a link to an interview with retired Major General of the Polish Army Leon Komornicki who questions why Central Europe is supposed to be cannon fodder; and says the solution to helping Ukraine is to create an arms industry in Europe, and not to try to figure out how to maneuver soldiers and citizens of Central European countries into the war.

## Solidarity and Strategy: Poland’s Role as Ukraine's Steadfast Ally

Defense spending and military readiness are frequent topics in Polish ethnic media, reflecting the national priority of arming in response to regional threats. Statements from Polish leaders praise international allies like Canada while advocating for stronger collective defense commitments within NATO.

At the end of February 2024, the Canadian Polish newspaper **Goniec** said that while praising Canada as one of Poland's best allies, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk avoided criticizing Prime Minister Justin Trudeau directly over Canada's defence spending. On April 10, Toronto based **CJMR 1320 AM Radio 7 Zycie – Mississauga** discussed Canada's newly announced defense spending as higher but still below NATO standards.

The interaction between the Polish and Ukrainian communities, particularly in diaspora contexts such as Canada, also illustrates a deep cultural and social bond. This connection is evident in the workforce integration and community support, with Ukrainians finding employment and assistance within Polish businesses and networks.

On March 17, 2024 radio host Joanna Ciapka-Sangster of the Edmonton based Polish radio **CJSR 88.5 FM Nasze Radio Canada** and Polish-born former deputy premier of Alberta Thomas Lukaszuk discussed Poland's security as it relates to the war in Ukraine. Lukaszuk said "If we don't support Ukraine financially our price will be higher when we will have to actually send our soldiers". Situation is critical – Putin already mentioned Poland multiple times and made outrageous claims that Poland had collaborated with Hitler's Germany – echoing his accusation that Ukraine is a "Nazi" country and blamed Poland for the outbreak of the Second World War. We know it's absurd but that's Putin's propaganda that he might use to attack Poland like he attacked Ukraine, said Lukaszuk.

In response to Russian propaganda accusing Poland of historical misalignments, Polish commentators and politicians reiterate the absurdity of such claims and the importance of supporting Ukraine as a bulwark against potential aggression. The dialogue within Poland is not just about defense, but about actively shaping a future that ensures the safety and stability of both Poland and Ukraine.

On a side note, in the Greater Toronto Area, linguistic affinity plays an important role. Ukrainians now often work in Polish ethnic grocery stores and businesses. In Polish ethnic newspapers, you often see advertisements by Ukrainians who are looking for jobs, advertising their services or looking for a place to live.

## Beyond Immediate Borders: Italian Canadian Media and the Ripple Effects of the Conflict

This ripple effect of the conflict goes beyond the countries directly affected. Four Italian Canadian news outlets mentioned the Ukraine war in 13 news items: **CHIN Radio**, Toronto (1) **CFMB Radio**, Montreal (7), **Il Cittadino Canadese**, Montreal (2), **Lo Specchio**, GTA (3). In five news items (CHIN, Il Cittadino Canadese, Lo Specchio) the issue was cited in connection with the summit between Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Italian counterpart, Giorgia Meloni. Lo Specchio looked at the Hunka affair, when the House gave a standing ovation to a former Ukrainian Nazi during the visit by the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Canada. Il Cittadino Canadese reported on visits by Trudeau and Italian PM to Kyiv. CFMB reported on talks between Trudeau and Zelensky, Canada's military and financial aid to Ukraine, on Canada-Ukraine free trade and security agreements, foreign minister Joly's visit to Ukraine, temporary residence visas issued to Ukrainians, as well as Canada's role in multilateral efforts to help Ukraine.

The fact is that, from Armenian to Vietnamese, each of Canada's ethnic community media segments brings a different perspective to the international conflicts that reach our shores, a perspective that is informed by their unique, diverse and localized experiences of historical homeland events that may well have useful lessons for Canadians today.

## Conclusion: Ethnic Media: A Vital Conduit for Understanding and Empathy Between Communities in Times of War

The analysis of media reactions to the Russia-Ukraine conflict reveals stark contrasts in the narratives and perspectives presented by different outlets, reflecting the complex interplay of geopolitical interests, cultural dynamics, and information warfare.

While Ukrainian and Russian homeland media offer opposing narratives aligned with their respective governments' stances, Latvian media has largely supported Ukraine and condemned Russian aggression.

In Canada, mainstream media has taken a critical stance toward Russia's actions, while ethnic media outlets have provided diverse perspectives influenced by the experiences and sentiments of their respective communities.

Canadian Russian and Ukrainian ethnic media outlets play a crucial role in shaping public discourse and understanding of the conflict within their communities. Ethnic media outlets offer unique perspectives, insights, and information on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that are not readily available in mainstream Canadian media.

