Jordanian Audiences and Satellite News Media

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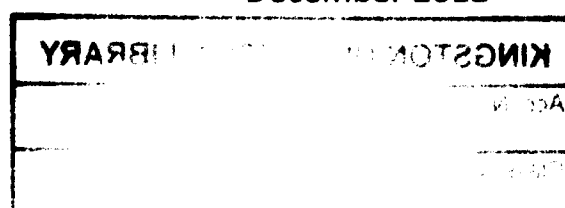
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Presentations based on this study

Conferences

1. "Post 1967 Palestinian audience", CAMMRO PhD Symposium, 9 December 2006.

2. "Arab media scholarship", Media and Art conference, Luton University, 2005.

In addition, I've participated as discussant in the following conferences/symposia:

1. SOAS Arab Media conference, 2005.

2. Cambridge Arab Media conference, 2004.

Forthcoming articles:

The power of Arab audiences – Jordan as a case study under submission at *Global Media and Communication* journal.

Abstract

This study aims to examine current reception analysis and media theories to determine if extant literature in the field is relevant to the experience of the Arab audience focusing on the Jordanian audiences as an illustrative case study, using quantitative and qualitative tools including questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The findings show that the Jordanian audiences seem to favour television over print press as a source of information, and they favoured channels such as Al Jazeera. Getting information about international (political) affairs gives this sample of audiences a sense of empowerment which is argued, could compensate for the lack of genuine opportunities for political participation in Jordan. It is also argued that, unlike western studies which claim the prevalence of entertainment programmes and the decline of news, this study shows the opposite trend in the Arab region where viewers are more interested in politics as a topic for social conversation. The findings show that the Jordanian audiences are aware of the role of ownership on the news content but they tend to use their awareness of this issue to distinguish between information and propaganda.

In general, audiences seem mistrustful of pan-Arab channels and their ideologies and yet they are avid consumers of such channels. One reason, in my view, is the low quality of what they see as censored news in Jordan. Audiences' scepticism of what they watch on news channels is not necessarily damaging their engagement in the political life. Jordanian audiences also understand that the diversity of views offered by satellite news channels is based on the selectivity of each channel (and its editorial team as well as its owner).

Introduction

Global communication requires a global understanding of how communication happens. Since satellite television became a worldwide phenomenon approximately ten years ago, both corporate and government entities worldwide have scrambled to mould it to suit a host of economic, political, social and religious purposes. It is therefore extremely disconcerting that although there are exhaustive studies of how televised information is transmitted to different audiences, there have been few studies or analyses of how the Arab audience receives and processes this information. Since many of the current media outlets are western-based or western trained, with others acting as organs of government-controlled messages, it follows that there are going to be problems in the transmission from idea to interpretation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of broadcast journalism in Jordan, where a host of important factors such as history, religion, colonial rule, repression, and control of the internal/national media have impacted audience response and satisfaction with received information. With an understanding (by the West and the Arab world alike) of the reality of Arab audiences, how they are comprised, how they interpret news, and how their identities are shaped by their own political realities, there may emerge a clearer definition what constitutes an Arab audience, so that a pan-Arab sphere of media influence can emerge that is both self-enlightening and non-threatening to the outside world.

This dissertation will examine current reception analysis and media theories to determine if extant literature in the field is relevant to the experience of the Arab audience and pertinent to the study of the role of news in their day-to-day lives. Within that framework, several research questions will be posed, to determine what these audiences think the media's role should be, and how Arab audiences, through their usage of satellite television, define themselves politically and socially. The primary research question, however, is the following: "Is there a relationship between the process of politicization and the consumption of news programmes

through Arab satellites on the regular Jordanian citizen?" Examined within the context of this primary research question will be several corollary questions, the most important being the following:

1. What is the impact, politically and socially, on regular Jordanian citizens of news consumption through the Arab satellites?
2. Do Arab satellites accelerate / maintain a high level of politicization through their news programmes?
3. How do the Jordanian audiences interpret received news programmes?
4. In what way does this interpretation affect how the population views itself as well as the world around it?
5. What relationship, affiliation or identification does the audience have with its television station(s), and to what extent would such a relationship affect the station's credibility?
6. To what extent is the audience's perception and understanding of news/current affairs programming affected by education, income, cultural background, national identity, and geographic location?

For purposes of this study, Jordanians will be considered representative of audiences throughout the Arab world, though this is obviously a broad generalization and needs some clarification. The area now called Jordan was delineated in the 1940's by the British government, who had colonized the entire surrounding area. Prior to that time Jordan and its population were simply a part of the neighbouring areas and countries.

The long history of Arab governments' control of the media has produced a distrust in the accuracy and credibility of the Arab media. Combined with the alternative—a western-centric offering of information not based on any relevant audience reception study and therefore equally suspect, Arab/ Jordanian Audiences interpret media messages "differently" from their western counterparts. This is not only based on one factor or rule such as filtering based on their own idiosyncratic

backgrounds but also based on many different and conflicting factors. It is therefore crucial to examine the geopolitical, historical and sociological factors that define the Arab audiences' relation to television media, and by extension, its relation to the rest of the world.

As this thesis positions itself within the framework of media studies and reception analysis theory, it will explore these concepts' usefulness as well as their limitations. Beginning with a critique of mass audience theories, it will be argued that the inadequacies inherent in analyses of Arab audience studies (or indeed the lack of such studies) are due to a western-centric focus, even by Arab-based stations themselves. These gaps can be seen as liabilities that result in not only a lack of information on the part of the non-Arab world regarding the true needs of the Arab audience, but an inability on the part of Arab media itself to understand that the delivery of news, if not culturally competent, produces an audience with a distorted and negative view of its own political and social reality in relation to other countries and cultures. No one theory can encompass all of the aspects and dimensions of Arab audiences in their fragmentation and complexity, but this is no reason to omit entirely this important group from close study.

For a more comprehensive understanding of Arab audiences, then, we must take a new and fresh look at the application of audience theories, and borrow from the wisdom of reception analysis while not limiting the scope of this project to one particular theory or model. Despite their limitations, media theories, and the respective audiences themselves, will provide the tools required for a deeper understanding of the political and social dynamic of the Arab audience in the twenty-first century. Empirical research, incorporating methodological strategies and comprised of investigating different models of Arab audiences living in Jordan, indicates the emergence of a new Arab media consciousness that is marked by resistance, hostility, and skepticism. This is a trend that needs to be addressed, in both the sociological and international arenas.

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The field work for this study was conducted in Jordan, a country with a unique and diverse population, and the most centrally located of the Arab countries. Although it was the original intent of this dissertation to employ the research instrument in several other Arab countries as well, an unprecedented amount of apprehension about participating in this project, due to fear of government reprisals, re-directed the focus to Jordan. While circumstances allow the population to be far more open regarding participation, there exist characteristics about Jordan and Jordanians that lend themselves to the forming of general observations about the Arab world, and Arab audiences in particular.