Polish and Italian Canadian media reflect each communities' particular historical and geopolitical connection to Ukraine and Russia, a connection worth keeping in mind when studying the reactions of diaspora communities to homeland and international events as politics and political strategies become globalized around us, and there are advantages to being able to see the world through the eyes of others.

Providing tailored resources and information, ethnic media outlets serve as valuable platforms for immigrant and refugee communities navigating the complexities of the conflict in their home countries. Furthermore, ethnic media coverage can foster discussions about the historical roots, cultural nuances, and long-term implications of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, promoting mutual understanding and reconciliation between communities.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges faced by ethnic media, such as limited resources, or potential biases, which may impact the objectivity and responsible reporting of information.

As the conflict continues to unfold, the role of ethnic media in shaping public opinion and influencing government policies cannot be overstated. Objective and responsible reporting from all media sources is paramount in ensuring that the multifaceted nature of this conflict is accurately portrayed, and that the perspectives and experiences of all affected communities are given a voice.

## Chapter Four - Fractured Narratives, Shared Pain: How Ethnic Media Shapes Canadian Perspectives on Israel-Palestine



## Introduction: A Conflict that is Not Recent, but Centuries Old

MIREMS coverage of the war in the Middle East has been more recent than the scan of the other conflicts analyzed in this paper, since the trigger event – the October 7, 2023, massacre of around 1,200 people and the taking of 240 hostages, which remains a key element in the situation.

As of this writing, on April 13, 2024, the mainstream news is that an Iranian attack on Israel is imminent, which pulls back the camera to focus on the region and raises the question of whether the Hamas attack is not a provocation to this denouement, at an enormous price.

Our ethnic media scan of current news on the issue is shorter in span, covering stories since that October event, and our database of almost a 100 Arabic media worldwide has a mere 20 active outlets in Canada, while our Jewish one has a dozen and a half of which four are Canadian. Each media segment serves a different function in its community, primarily along the lines of linguistic barriers and settlement history in Canada.

By contrast, the conflict is not recent, but decades, even centuries old, depending on who is counting.

Here is a very high-level summary of a complex issue with deep historical, political, and social roots which trace back to the late 19th century when Zionists sought to establish a homeland for the Jewish people in Ottoman-controlled Palestine. At that time, Palestine was inhabited by Arab Muslims, with smaller numbers of Christians, Druze, Circassians, and Jews. The Balfour Declaration of 1917, issued by the British government, endorsed the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, leading to an influx of Jewish immigrants to the region. Following World War II and the Holocaust, international pressure mounted for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The establishment of Israel in 1948 led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who became refugees, sparking a decades-long conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people. The Palestinians seek to establish their own independent state in at least one part of historic Palestine. Numerous peace negotiations have taken place over the years, but a long-term peace agreement has not been reached.

Iran's role in the Israel-Palestine conflict is also complex and multifaceted. For more than four decades, Iran has maintained a steadfast commitment to the destruction of Israel, a pledge echoed by its Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran's historical support for groups opposing Israel, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, has not gone unnoticed. Into this mix one must factor the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites that puts Israel rapprochement with Gulf States as a further trigger of Iranian action.

**The conflict between Hamas and Israel has long been a focal point of international attention, with media coverage playing a crucial role in shaping public perception and understanding, tapping into centuries' old issues such as Western Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia dating to the Middle Ages and the Crusades.**



Different media segments offer distinct perspectives on this conflict. Its impact on media worldwide rises to pandemic levels, and this includes all ethnic media and all communities. At the centre of our attention are Arab and Jewish Canadian domestic media and Canadian mainstream media. This analysis delves into their respective viewpoints, highlighting key themes and differences in coverage.

## Jewish Canadian Media: Solidarity, Suffering, and the Struggle for Understanding

The Jewish Canadian media's reaction to the Israel-Hamas conflict may be divided into three categories. First is the situation "on the ground" in Israel itself and the experience of individuals caught in the conflict and of their family members and friends as well as concerned Canadians. For example, **Alberta Jewish News (AJN)** announced an upcoming talk in Calgary by the survivor of an attack on a music festival in Israel. The same publication told of how Michael Levy, brother of a hostage in Gaza, is urging the Canadian government to put pressure on Egypt and Qatar to in turn pressure Hamas. Canada, as a "country proud to support peace, should do what it can to help civilians and children in captivity," in Levy's view. Similarly, **Canadian Jewish News (CJN)** featured an article about how members of Canada's Jewish community are writing letters to Israeli hostages through the Red Cross, which, according to the paper, is not delivering them.

The second category concerns the Canadian federal and various provincial and municipal governments' response to the Israel-Hamas crisis. Alberta Jewish News featured a negative article about a non-binding motion passed by MPs on March 19 which urged Ottawa to "work towards the establishment of the State of Palestine." Both B'nai Brith Canada and CIJA (Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs) criticized the motion as "anti-Israel." B'nai Brith said the motion is a sign "anti-Israel demonization is becoming normalized in Canada." Canadian Jewish News reported CIJA plans to take the federal government to court over the decision to restore funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which has allegedly participated in the October 7 attacks on Israel. CJN also spoke of a protest by women at Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square who accused Ministers Mélanie Joly and Marci Ien of ignoring the plight of Israeli victims of sexual violence in Gaza. According to protest organizer Daphna Pollak, "We were particularly disappointed, by again, the rape crisis centers, the women's organizations... Marci Ien is the federal minister of gender equality. We haven't heard anything from her about it."

While the Jewish media's response to the federal government appears predominantly negative, the response to provincial and municipal governments' reaction to the Israel-Hamas conflict is more nuanced. In AJN, Jewish Federation of Edmonton CEO Stacey Leavitt-Wright spoke approvingly, following a trip to Israel, of a "strong letter of support" from Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly Nathan Cooper to Speaker of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) Amir Ohana. Less complimentary was the attitude towards the British Columbia government, which, according to CIJA Vice President Pacific Region Nico Slobinsky, "could do more" amidst a rise in antisemitic hate incidents in Vancouver, said AJN. CJA similarly stated the City of Toronto could have done more, in an article about a protest in that city during which a police officer delivered Tim Hortons to a demonstrator, for which Police Chief Myron Demkiw was forced to apologize.

The third category involves perceived effects of the war in Israel on life in Canada itself. Concerns have been raised about an increase in antisemitism in Canada as a result of the conflict abroad. For example, the article about hate crimes in Vancouver noted 33 of the 47 such incidents reported occurred after the October 7 Hamas attacks. Jewish Federation of Edmonton's Leavitt-Wright claimed children and families have faced antisemitism in schools and on campus, although "we have not seen the same level of violence on the streets of Edmonton as we have in other provinces," she said. On the other hand, Calgary Jewish Federation CEO Adam Silver told AJN antisemitism and antizionism is present in Calgary.

CJA featured an article about how Dr. Ted Rosenberg, a gerontologist at the University of British Columbia, felt forced to resign from his position as a clinical assistant due to the school's inability to deal with concerns about antisemitism. At issue was "A Call for Action on Gaza," a petition signed by over 225 students at the medical faculty which described Israel as a "settler colonial state" and accused it of "collective punishment through indiscriminate bombing of civilians." Rosenberg wrote, "This petition and other similar statements on campus, as well as the inaction by UBC, makes me wonder if antisemitism has become systemic in this institution." CJA further covered a protest at McGill University which led to classes being cancelled and which Jewish organizations condemned as antisemitic. "Targeting institutions because of their perceived connection to the Jewish community must stop," said CIJA Vice President Eta Yudin.

The Jewish-Canadian media delved into how non-Jewish individuals have viewed and reacted to the Israel-Hamas conflict. Alberta Jewish News wrote about "Malibu pizza princess" Caroline D'Amore, an influencer and supporter of the state of Israel. She spoke in Edmonton with Jewish teens about their experiences with antisemitism. "Kids are innocent," she said. "We have a collective responsibility to teach them about being responsible online... this is where a lot of youth are being harassed by antisemitism right now." Another non-Jew featured in AJN was Bassem Eid, a "Palestinian human rights activist" who has criticized Hamas as a "brutal, barbaric terrorist organization" and accused "so-called pro-Palestinians," to whom he referred as "thugs and gangsters," of hurting rather than helping the people they claim to support.

Alberta Jewish News approached the Israel-Hamas issue from a different angle in an article titled "A plea for connection" by Calgary rabbi and spiritual leader Mark Glickman. Glickman advised members of the Jewish community to be open to dialogue and not automatically avoid those with whom they disagree. He cited in particular Jewish organizations' decision to disinvite Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek from their events following her refusal to take part in a Chabad menorah lighting at City Hall as well as the ban on Jewish leaders from meeting with any non-Jewish leaders who have ever said anything objectionable about Israel. "Don't storm off when others say objectionable things – stay connected," Glickman said. In addition, he wrote that a large number of Jews "cannot reconcile Israel's war efforts with the universal Jewish values they have long embraced."

## Arab Canadian Media: Amplifying Palestinian Voices and Challenging International Biases

While Jewish Canadian media focuses on the Israeli perspective, solidarity with Israel, and the impact of the conflict on Canadian Jewish communities, Arabic Canadian media approaches the issue from a distinctly different angle, emphasizing the Palestinian narrative and the plight of Palestinian civilians. This contrast in perspectives highlights the complex and often polarizing nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how different media segments shape narratives based on their cultural, historical, and political contexts.