It is hoped that the information gathered in the preparation and execution of this dissertation will demonstrate the need for Cultural, Sociological and Media studies to begin to focus on Arab audiences, if we do not wish to continue to misunderstand the populations' reactions to non-Arab media coverage, and if the Arab world itself wishes to gain a less distorted sense of its own political and social reality.

This dissertation is an attempt to understand how Arab audiences give different meaning to news and current affairs, bearing in mind differences among them such as age, gender, religion, beliefs and attitudes. In addition, these audiences' view of the media's role will be examined as well. In order to answer the question of how Arab audiences see themselves in relation to the world via their interpretation of media, a number of questions, in the form of an audience study, need to be answered, such as the audience's relationship and identification with the news channels and their perception of these outlets' credibility. Another important question to pursue here is the relationship between the audiences' education, income, geographic location and gender with their understanding of the news/current affairs programming.

0.1 Audience research in the Arab world

There is little substantial audience research in the Arab world today[1] that uses empirical methods to examine how Arab audiences interact with the media, or investigates the relationship between Western media consumption and the dynamic of imperialism (Sakr 2006). Ayish (2005) suggests that due to the lack of a universal theory of media, effects, or audiences, audience theories may be culturally biased. Arab societies emphasize a community and collectiveness that stands in contrast to Western individualism-based conceptions (Ayish 2005).

There also exists no socially-driven research on Arab audiences within transnational television; these audiences are simply neglected. Arab academic media studies and literature downplay the audience, focusing instead on the political economy aspect of media production (Fakhereldeen 2004). Although there exists sufficient commercial research, it is conducted on behalf of advertising agencies and multi-national corporations who seek viewing habits such as size and reach. Audience research in the Arab world is very fragmentary and largely underdeveloped (El Gammal 2003). Suffice it to say that, unlike the West and in Britain especially, Arab academia in general has not yet developed – nor does it seem to comprehend – the necessity for a coherent field of 'cultural studies' with respect to this area. Currently in the Arab world, there exist only fragmented pieces of work, which remain largely dissociated sections of an incoherent whole (see Chapter 2 for an extensive literature review). This inadequacy has wider implications for the lack of audience research in the Arab world, most of which is quantitative data emerging from surveys on Arab audiences which "tend to be developed for marketing studies, and thus concentrate on wealthier populations and remain proprietary" (Alterman, 2005: 203). What is required is qualitative, socially-driven, academic-based research with no political agenda, which focuses on the receiver of the television content and has the potential to investigate the social world of Arab audiences and their interpretation/usage thereof.

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[1] There are many small fragmented studies; they are small due to the narrow issues being researched, as well as narrowing down the population. The issues where not aggressive /bold enough or serious enough. Non of these studies make any claims to understanding Arab audiences

No single audience reception theory can cover all of the aspects and dimensions of Arab audiences, nor can it synthesize their different elements and individualities, given this audience's fragmentation and complexity (Sabry 2004).

Isolated analysis theories, made without an attempt at drawing on the complexity of any particular audience group, cannot produce a clear understanding of how that audience processes information and uses it to shape its own identity and relate to the world around it. An examination of the significant work produced in the field of audience theories--the mass media concept, use and gratification theory, and reception analysis—will underscore the absence of the Arab audience, or cultural competence in general, from a great portion of these otherwise insightful media study tools. In the context of this absence of academic literature on Arab audiences or groundbreaking audience research, different studies conducted on Arab audiences and their population will be explored, in order to examine some of their inherent weaknesses and inadequacies, as well as their usefulness.

0.2 Theories of Audience Reception: Their Strengths and Limitations

In theorizing media reception, we are inevitably led to questions of culture: we must either ask or assume what norms and values structure the field under examination. An un-historicized notion of capitalist modernity tends to function as the taken-for-granted context of reception studies (Curran and Park 2000).

A culture of modern, liberal citizenship is assumed as the norm in democracies, with certain kinds of political behaviour (e.g. representative democracy, with an informed and well-behaved electorate) and certain divisions between public and private behaviours (e.g. with religious and community cultures excluded from the public realm). These are values derived from a particular interpretation of Western experience.

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Arvind Rajagopal (1996) argues that media reception studies unavoidably uncover contradictions of cultures in non-Western societies. He asserts that holding the value of modernity constant whilst studying these societies is thus seriously misleading. He also warns of the extent to which the universalist notions of modernity have been identified with particular histories of few countries. He concludes that such a view not only misunderstands the originality of the social experiments being undertaken in large portions of the globe, but also demonstrates the lack of historical vision applied to the West itself.

Audience theories are developed in the Western hemisphere, both empirically and theoretically. Mohamed Ayish adds that audience theories emerged originally from a Western context, when social scientists and policy makers were concerned about the potential effects of media on audiences in the early part of the twentieth century. He argues that the way in which media effects and audiences were conceived show the type of relationships dominant in Western communities at the time: audiences were viewed as fragmented entities who would be joined together by media (Ayish 2005).

Past reception work has typically naturalized a Westphalian ideological discourse. In this discourse, the concept of state sovereignty is based on territory and there is no significant role for external powers in domestic system of government. The past reception work has taken for granted the nature of civil society, and the history of governance in relation to consumer democracy. Moreover, for non-Western scholars, the silent but ever present Western framework in cultural studies has also encouraged a conflation between postmodernism and globalization (Juluri, 2003; Sardar, 1998; Murphy 2003). Audience studies assume that similar conditions apply in non-Western countries, such as freedom of the media, the audience's ability to choose their media sources, and the existence of freedom of cultural expression. Western-centric theories also assume that audiences could be critical of either the government or the media without fear of retribution from either. Though these conditions do not apply in most non-Western countries, they are never taken into account in the development of the theories (Curran and Park 2000).

This problem with audience studies is by virtue of the historical development of media research traditions. They emerged in Western contexts, were developed by Western researchers, targeted Western audiences, and their expectations perfectly fit Western norms and values. This, of course, applies to the dominant paradigm as well as critical research studies. As Ayish (2005) also asserts, communication theories should be culturally-based: "The more universal we go, the more detached we get from culturally-sensitive norms" (Ayish 2005b).

The arrival of Stuart Hall's theories certainly changed that perception. Yet Hall's theories did not take into account the different aspects of Arab culture. He did not consider the impact of different geographical locations among the homogenous population – the Palestinian population, for example, live among many other Arabic speaking populations in scattered geographical locations within the world. He also did not give enough weight to the importance of cultural influences directly relating to audience viewing habits, particularly Islam and its role in society. For example, when the Alhurra Arabic station was launched, a Saudi cleric issued a Fatwa (religious decree) banning Muslims from watching the station due to its American ownership and control (Al-Atraqchi 2004). Such actions clearly actively limit Arab audiences' choices.