Articles on **Ahram-Canada**, an Arabic-language news website, highlight the destruction in Gaza and the significant number of casualties while criticizing the decisions leading to the conflict, including Hamas' strategies such as kidnapping civilians and the repercussions of their actions, which have led to a negative perception of the movement in the international community.

According to Montreal's Arabic-language **Sada Al-Mashrek** website, there is growing discontent within the Arab/Muslim community in Canada regarding the federal Liberal Party's stance on the conflict. This has led to some activists and financial contributors withdrawing their support from the party, reflecting broader community unrest and the potential political implications within Canada.

Moreover, Arabic media outlets are known to be critical of international actors, especially Western governments, whom they accuse of bias towards Israel. They highlight political alliances and historical contexts, such as the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and the displacement of Palestinians, to contextualize the conflict. Some opinions and editorials in Arabic media have called for international solidarity with Palestinians, condemned Israeli military actions, and advocated for a resolution that includes Palestinian statehood and self-determination.

Ahram-Canada explores the broader geopolitical implications of the conflict, suggesting that Iran and Russia could be seen as beneficiaries in the reshaping of Middle Eastern and global politics as attention shifts from other conflicts like the war in Ukraine.

An opinion column written for Montreal's **El Ressala** Arabic-language website notes that the conflict in the Middle East is the fault of the Arabs, whose hate-fueled beliefs towards Jewish people and Westerners are worsening the situation. However, the writer argues against calling the situation in Gaza a genocide, claiming that the population in Gaza has been growing and that they have access to certain goods and services. The article ends with a plea for the Arab world to adopt a different, more diplomatic strategy towards Israel, implying that the current approach is ineffective and leads to unnecessary suffering.

In Toronto, an article on the Arabic-language **Meshwar** website featured the opinion of Miko Peled, a political activist and grandson of one of Israel's founders, who criticized Israel, describing it as a racist state for 75 years, and arguing that people must not accept Israel and its racist policy, just as people rejected the same thing in South Africa and in the West.

Arabic media also delve into the social and cultural dimensions of the conflict, exploring themes of identity, heritage, and national pride among Palestinians. They feature stories of resilience and resistance, showcasing Palestinian cultural events, artistic expressions, and community initiatives aimed at preserving Palestinian heritage and identity in the face of adversity. This humanizes the Palestinian narrative and fosters a sense of unity and empowerment among Arab audiences.

## Mainstream Canadian Media: Balancing Objectivity and Nuance in a Polarized Landscape

In contrast, Canadian mainstream media coverage of the Hamas-Israel conflict tends to be more balanced and nuanced. While acknowledging the suffering of Palestinians, especially civilians caught in the crossfire, Canadian media also emphasize Israel's right to self-defence against rocket attacks and terrorist activities by Hamas and other militant groups. Reports often highlight Israel's security concerns, including the threat of terrorism and the need to protect its citizens from harm.

Canadian media outlets strive to provide diverse viewpoints, featuring analyses from experts, interviews with political figures, and opinions from advocacy groups representing different perspectives. This diversity allows for a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding the conflict, including historical, political, and security-related factors. Canadian journalists aim to present factual information while also promoting dialogue and critical thinking among their audience.

Canadian media coverage also reflects Canada's diplomatic stance on the conflict, which emphasizes a two-state solution and peaceful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. This approach aligns with Canada's support for international efforts to achieve a lasting and just resolution to the conflict, based on the principles of mutual recognition, security, and respect for human rights.

## Iranian Canadian Media

When examining the response of Farsi media to the recent escalation between Hamas and Israel and subsequently Iran and Israel, differences become apparent. Three primary trends emerge within the media landscape: Farsi media platforms operated by Iranians residing in Canada, Farsi outlets of big news agencies, and Farsi media outlets based in Iran.

Farsi media platforms operated by Iranians residing in Canada demonstrate a tendency to offer restricted coverage of the topic, resulting in a lack of comprehensive analysis or contextual understanding for comparison. This trend suggests a form of self-censorship within these media outlets. For example, **Salam Toronto** covered the death of another Canadian on December 23, 2023 but did not report on the conflict at all until the news about Air Canada establishing its flights to Israel after six months on April 11.

Indeed, there is a notable divergence in how the conflict and its aftermath are framed between homeland and international diaspora Farsi media outlets. Homeland Farsi media often presents the conflict as a demonstration of Iran's authority and prowess over Israel, depicting it as a significant triumph. For example, on April 15 the Iranian news agency **Khabar Online** claimed that a total of 9 missiles variously hit two Israeli airbases and uses a video of an Iranian missile before hitting the target to prove the point, in contrast with pro-Israel sources reporting the damage was minimal.

This portrayal stems from their belief that the attack is a retaliatory response to Israel's targeting of the consulate of Iran. These outlets assert that Israel and Western powers are hesitant to acknowledge the true success of Iran's operation.

Such portrayals may not fully represent the perspectives of all Iranians. Within Iranian society, there exists a spectrum of opinions regarding the recent conflict, and previous conflict between Hamas and Israel. While some individuals align with the narrative espoused by Iranian official media, others express condemnation of the attacks and show solidarity with Israel. Additionally, there are individuals who advocate for peace and oppose all forms of warfare; this faction is not necessarily in alignment with the government. But their advocacy often revolves around fostering a united Iran characterized by solidarity regardless of internal issues. It is difficult to verify these opinions considering the punishments for speaking in favour of Israel announced by the Iranian government.

This diversity of viewpoints underscores the complexity of public sentiment within Iran and highlights the multifaceted nature of Iranian society. Iran's **Tabnak News** presents a story that claims dispute in Netanyahu's cabinet over attacking Iran. It reports that on Channel 12 "of Zionist regime [...] The media is reporting huge disputes over punitive action against Iran in the Israeli War Cabinet [...] They agree on responding to Iran's attack but there are disputes over the timing and method."

Iran's response to dissenting voices includes the initiation of new rounds of activity aimed at reinforcing adherence to hijab regulations, a move intended to exert further control over its populace. Additionally, there have been announcements signaling Iran's intention to clamp down on any expressions of support for Israel on social media platforms. These measures underscore the government's efforts to suppress dissent and maintain ideological conformity among its population. Iran's **Ebtekar News**, quotes President Raesi saying that "Any adventure seeking will be subject to a harsher response." The same quote in **Tasnim News** is attributed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Amir Abdollahian.

In sharp contrast the Canadian Farsi media exhibits a cautious approach in light of recent reports that the Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference (PIFI) is looking into Iranian interference and harassment of Canadian Iranians by the Regime. As a result, numerous Iranians seeking relatively impartial news turn to outlets of major international news agencies. These sources often adhere to standards akin to those of Canadian mainstream media, offering Iranians alternative perspectives and a wider array of information. In doing so, they help bridge the void created by the absence of independent liberal Farsi media outlets.

Our analysis looked at several Farsi sources in Canada and found little news and no comment on the homeland situation which doesn't mean that the community is indifferent but so involved that it is fearful of offering an opinion on the matter. The only news on **Persian Mirror** was that Canada condemned the attack of Islamic Republic on Israel. **Salam Vancouver**, **Hamyari** (Vancouver), **Picobino** (Calgary), **Atash** (Toronto) say nothing on the subject. **Hodhod** in Montreal asks how does Israel's air defence system work. The **Iran Star** reports on Israel's attack on the Iranian embassy and damaged the Canadian embassy next door. **Medad** in Montreal reports that Israel and the US are waiting for Iran's retaliation but **Medad** does not report it when it happens.

In conclusion, there remains a notable gap and contradiction between the two main sources of information concerning the conflict. Farsi readers maintain a sense of skepticism regarding the repercussions of the recent escalation, questioning whether Iran has demonstrated its capability or exposed vulnerabilities. These contrasting viewpoints each have their adherents. Furthermore, given the Iranian community's experience of enduring an eight-year war with Iraq, particularly among those who oppose war, there is a profound sense of unease and concern regarding the possibility of further escalation in the conflict.

## Polish and Italian Canadian Media: Echoes of Historical Trauma and Contemporary Concerns

Indeed, perhaps because of the historical roots of anti-Semitism and current climate of Islamophobia in Eastern Europe, the diaspora communities from that region have reacted more than others.

By way of illustration, the Polish ethnic media has been reporting diplomatic tensions between Poland and Israel that erupted following the death of Polish aid worker Damian Sobol in Gaza.

Amid shock in Poland over the death of the charity worker, Israel's ambassador to Poland, Yacov Livne, pushed back at what he said were attempts by the "extreme right and left in Poland" to accuse Israel of "intentional murder in the attack"; adding on social media that "anti-Semites will always remain anti-Semites".

His comments caused a storm in the Polish media. As reported by Warsaw daily newspaper **Gazeta Wyborcza**, the words of the Israeli ambassador, as well as the inept explanation of the attack by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who both apologized and downplayed the matter, were sharply criticized by Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk. Tusk published a comment on social media addressing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Livne saying that "the vast majority of Poles showed full solidarity with Israel after the Hamas attack. Today you are putting this solidarity to a really hard test".

On April 10, Canadian Polish newspaper **Goniec** reprinted an interview with Palestinian Ambassador to Poland from **RMF24** radio station in Poland. Radio host Krzysztof Ziemiec asked his guest, Palestinian Ambassador to Poland Mahmoud Khalifa, if he was not afraid that after the attack on World Central Kitchen volunteers, humanitarian aid for the Gaza Strip would be limited. Mahmoud Khalifa answered that "This was Israel's goal. Propaganda wanted this aid to be stopped". The radio host also asked his guest about the attack by Hamas terrorists on October 7. "For Palestinians, every human life matters. And a Palestinian, and an Israeli, and a Pole, and an American. If it were not for this occupation for over 70 years, there would be no October, no August, and no incidents in July in Jenin", Khalifa replied.