0.3 Theoretical Framework, Methodology and Research Strategy

To further understand the usage of news and current affairs programmes among Arab audiences, we need to look at an important aspect of mass communication theories that needs to be covered within this theoretical framework: media credibility. I argue that credibility or the lack thereof, heavily influences the audience's interpretation of the media message, or causes the audience to reject the entire message.

Media credibility is a complex concept, and researchers have used a wide range of approaches to evaluate and to understand its components. Perceptions of media credibility have been a recurring issue in mass communication scholarship since the

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mid-twentieth century. Early research focused on the dimension of source credibility (Hovland and Weiss 1951) while contemporary literature has highlighted variations in credibility perceptions of different channels (Rimmer and Weaver 1987).

Some research suggested that television news credibility is related to the individual rather than the institution that they belong to (Newhagen and Nass 1989). Television credibility does vary among audiences: there has been much research to suggest that news credibility tends to be similar among homogenous groups with certain variables, such as demographics (age, education, income, geographical location and gender) and psychographics (religion, beliefs, habits, hobbies and political affiliation), which tend to mediate peoples' perceptions of news credibility (Westley and Severin 1964). Research findings also suggest that those who are older, wealthier, and better educated are the least likely to view media as credible, while males judge media as less credible than females (Westley and Severin 1964).

Lack of transparency in the ownership, mission and objectives of stations can cause unwanted consequences for the stations and their credibility. Such lack of transparency can create room for rumours or conspiracy theories. One interesting example was when the most famous and watched channel in the Arab world, Al Jazeera satellite station, was rumoured to be part of an Israeli conspiracy to control the flow of information to the Arab audiences and brainwash them. Although many may have believed such rumours about Al Jazeera, it never affected its popularity, and Al Jazeera remained the most watched station throughout the Arab world despite its government ownership. However, such high credibility was only achieved after several years' of audience-approved reporting. Interestingly enough, the U.S. Central Command Headquarters (Cencom) which guided the war on Iraq was based in Qatar, only a few hundred metres from Al Jazeera headquarters, yet this never effected its credibility among Arab audiences. It could be argued that the lack of access to war information from the Arabic perspective made Arab audiences overlook such a fact in earlier days; the finding of such centre could have damaging effect on both Al Jazeera and Qatar (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2002).

Credibility also varies based on content. For example, in 1998 the strategic studies centre at the University of Jordan conducted a non-commercial survey, which looked at satellite viewing habits. They interestingly found that local audiences in Jordan rely on transnational sources for local news: government owned television was not viewed as a reliable source of news (Callard 1998). Although Arab governments are not accredited as reliable sources of information by both the audiences and media outlets (Telhami 1993), during the latest war on Iraq, a unique situation occurred. For the purpose of seeking information on the American-led war and during the course of the war itself, Arab media and their audiences intentionally turned to the Iraqi Information Ministry represented by its minister, Mohamed Al-Sahaf, as a source of information. For months, the public refuted all other reports of American advances; instead they chose to believe the Iraqi version of events. Within days of the fall of Baghdad, Arab media and their audiences took a different position on the Iraqi government, and destroyed the credibility of the government and the Iraqi Minister of Information (Ayish 2004a). Other similar situations have occurred throughout recent Arab history. Such a shift to nonconformist news sources among Arab audiences only reflects another element of this multi-faceted audience.

For a better understanding of Arab audiences, then, I propose that we take a new look at the usage of audience theories, and borrow the wisdom from reception analysis while not limiting the scope of this project to one particular theory or model. Despite their limitations, media theories, and audiences in particular, will provide us with the tools required for a deeper understanding of Arab audience dynamics in the twenty-first century. I also propose conducting empirical research, investigating structures of Arab audiences living in Jordan, that employs traditional methodological strategies.

0.4 The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is a wave of riots and revolutionary moods which took place in the countries of the Arab World beginning on December 18, 2010. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen have become the countries where their rulers were overthrown. These dramatic events have become the most influential since the World War II, and are likely to "dramatically affect relations between regional countries and extra-regional powers with interest in the Middle East" (Jones 2012). Bahrain, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Morocco, Kuwait and Sudan have become the countries most touched upon by these major uprisings.

The essential impact of the Arab Spring on the countries of the Arab World and even beyond it can hardly be disputed. By setting the goal of bringing down the regime, the protesters have succeeded in many countries. Even if the result was not the overthrow of the regime, the outcome of making governments listen to the people can be considered as an important one. One of the important facts usually noted by the media and the researchers is that the Arab Spring had not been predicted. It came completely unexpectedly and led to the astounding outcomes (Jones 2012; Parsons 2012).

The Arab Spring in Jordan started in 2011 with the people's protests against price increases for petrol, food and other commodities, rising unemployment and lack of subsidies (*Al Jazeera* 2011). It was begun by the trade union activists who aimed at the resignation of Samir Rifai, Prime Minister of Jordan. A sit-down protest was organized, which caused a major shift in the economic and political policies. King Abdullah dismissed the government and started the formation of the New Cabinet targeting the democracy and economic improvement. However, this did not put an end to unrest. Moreover, Jordanian Arab Spring was marked with at least one killing of a person and more than a hundred injured people in the confrontation between the protesters and the police. Since then, at least two heads of the government have been dismissed and replaced, and now the Jordanian government is headed by Fayez al-Tarawneh. The protests in Jordan continue regularly.

The unrest has led to certain outcomes, as the government changed their economic policies in relation to people, although even these measures were

considered as insufficient. Poverty still remains the greatest problem, the solution of which is expected from the government by the people.

The influence of the Arab Spring on the countries of the Arab World can be considered in terms of the territory division and for this reason the Gulf, the Levant and North Africa can be distinguished as the most distinctive parts of the Arab World influenced by the Arab Spring (Parsons 2012). While there was a lack of evidence and forerunners for the Arab Spring upheavals outbreak, the events were and are covered by the media, and this presents an interesting turn in terms of the media influence on these events. Al Jazeera, a Qatar-owned independent broadcaster is one of the media networks that has been covering the uprisings and unrest in the Arab World countries, and the audiences in these countries pay particular attention to the interpretation of these events by the broadcaster. This raises the issue of the Arab Spring coverage by Arab TV satellite stations, namely Al Jazeera, and their impact on the audiences' perceptions.