On the Edmonton based Polish radio **CJSR 88.5 FM Nasze Radio Canada** Polish-born former deputy premier of Alberta, Thomas Lukaszuk discussed local efforts to bring supplies to Gaza. Lukaszuk himself helped organize the Albertans for children in Gaza event - a non-partisan humanitarian initiative. When they were collecting items for Ukraine, just by looking at people that came, one could tell that people representing various ethnic groups in Edmonton came to support.

This time around, when they were helping Gaza, 90% of people that came to help and donate were people of Arabic origins. Lukaszuk says that although Gaza seems so far away from Canada and from Poland and it affects people of different faiths, he wanted to thank all from the Polish community that came to support the children of Gaza.

In the Italian Canadian media news items were centred on the Israel-Hamas war in one form or another, directly or indirectly. The Trudeau-Meloni meetings, for example, included references to the Middle East crisis, the Israel-Hamas war, with both leaders calling for the hostages to be freed and more aid for the civilian population in Gaza.

**CFMB** Radio in Montreal broadcast 11 news items in Italian, centred mostly on specific actions by the Canadian government in connection with the war, like funding for UNRWA, warning Israel not to attack Rafah, calling for a humanitarian ceasefire, joining the maritime corridor to Gaza, stopping selling lethal weapons to Israel, and issuing temporary residence visas for Gazans. The radio program also reported on protests against Canada's stance on Gaza and legal actions against Canadian arms exports to Israel.

**Il Cittadino Canadese** published 13 articles and two opinion pieces. The articles looked at US diplomatic efforts, Canada's refusal to join South Africa's genocide case against Israel, truce proposals, Rafah attack, UN resolution against Israel, pro-Palestinian efforts, and Canada's participation in the maritime corridor to Gaza.

The two opinion pieces were by the same author, Claudio Antonelli, who writes a regular column for the paper. It is important to understand the journalist's background. Antonelli is a refugee from Istria (when it was part of Italy), a peninsula in the northern Adriatic Sea that changed hands four times between 1918 and 1991. Between 1919 and 1954, the region's population experienced war, foreign occupation, nationalist repression, large-scale massacres, and mass exodus.

In his first piece, titled "*Israelis vs Palestinians Collective culpability and reciprocity*" (Jan 31), Antonelli notes that Gaza's tragedy keeps repeating itself. The current war is but another episode in a never-ending cycle of violence. Citing Israeli writer Avraham Yehoshua, he notes that Israel is violating the principle of reciprocity in its relations to other nations; once exiled, the Jews were able to remain themselves among the Gentiles, whereas Israel has become ethno-religiously exclusive. And this is depleting the moral capital Jews accumulated over the centuries as victims. In the end, they have become like everybody else, capable of the worse crimes."

In his second piece, "*Incubator of future fighters and terrorists*", Antonelli notes that in its attack on October 7, Hamas showed that it had a dehumanizing view of its Israeli enemy, treating them as animals to be slaughtered, tortured or abducted. Turn the other cheek is not in the Koran. By the same token, the Old Testament offers arguments to dehumanize one's enemies. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu likes in fact to cite warlike passages from the Bible when it comes to dealing with Israel's enemies. It would be better for Israelis and Palestinians they put their holy book aside. Antonelli suggests that Israel's disproportionate response is likely to fuel more violence in the future from the next generation of Palestinians.



## Influence on Public Opinion and Policymaking: Contrasts and comparisons

One key difference between Arabic domestic media and Canadian mainstream media is their framing of the conflict's root causes and the portrayal of key actors. Arabic media often focus on the historical injustices faced by Palestinians, the impact of Israeli policies on Palestinian communities, and the role of international actors in perpetuating the conflict. In contrast, Canadian media tend to highlight security concerns, diplomatic efforts for peace negotiations, and the broader geopolitical context of the Middle East.

Another important theme in media coverage is the role of social media and citizen journalism in shaping narratives and disseminating information about the conflict. Arabic domestic media often rely on social media platforms and citizen journalists to provide real-time updates, personal testimonies, and grassroots perspectives on the ground. This grassroots reporting adds a layer of authenticity and immediacy to Arabic media coverage, allowing audiences to connect with the human stories behind the headlines.

Canadian mainstream media leverage social media as a tool for audience engagement, interactive storytelling, and amplifying diverse voices. They incorporate social media trends, user-generated content, and digital platforms to enhance their reporting, reach wider audiences, and foster public dialogue on complex issues like the Hamas-Israel conflict. This multimedia approach enhances the overall impact and relevance of Canadian media coverage in a digital age.

Additionally, Canadian media navigate challenges related to media ethics, editorial independence, and public trust, particularly when covering sensitive topics like the Middle East conflict. They must balance competing narratives, navigate political sensitivities, and uphold journalistic standards while serving diverse audiences with varied interests and perspectives. Despite these challenges, Canadian media have the opportunity to contribute to informed public discourse, promote dialogue, and foster understanding of complex global issues.

But what of other ethnic community media? Each segment has weighed in on the conflict from their own cultural point of view and lived experience. We picked Polish, Farsi, and Italian Canadian media to showcase this point.

The diverse media perspectives on the Israel-Palestine conflict have a significant impact on public opinion and policymaking in Canada. The way in which different media segments frame the conflict, emphasize certain aspects, and present various narratives can shape how the Canadian public understands and engages with the issue.

For example, the Jewish Canadian media's focus on the Israeli perspective and the impact of the conflict on Canadian Jewish communities may influence Jewish Canadians' views and their expectations of government policy. Similarly, Arabic domestic media's emphasis on Palestinian suffering and calls for international solidarity may resonate with Arab Canadians and encourage them to advocate for a more pro-Palestinian stance from the Canadian government.

Canadian mainstream media's attempt to provide balanced coverage and reflect Canada's official diplomatic position can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the conflict among the general public. However, the challenge of maintaining objectivity and navigating competing narratives may also lead to confusion or skepticism among audiences.

The diverse media landscape in Canada can also influence policymaking by shaping public discourse and political debates. Politicians and decision-makers may feel pressure to respond to the concerns and demands of different communities as expressed through their media outlets. This can lead to a more complex and multi-faceted approach to foreign policy, as the government attempts to balance competing interests and maintain social cohesion within a multicultural society.

Moreover, the media's role in shaping public opinion can have an impact on Canada's international relations and its ability to contribute to peace efforts in the Middle East. By providing a platform for diverse perspectives and fostering informed dialogue, Canadian media can help build understanding and bridge divides between communities, both within Canada and abroad.

## Conclusion: A Mosaic of Perspectives: Ethnic Media's Contribution to Canada's Understanding of the Israel-Palestine Conflict

In conclusion, analyzing media perspectives on the Hamas-Israel conflict reveals the complex interplay of narratives, historical contexts, and geopolitical interests that shape public understanding and discourse on this enduring and multifaceted conflict. While Arab Canadian media prioritize solidarity with Palestinians and critique international actors, and other multilingual media contribute distinct perspectives to the overall media map, Canadian mainstream media strive for balance and objectivity, emphasizing diplomatic solutions and comprehensive analyses of the conflict's complexities.

It is not possible to understand the impact this conflict is having on Canadian society without a window onto the perspectives of the country's large immigrant population. These points of view contribute to a nuanced understanding which at the same time is more comprehensive of the challenges and possibilities for peace in the Middle East, highlighting the importance of diverse media voices in shaping global narratives and fostering dialogue on critical issues, but also in managing the repercussions of the conflict on the relationship between Canadian citizens from those homelands and the broader society.

## Final Questions: Emerging Conflicts and Mental Health Impacts on Immigrant Communities



### **Is This What WWII Looks Like?**

In an era where the battlefield has extended into the psychological and digital realms, the concept of World War III might be unfolding not through territorial conquests but through the pervasive influence of global media and cultural conflicts that affect diaspora communities. The role of ethnic media in Canada, as highlighted in this document, serves as a microcosm for a broader, more dispersed type of conflict where the battleground is the human mind and cultural identity.

These media outlets not only report on conflicts from their homelands but also frame these events in ways that resonate deeply with immigrant audiences, potentially reinforcing divisions and solidarity along lines drawn thousands of miles away. Reaching out as well as listening to them has been a traditional Canadian practice during war time, although that outreach has sometimes been ban.

During World War I and World War II, the Canadian government took severe measures against media outlets associated with enemy nations, particularly those in German, Italian, and Japanese languages. Under the War Measures Act of 1914 and the Defense of Canada Regulations during WWII, many German, Italian, and Japanese language newspapers were banned, and some publishers and employees were arrested or interned as "enemy aliens."

### **Are Our Immigrant Communities Suffering from Complex PTSD?**

The constant exposure to homeland conflicts through ethnic media on one hand, and their mainstream Canadian media on the other, can be traumatic for immigrants, who find themselves caught between their past and present lives. The coverage of ongoing conflicts such as those in Ukraine, India, and the Middle East might trigger symptoms akin to Complex PTSD, where the stress is prolonged and repetitive, involving an ongoing re-experiencing of trauma tied to the homeland. This form of psychological stress is complicated by the immigrant's ongoing effort to integrate into Canadian society while maintaining ties to their country of origin, leading to a unique set of mental health challenges.