Arab TV satellite stations have become one of the most influential sources of news for the population. The hallmark of the audiences' preferences in Arab countries is the preference of political and economic news, while in Western countries this has traditionally included entertainment programs. Al Jazeera has been considered as the most trusted media network: "Over the past 16 years Al Jazeera has emerged as the most credible news source in the region" (Hashem 2012). TV satellite channels have even been considered as the political leverages, thus, Hashem (2012) indicates that the Bahrain revolution was significantly affected by TV channels financed by the Gulf which aimed regional security as the most important outcome of the unrest, while protesters and the people wanted greater freedom and democracy.

Therefore, politics separated TV channels and grouped them according to their ownership political views and preferences. Al Jazeera is still regarded by many people as the most trusted source of information concerning political and economic news, which are the most wanted ones in the countries of Arab World.

The coverage of these events by TV satellite channels is an important issue because, as research shows, the audiences of different channels can have different attitudes toward the same events in a country such as Jordan. This can

be considered the result of the interpretation of the news by the broadcasters based on the channels' ownership and the political views of the owners.

Research in 2008 asked Jordanians which system of government they would consider as the best fitting the needs of poverty problem solving in the country. This issue has been the most crucial for many Jordanians. Within the frame of the research, the issue of the most trusted local news sources was considered, and the views of the public based on their local TV channels preferences were the following: "a plurality of viewers of Jordanian Television (42 per cent) and al-Arabia viewers (41 per cent) and a lower percentage (35 per cent) of Al Jazeera viewers specified a multi-parliamentary system, whereas the plurality of Al Jazeera viewers (37 per cent) preferred a Sharia-based system without elections" (Murphy and Zweiri 2011: 132). A religiously informed political system is considered as the most potentially effective to fight poverty in the country by Al Jazeera viewers at the local level. This allows supposing that the channel forms the religiously-based public opinion of its viewers. On the other hand, the international coverage by Al Jazeera demonstrates results which are quite contrary (Murphy and Zweiri 2011: 133).

Therefore, it can be stated that media networks, and TV satellite channels in particular exert significant impact on the audiences and thus can be considered as the important agents of influence in the country.

0.5 The significance of the study

Once it becomes clear that the majority of reception analysis theories, including audiences, are Western-centric, the question now is how to develop other audience theories that can help explain how non-Western audiences make use of media. The lack of empirical work in the Arab world remains one of the key problems; until additional work is carried out and substantiated, it will be difficult to provide a theorization of the audience that can explain these differences. We need to acknowledge that the existence of ostensibly free and varied media outlets does not necessarily mean that citizens are empowered to challenge the status quo. To understand the audience in a non-Western context necessitates addressing the

respective political context and the struggle over meaning and new uncertainties, particularly in relation to power, that the new media creates by providing conflicting views of reality (Matar 2005).

The uniqueness of the Arab audience requires a fresh look at the audience theories from critical perspectives. This uniqueness is complex, and we may not be able to rationalize some of the behaviour or media habits of the audiences without fully understanding the different variations amongst them. As Tarek Sabry put it, audiences are problematic in the Arab world due to their lack of structure; they are hybrids of many elements. Given the complexity of Arab audiences, they have to be studied vis-à-vis the complex relationships of globalization, post colonialism, cultural imperialism, traditional geo-cultural issues, Islam and economics (Sabry 2004b).

Audience research has focused on processes of creating meaning, interpretation and comprehension, but what we need to address is not only these sense-making processes, but also how Arab audiences use media and what they do with it. This is particularly relevant in the Arab context: people know that governments often bend and distort reports, therefore becoming skilled at imagining reality. What is interesting is that new media, such as Al Jazeera, is now providing different and oppositional imaginations of reality. The question is: how do Arab audiences use what is presented, what is left out, what is given priority, and how are things said? (Matar 2005).

The lack of historical data and comparative information limits the usage of certain theories, such as the cultivation model, since there is no available data for comparison. In general, there are difficulties in researching Arab populations due to the lack of data and accurate studies. In many ways, audiences in the Arab world are problematic, due to their lack of structure; they are hybrids of many elements.

In order to develop a plausible theory of how Arabs receive news and how this news shapes how they see themselves, I have conducted 40 in-depth interviews using a

pre-designed instrument that addresses a variety of variables: social/economic/religious background, beliefs regarding government, family, other non-Arab countries, viewing habits, etc. A section was included addressing all facets of news analysis and interpretation including terminology used and ownership issues. The final section of the instrument concentrates on the issues of trust, media credibility, self education, the role of news, and personal interpretation methods.

Ordinary everyday experience remains largely under-examined. The phrase commonly used by the media and Arab intellectuals is 'Arab street' –a clear indication of Arab intellectuals' elitist stance and their dissatisfaction with the working classes that ironically make up most of their countries populations. Yet the term 'Arab street' remains largely vague and unidentified. A few Arab academics, such as Tarek Sabry, try to examine the term: he poses the question:"What is the Arab street? Why isn't there talk of European, American or Indian street?" (Sakr 2006). The constant massification and homogenisation of Arab audiences into this redundant term is proof of a major lack of understanding about how complex and stratified audiences are. As Williams put it: "There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as the masses" (Williams 1958: 300).

On the other hand, political economists tend to regard audience work as ancillary, on the grounds that what mattered was the structure of ownership: once this structure is established, effects can be predicted (Morley 2000). Although this theory might have some merit to it, it is too narrow in its application and consideration of audiences, especially given the complexity of the Arab audiences. 'Structure of ownership' is certainly important to consider, but within the reception analysis framework. Furthermore, this research does not focus on the effect of the media, but rather the meaning audiences create out of it.

Cultural studies, influenced by deconstructionism, tends to stress the changes in the reception situation that characterized the end of the twentieth century. Readers/viewers, it is assumed, are all the more obliged to exercise their capacity of

interpretation as they become surrounded by more and more different messages; this is an interesting assumption for which there is no 'proof' (Sorlin 1994).

0.6 Conclusion

The study of a particular and marginalized audience is necessarily situated within an extremely complex world of media and audience theories. This area of research, like media and technology itself, is currently undergoing constant change and growth, responding to the many variables that affect audiences and media, such as population movement, globalization, and social change.

New audience research in the Arab world needs to address how the changes in thinking, attitudes, etc., are not only stimulated by exposure to new information and ideas, but also by the different ways in which people interpret signals and symbolic content. How do people make sense of language, the change of tone, the ways the media presenter is giving out information? What do stations mean to the audiences? To further understand audiences in the Arab world, we need to look into how media is being used, and how political, social, and cultural attitudes are developed during moments of social change, and importantly how ideological interpretation takes place when viewers meet to talk about and reflect further about what they have seen on television.

The following chapters are structured as follows:

In Chapter One, I present the theoretical framework of my study anchoring it in media analysis scholarship.

In Chapter Two, I review relevant Arab studies, linking them to the concepts discussed in Chapter One and showing how Arab scholars operationalized such concepts in their studies.

Chapter Three presents a brief background about Jordan and Jordanian demographics. I also dedicate a section to overview the Jordanian media environment and another to briefly present the pan-Arab satellite channels which flourished since 1990s.

In Chapter Four, I present my chosen methods of analysis arguing for the need to integrate quantitative and qualitative methods in this study.

Chapters Five and Six provide the findings of the quantitative data, while Chapters Seven and Eight are dedicated to discussing the qualitative findings.

I then conclude with a general discussion of the overall results and indicating a few pointers for future studies.

Beginning with a critique of mass audience theories, then, Chapter One will look at examples of both Arab audience studies and the theories of Western scholars, most of whom use Western-centric models to frame their inquiries, thereby downplaying the Arab audiences' cultural, social and political uniqueness. The history and roots of the avoidance of a truly Arab-based study of media reception, as opposed to media provision, provides a backdrop for an examination of current literature and recorded studies in the field, followed by an analysis of this study's data.

Chapter One

Theoretical framework -

Media audiences: between media effects and media psychology

1.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to lay out the theoretical framework of this research focusing on the research on media effects on audiences and how this line of research converges with the discipline of media psychology and the wider field of media studies. In particular, I shall focus on the contributions of media psychology to the study of audiences' media consumption beginning with the first attempts in the USA to measure the impact of mass media on public opinion, inspired by behaviourism, through to the recent scholarship which centres on audiences' cognitive processing of media programming. McLeod et al (1991) provide a useful overview of media effects research identifying several characteristics of such an approach. Firstly, this line of research tends to be audience-focused, exploring the influence of media on audiences. Secondly, that influence is triggered by the media form or content although the majority of studies tend to favour the impact of content. In general, media psychology is an emerging discipline that studies the impact of mass media on both senders and receivers.

In fact, it can be argued that the history of mass media triggered the recent conceptualisation of the audiences' relationship with the media texts. The most vivid and often cited example is the use of radio during WWII and its impact on audiences in Europe, USA and the Arab region (as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two). For instance, Allport and Cantril (1935) provided an example of the studies focusing on the psychology of broadcasting, especially radio, on audiences. For them, radio was a new medium of communication that was most suited to influence the public opinion. Their book *The Psychology of Radio,* was intended as a contribution to the debate about novel media such as radio whose effect was estimated to be pervasive, and debating this new medium as a social institution. This institution was seen as a tool that can be misused for political propaganda, as

indicated in the authors' references to Hitler in their book. Radio, then was a means of public control and consequently it warranted further scholarly investigation. For Allport and Cantril, radio was a mass medium with too significant psychological impact to be left in the control of private corporations, or the political parties. If handled carefully, however, radio could serve as a tool for deliberate democracy. What is clear then is that researchers were fascinated by the new medium of radio as a mass communication tool and saw in it a new and powerful propaganda tool or a "hypodermic needle" (Lasswell, 1935). This metaphor linked the radio to a needle that injects ideological bias into the minds of listeners and thereby affecting their attitudes, or even behaviour, with regards to a certain political concept or a nation. This early scholarship on political and sociological impact of media was accompanied by another school of thought, namely the Frankfurt School, whose main figures fled Germany in the 1930s, escaping the Nazi persecution.

The history of media audience studies encompass a range of perspectives that has stressed both the power that a message can wield over an audience, and those real or artificial barriers that 'protect' the audience from the potential effects of the message. A useful complement, then, to the examination of Stuart Hall's work, is a discussion of mass audience and reception theories. The 'hypodermic' theory of media effects was put forward by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. According to this theory, the media is like a syringe which injects ideas, attitudes and beliefs into the audience who, as a powerless mass, have little choice but to be influenced. This mass reception theory is useful to study not only for its nearly non-western postulations about how people receive information, but as a negation of the presence of individuality or free will, a concept with which western and non-western thinkers struggle equally.

1.1 Measuring media power

In broad terms, the serious academic interrogation of the character and status of media audiences can be said to have originated with so-called 'pessimistic mass society' debate in the US during the 1940s and the 1950s, notably with those

writers and critics associated with the Frankfurt School. Most notably writers such as Theodore Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse and others had argued that the breakdown of traditional social norms and structures, in, for example, pre-War Germany, had exposed people as atomised and alienated individuals highly prone and susceptible to the influences of powerful external forces such as the manipulative propaganda of powerful leaders. Clearly within this particular time frame an emergent mass media was seen as the most persistent form of such external influence. Relocating to the US from fascist Germany prior to the Second World War, Adorno and Horkheimer had argued in their most celebrated and influential piece 'The Dialectic of Enlightenment' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979) that whilst in fascist Germany this form of manipulative oppression had tended to take the form of an overt authoritarianism (one clearly backed by the threat of real violence), within the US the loosening of traditional ties and structures had led to an essentially conservative, largely undifferentiated population or mass who were essentially seen as the 'victims' of a manipulative mass media. This mass media was itself seen as promoting essentially conservative values and belief systems and tended to avoid the tendentious, the overtly political, the radical and the controversial. In short, the demands for a pacific and unquestioning mass audience demanded by capital (made manifest in the power of the advertising industry) was seen to produce a 'flat' or 'one-dimensional' (Marcuse 1986) set of media representations of the social world which was in turn 'injected' directly into the consciousness of the massified audience. The media thus produced a standardised and uniform set of cultural representations and expectations of its audience which were objectified in the commoditised objects it produced, most notably popular music, popular literature, radio, Hollywood film and an emergent television industry. As Adorno famously argued:

> Mass culture is a kind of training for life when things have gone wrong. The schema of mass culture now prevails as a canon of synthetically produced modes of behaviour. The following which mass culture can still count on even where tedium and deception seems almost calculated to provoke the consumers is held together by the hope that the voice of the monopoly will

tell them as they wait in line precisely what is expected of them if they want to be clothed and fed.

(Adorno 1991: 80)

The radical Marxism of the Frankfurt School was not without its critics, even amongst those who had some sympathy for the general tenor of their argument. In an emergent Parsonian sociology within the US during the post-War years critics may well have looked upon the blossoming media industries with some alarm and concern, particularly in their potential influence upon audience members but more caution, and even a degree of scepticism, was urged regarding the actual 'effects' this new mass media had on real, socially situated audience members. Perhaps most notably in Robert Merton's pioneering research (see for example Merton 1946) the argument was made with some considerable force that whilst the work of writers such as Adorno provided important and insightful accounts into the rhetorical devices and formal structural formation of media content (in terms of the forms of imagery and language used in advertisements for example), and the manner by which these were clearly designed to elicit particular emotional responses in audience members, the 'effects' of such 'propaganda' could not simply be assumed or inferred. For Merton, the link between media content and media effect had to be approached from both ends of the discursive chain. The mass media message both as a constructed text and as a particular cognitive understanding or interpretation of that text by individual viewers or audience members.