### **The 'Homeland of the Mind': A New Mental Disease for Canadian Newcomers?**

Immigrants navigate dual identities. In this context, the "homeland of the mind" (A phrase coined by Psychiatrist Klaus Minde who was Director of Research at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, from 1973 to 1986) becomes a pivotal concept in understanding their experiences. This mental space is populated by memories, cultural practices, and the ongoing media portrayal of their countries of origin. The disparity between this mental image and their physical reality in Canada can result in dissonance, which may manifest as anxiety, depression, or other mental health disorders. Recognizing this issue is crucial for developing targeted mental health support that addresses the unique needs of immigrants, helping them reconcile their inner and outer worlds effectively.

### **Conclusion: A mentally healthy diverse immigrant population needs a media network**

As Canada continues to embrace its multicultural reality, and debate the kind of policy that needs, a deeper understanding of how homeland conflicts impact immigrant communities becomes increasingly important. This understanding is crucial not just for policymakers and community

leaders but also for the general public. By fostering a more inclusive and empathetic society that recognizes the psychological burdens carried by its immigrant populations, Canada can better support these individuals in healing and integrating more fully into the fabric of the nation, because they recognize themselves in it.

## About MIREMS Ltd.



MIREMS Ltd. is not an academic organization. It is a corporation. As a result, this paper has not received any funding, but is the product of the team of media analysts paid for by the company, provided as a public service. Further information on the source materials can be made available on request.

*Multilingual International Research and Ethnic Media Services (MIREMS) is a unique for-profit media monitoring service that plays a vital role in Canada's ethnic media landscape. Established in 1988 and currently managed by Andrés Machalski, a linguist and University of Toronto graduate, MIREMS dedicates itself to monitoring, researching, and analyzing ethnic and multilingual media sources both in Canada and globally (Miftari 2023, 336).*

*What sets MIREMS apart is its commitment to increasing awareness of the central role that ethnic media plays in giving a voice to newcomers in Canadian society. The organization responds to the needs of corporations, governments, and NGOs, encouraging them to include perspectives from diverse communities in their communication strategies (Miftari 2023, 336). With a team of consultants representing forty languages, MIREMS monitors, analyzes, summarizes, and translates stories from more than 1,000 ethnic media outlets daily, providing comprehensive coverage of ethnic media content in over thirty language groups and communities (Miftari 2023, 336-337).*

*MIREMS' extensive inventory of sources, which includes specialized publications such as sports and entertainment magazines, directories, and real estate guides, spans more than thirty languages from over forty-five cultural groups (Miftari 2023, 337). This wide-ranging coverage allows MIREMS to offer its clients, including all three levels of government, companies, and organizations, a unique look at diverse ethnic communities in Canada (Miftari 2023, 337).*

*In addition to its media monitoring services, MIREMS runs a public service blog that highlights opinions and analyses from its exclusive ethnic media feed. The blog has covered a wide range of issues, such as the Syrian refugee crisis, Canada-US cross-border issues, COVID-19 reporting in ethnic media, and reactions to Canadian foreign policy decisions (Miftari 2023, 338). This blog not only serves as a platform for disseminating information but also demonstrates MIREMS' commitment to supporting outreach to ethnic media. MIREMS' methodology combines the advantages of computerized media monitoring with the expertise of its consultants, who manually select and summarize stories based on clients' topics of interest (Miftari 2023, 337). This approach ensures that the organization can effectively communicate with and monitor ethnic media, providing valuable insights into the reach and impact of these outlets.*

*In summary, MIREMS occupies a unique position in Canada's ethnic media scene, offering comprehensive monitoring, research, and analysis services that bridge the gap between ethnic communities and the broader Canadian society. Through its dedication to understanding and amplifying the voices of diverse communities, MIREMS plays a crucial role in fostering inclusivity, participation, and intercultural understanding in Canada (Miftari 2023, 331-332).*

Reference:

Miftari, N. (2023). Innovative Models in Ethnic Media 2.0: A Practitioner's Reflections. In D. Ahadi, S. S. Yu, & A. Al-Rawi (Eds.), *The Handbook of Ethnic Media in Canada* (pp. 331-348). McGill-Queen's University Press.

## Credits

This presentation was the work of two dozen team members (Chinese team: 4, South Asian team:2, European team: 5, and Israel-Hamas team: 3 were directly involved in writing the paper, based on findings of the rest of the team, many of whom wish to remain anonymous.

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Standing on their shoulders and coordinating the project were Silke Reichrath, Editor in Chief, Blythe Irwin, Media Analysis and Sources Director, and Fatima Witt, Communications Director. President Andrés Machalski contributed three decades of experience to the presentation. For further information about MIREMS visit [www.mirems.com](http://www.mirems.com).



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