Merton's assertion on the need to focus on the moments of the cognitive understanding of media messages led, in the US context at least, to a blossoming of research into the precise mechanisms and processes by which audiences assimilated media messages into certain frames of meaning and understanding. In particular, research focused on the role of significant others, 'reference groups' or 'opinion leaders' within the wider social context whose essential function was to determine the 'legitimacy' of media content in effect on behalf of audience members. This so-called 'two-step flow' model of mass communications research

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(see especially Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Klapper, 1960) rejected outright the notion that media messages are effectively 'injected' directly into a passive audience in favour of a model that stressed the mediation of media messages and content through wider social structures and contexts or reception. Empirical studies (for example Lazarsfeld et al. 1948) seemed to support the view that media messages had a relatively insignificant effect on the changing of the attitudes and behaviours of media audience, functioning more significantly instead as an agent for the *reinforcement* of already formed wider social values and norms.

Within the U.S., the saliency of the model of mass communications research outlined by figures such as Merton, Katz and Lazarsfeld and others gave way to an almost exclusively quantitative approach to mass communications analysis in which, according to some (for example, Berelson, 1952), the function of such research was merely to provide appropriate quantitative data to support and reinforce the essential tenor of effects analysis. Indeed, it was not until the late 1960s and the early 1970s within the UK context that the analysis of media effects began to assume a somewhat more progressive character. In particular, research undertaken at the Centre for Mass Communications research at Leicester University, particularly under its director James Halloran (see for example Halloran, 1970a) stressed, in the now much quoted sentence:

> We must get away from the habit of thinking in terms of what the media do to people and substitute for it the idea of what people do with the media.
> (Halloran 1970a:15)

1.2 Causal effects

The preoccupation with the effects of media, particularly the negative effect, continued to mark the scholarship during the 1960s and 1970s. Gerbner's cultivation theory (Gerbner and Gross, 1976) was another milestone in this line of scholarship. The main insight of this theory is that violence on screen may not necessarily lead to more violence in society, but rather to the spread of fear. The cultivation theory was adopted by many Arab scholars, who were concerned with

measuring the influence of western television and advertising on Arab audiences, particularly the youth, as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Another related line of research, which also gained resonance in the Arab scholarship, was the Uses and Gratification theory, based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs to justify the reason behind watching certain programmes. Thus, this theory is more concerned with the motives that underpin viewing and its relation to the needs this programming may gratify.

The Uses and Gratification theory helped shift the focus of audience research from causes to effect, and hence it can be regarded as functional model (Cary and Kreiling, 1974). An earlier attempt was reported in Finn and Gorr (1988) which examined the relationship between feelings of self-esteem, shyness and loneliness on the one hand and audiences' motives of watching television. They concluded that people watch television for social compensation and mood management. Such an approach necessarily rejects the notion of the media audience member as a 'blank slate' or *tabula-rasa* upon which media messages can be routinely 'written' towards the notion that media audiences approach any viewing situation with an already established and independently determined set of cognitive processes through which an understanding of any particular media message must inevitably pass before meaning is itself produced. Audiences are, therefore, seen as having their own particular social and personal agendas within any viewing situation and are seen to use media forms in distinctive ways as a means of satisfying these agendas. As such, it is less productive to refer to media forms has having 'effects' on audiences and more accurate to define them as a set of 'cultural resources' from which audiences use that which is of relevance to their particular social situation (see for example Halloran 1970b).

This 'uses and gratifications' approach to media analysis has the undoubted strength of offering us a basic framework for understanding media influence which situates the audiences as, at the very least, 'equal players' in the process of the determination of meanings generated by media texts. The problematic facet of such an approach, however, is that once we arrive at a situation, in which audiences

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themselves are conceived of as being instrumental in determining meaning, it becomes extremely easy to lapse into the problematic position in which audiences themselves *determine* meaning, thereby reducing the media text itself to a mere storehouse of textual resources. As Hall (1973) suggested, we should be cautious in conflating media 'polysemy' with a pluralism in which audiences have an un-negated access to the production of textual meaning. Similarly, the uses and gratifications approach was also criticised for abstracting the individual audience member from his or her wider social and historical context, focusing as it did on more psychological frames of reference such as 'mental states, needs and [cognitive] processes' (Morley 1992: 53).

1.3 The rise of active audiences

Giles (2003: 184) argues that the concept of active audiences is central to the study of media psychology in both the North American and European schools of thoughts, "from the uses and gratifications in North America to European "reception" studies and the analysis of the text-reader relationship."

By the mid 1970s, analysis of media and its audiences had tended to vacillate between the extreme polarities of the media's absolute power to determine meaning and effect to the sovereign power of the audience in drawing from media texts exactly those meanings (and pleasures) they needed to satisfy their own and particular cultural agendas. Moreover, this situation was becoming increasingly more complex with the profound impact that debates within continental structuralism was beginning to have throughout the entire field of the arts, humanities and social sciences.

Whilst not remotely concerned with 'audience analysis' in the conventional sense, the impact of structuralism on the analysis of media forms in general necessarily had implications on how audiences were situated theoretically in relation to the media texts under analysis. Whereas preceding paradigms of media analysis, whether conducted from the perspective of the text or from the perspective of the

audience, had tended to focus almost exclusively on the manifest content of media messages, structuralist approaches are concerned predominantly with the, essentially linguistic, forms and structures embedded within media texts through which this content is framed discursively. Based primarily on a Saussurian understanding of the function of language (Saussure, 1986), the essential premise of structural analysis is that it is the linguistic forms themselves that determine textual meanings and therefore the audience's relationship with these texts. At the heart of this notion lies the fundamental structuralist assertion that language (here used in its widest possible sense) is not merely descriptive of the social reality but constructs and indeed constitutes the social reality; language is not merely a system of nomenclature to a pre-existent social reality but a structuring system (of words, images, sounds, discourses etc) that organises social experiences into meaningful patterns.

In terms of media analysis, the structuralist methods were most notably deployed for the analysis of film and cinema (although there were notable exceptions, for example the analysis of advertisements undertaken by Barthes (1993), Baudrilliard (1998; 2002), Williamson (1978) were most prominently seen in the journal *Screen*. Whilst the debates conducted through the pages of *Screen* can in no sense be regarded, in conventional terms at least, as 'audience analysis' they are significant and important for the study of audiences insofar as they established conceptual and theoretical basis or, indeed, 'ground-rules' for the emerging analytical paradigm of 'reception analysis' developed, initially within the UK context but subsequently worldwide. For this reason, it is important to consider briefly some of the primary themes and issues established by such work.

Fundamental to the type of structural and post-structural forms of analysis of film found typically within *Screen* (see for example Heath, 1981, McCabe, 1981a; 1981b, Mulvey, 1981, Willeman, 1978) is the conception of the 'audience member/viewer' not as an 'individual' but as a 'subject'; that is, as a conscious being who is the product or sum of the various historical and social forces and structures that have

produced her/him and into which this subject is inserted. As Fiske (1987: 49) remarks:

> Our subjectivity, then, is the product of the social relations that work upon us in three main ways, through society, through language or discourse, and through the psychic processes through which the infant enters into society, language, and consciousness. Our subjectivity is not inherent in our individuality, our difference from other people, rather it is the product of the various social agencies to which we are subject, and thus is what we share with others.

In broad terms, '*Screen* theory' emphasises the mechanism and formal devices found primarily within popular or Hollywood films that works through us at a latent level to reproduce certain modes of subjectivity within viewers and audience members. In particular, borrowing heavily from the influential ideas of the French structural sociologist Louis Althusser (Althusser 1971), this body of work stresses the filmic mechanisms that implicitly address and confirm the viewer's subjectivity. This is accomplished primarily through the reproduction of dominant ideological motifs within filmic texts. For Althusser ideology functions, that is, works upon the viewer, not through its specific and manifest contents (Althusser is at pains to stress that ideology is not a series of 'lies' used to subordinate individuals and classes for example) but through its very linguistic structure. For example, Althusser stresses that ideology is not a series of 'lies' used to subordinate individuals and classes. It is language and its structure itself, and not its content, that positions us as ideological subjects and within which we 'recognise ourselves' as though 'hailed' and 'interpolated' by a friend who recognises us on the street. To translate this notion into textual terms, popular texts 'call out to us', not through their manifest themes or subject matters, but through their very modes of address, their formal structures, their 'grammar' (editing, *mise en scene*, lighting, generic conventions, etc.), and their forms of story-telling (typically classic realist). It is this process that forces viewers' identifications and 'subject positioning' within the text, and towards its protagonists and themes, and not the subject matter itself.

From this basic standpoint, popular film typically works through, within the text, sets of established and ideologically motivated, 'binary oppositions' (such as 'good/evil' 'black/white', 'nature/culture', 'civilisation/wilderness', etc.) to formulate the subject position from which the ideal viewer should interpret the film. These oppositions are subsequently engaged with by the viewer in the process of film or viewing 'work' and meaning is produced only after the viewer has completed this necessary work. However, whilst the viewer perceives that s/he is engaging as a free-thinking and conscious individual to achieve these meanings through their own voluntary work, they are in fact *prescribed* from the outset within the film and, indeed, delivered via the various formal, structural and linguistic mechanisms deployed by the film text (see for example Heath, 1981). Pre-eminent amongst these formal textual devices is the notion of *realism,* in particular the *classic realist text.* The classic realist text is that particular mode of narrative delivery which confirms both a sequential and linear temporal order as well as providing the means through which the ideological tensions established and addressed by the film (manifest in the particular binary oppositions within the text) can be resolved adequately in favour of dominant ideological views of the social world. The 'pleasure of the text' is thus conditional and provisional, and realised or achieved within the viewer only after, firstly, these tensions have been worked upon by the viewer throughout the course of the film and, secondly, the film has achieved its narrative (ideological) closure.

In a similar intervention into the debate over the essentially conservative and oppressive nature of mainstream popular texts, Laura Mulvey and others identify regressive gender politics at work in the very formal structuring of such texts. In a complex and carefully-argued essay, Mulvey (1981) argues that the pleasures that popular films provide for their audiences are essentially 'phallocentric' in their origins, placing their audiences, both male and female spectators alike, within the scopophilic gaze of the male protagonist and, by extension, the male subject. As spectators women are thus 'masculinised'; the pleasures they derive from the film in fact confirming their own subordination and oppression as women. In an

attempt to construct both a theoretical and practical (Mulvey herself was a film-maker) alternative, anti-patriarchal, filmic form Mulvey provocatively calls for the 'destruction of pleasure as a radical weapon', an:

> ...alternative... that comes from leaving the past behind without rejecting it, transcending outworn or oppressive forms, or daring to break with normal pleasurable expectations in order to conceive a new language of desire.
>
> (Mulvey, 1981: 207)

Whilst the journal *Screen* focused almost exclusively on film and cinema, it was possible to argue that very similar formal structural mechanisms existed through the generic codes and conventions in all other forms of media output (for example newspapers, television news coverage, television drama, etc.). Hence analysis of the precise mechanisms of viewer identification with the ideological themes addressed within these genres can potentially allow us to unveil the manner in which, for example television news viewers, form opinions and views, which are perceived of 'as their own', but are in fact already inscribed within the text at the outset and realised through such mechanisms as 'viewer identification', narrative devices, realism, etc.

The saliency of structural and subsequently post-structural approaches to mainstream popular media forms typified by *Screen* had led by the late 1979s, in continental Europe and the UK in particular, to an almost exclusive focus on the text as the prime source of meaning and understanding. Viewers and audiences were thus seen as ultimately mere 'functions' or 'products' of the text, routinely, albeit through their 'work', reproducing the prescribed meanings of the text. It is ironic that by this period the conception of the media audience had effectively returned full-circle to one of an unwitting textual function. The primary difference, however, was that whilst figures such as Adorno had focused on the manifest contents of manipulative propaganda and persuasion, structural approaches had effectively argued the same end but via analysis of the formal and structural properties of texts. It was, however, within the UK context that this dominant paradigm of the

understanding of media forms and their audiences was to be challenged and, eventually, supplanted, notably within the emerging field of cultural studies.

By the early 1980s, the emerging saliency of cultural studies within the broad field of media and cultural analysis had indeed begun to set firmly on the interrogative agenda the question of 'differentiated audience readings'. Emerging out of the 'softer' antecedent of a 'Gramscian Marxism' (see in particular Harris, 1992) the audience-centred analysis of media texts, perhaps best represented by the so-called 'British cultural studies' of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (see Hall and Jefferson (eds), 1976; Clarke, 1991), is these days often characterised as 'the break' with the sort of analytical determinism of the ideas found in journals such as *Screen*. It is undoubtedly true that the focus of attention throughout a body work during the early to mid 1980s seeks to set in place the idea that there is a multiplicity of discursive fields at play within readers/audiences when media texts are encountered, rather than the implicit assumption that these audiences/readers suspend all other discursive fields and social relations at play in the construction of their subjectivity in favour of an abstracted, one-to-one discourse with the substantive themes of the particular text in question. In short, it is suggested that '*Screen* theory' tends to abstract an idealised reader/viewer from the text according to the envisaged functions of that text so that, by implication, the reader themselves becomes a 'simple function' of the same text. As Morley argues:

> At the moment of textual encounter other discourses are always in play
> besides those of the particular text in focus – discourses which depend on
> other discursive formations, brought into play through the subject's placing
> in other practices – cultural, educational, institutional. And these other
> discourses will set some of the terms in which any particular text is engaged
> and evaluated. '*Screen* theory' may be assumed to justify its neglect of the
> interplay of other discourses on the text/reader encounter by virtue of its
> assumption that all texts depend on the same set of subject positions,
> constituted in the formation of the subject, and therefore that they need to
> be accorded no other distinctive effectivity of their own. Here, however, I
> wish to put in question this assumption that all specific discursive effects can

be reduced to, and explained by, the functioning of a single, universal set of psychic mechanisms.

(Morley, 1992:60-61)

In this respect, Morley attempts to set in place a theoretical framework that allows for a certain relative autonomy in moments of media viewing and consumption. Morley himself is at pains to point out that indeed the body work found in journals such as *Screen* manage to identify, often in an exemplary manner, the formal structural formation of ideological discourse in media texts, and that these are structured in patterns of dominance within these texts, audiences and viewers cannot merely be ascribed the status of 'textual functions'. The processes and patterns of reading and decoding are always, in every instance, complex and problematic, depending upon any number of 'extra-textual' social, historical and cultural conditions within which each viewer encounters that text. Hence:

> ...the meaning of the text must be thought in terms of which set of discourses it encounters in any particular set of circumstances, and how this encounter may re-structure both the meaning of the text and the discourses which it meets. The meaning of the text will be constructed differentially according to the discourses (knowledges, prejudices, resistances, etc.) brought to bear on the text by the reader and the crucial factor in the encounter of the audience/subject and the text will be the range of discourses at the disposal of the audience.
>
> (Morley, 1980:18)

In Morley's own, now classic, study of audiences *The Nationwide Audience* (Morley 1980) this theoretical position is put into practice. *The Nationwide Audience* works with the assumption that analysis *begins* with the text but extends (sometimes well) beyond it to encompass the aggregation of the discursive fields and social relations that readers inevitably bring to bear at moments of reading. For Morley, of particular interest in the relationship or encounter between audience and text is the issue of class position (and the cultural expectations and assumptions inherent within this) as well as the differential linguistic competences for reading and

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understanding media texts that are inevitably present within a range of media viewers. In short, different cohorts or clusters of viewers, defined in this instance by Morley *vis-à-vis* their class position, bring to bear upon a media text different interpretive frameworks and abilities when making sense of media messages. Borrowing, for example, on Bernstein's social linguistics (Bernstein, 1971) and Rosen's refinement of this work (Rosen, 1972) Morley, prefiguring perhaps Bourdieu's working class position and taste (Bourdieu, 1984), stresses that the act of reading and interpretation amongst the sum total of viewers is unequally distributed according to interpretive and linguistic/reading 'competences' amongst these viewers. In short, the text, whilst structured or 'encoded' (see Hall, 1973) to encourage particular readings in fact acts upon viewers or readers in a differential way according to the precise circumstances within which each viewer's particular interpretive framework exists. From this standpoint Morley develops a model of media viewing in which differential readings are produced (from 'oppositional', 'negotiated' to 'dominant') according to the particular 'class consciousness' of the viewer. What is perhaps sometimes forgotten, however, certainly in later characterisations of this early audience analysis, is that the text is still present as an intrinsic aspect of the inquiry. It is notable, for example, that subsequent discussions of Morley's early work on audiences focuses almost exclusively on *The Nationwide Audience*, and it is sometimes easy to forget that this book was itself preceded by *Everyday Television: Nationwide* (Brunsdon and Morley, 1978), a book that looked precisely at how the *Nationwide* text functioned formally to invite prescribed readings of its content.

Notwithstanding this, *The Nationwide Audience* marks a landmark in audience analysis, not only for conceptualising the audience from a sociological perspective as a relatively autonomous differentiated aggregation of, in this instance, class-based, reading 'groups', but also for the fact that the research was based upon the empirical and observational evidence drawn from particular sets of viewers and viewing encounters. Indeed, the book effectively marks the initiation of a sophisticated *reception analysis* that was to emerge throughout the 1980s internationally and beyond under the broad banner of 'cultural studies'. From this

perspective, cultural studies based research into media audiences and consumption tended to take two particular developments. Firstly, Morley's stress on the sociological variable of class position opened up the possibility for similar forms of reception analysis based upon other social variables. This was perhaps initially most noticeable with the variable of gender, in particular women's use of media and specific forms of media text, for example domestic and international soap operas (see especially Hobson 1980; 1982, Ang, 1982) and popular romantic fiction (see especially Radway, 1984). Secondly, Morley himself begin to explore in a number of ethnographic studies the precise social and cultural contexts or situations of media consumption and use, in particular the familial context of domestic television viewing (see in particular Morley 1986; Morley 1988). This work in particular stresses the vital significance of the domestic context of viewing patterns, focussing less and less on the tele-visual texts themselves as bearers of meaning and increasingly upon familial relations in the context of programme viewing and discussions within the domestic environment of those programmes as discursive frameworks for the production of meanings and understandings of television programmes.

1.4 Consuming news

News media in particular have gained a central place in the media scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic. Scholars have been concerned with the analysis of news power in influencing public opinion and this line of research took roughly two strands: one focusing on the news texts and the other on the audiences. The analysis of news texts marked the emergence of several theories including agenda setting, news framing and the political economy approach, which are discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 to 7.

This type of audience scholarship looked into the reasons why people watch the news and the outcome of this regular watching. For instance, Robinson and Davis (1990) argue that watching news on a regular basis does not necessarily increase their knowledge of current affairs. Moreover, Grabe, Lang and Zhao (2003)

examined the impact of tabloid style on news stories. In particular, they wanted to investigate the combined influence of news style and content on audiences' evaluation of television news. They argue that tabloid style may actually enhance audiences' remembering of calm news items, while the same style may overburden audiences' information processing when consuming arousing news content. They also argue that audiences seem to rate tabloid news as less objective and reliable than with news stories in other printed media.

Knobloch et al. (2004) provide three studies aimed to investigate the effects of narrative on audience's feeling of suspense and curiosity or even reading enjoyment. Through quantitative data collected via questionnaires, the studies sought to measure audiences' reaction to reading web-based and paper texts ranging from news items and fiction. The texts were manipulated for discourse structure (whether inverted or linear) and factuality. The authors argue that the linear structure triggered more suspense and audience's curiosity. Also, both linear and reversal structures triggered more reading enjoyment than the inverted structure.

Berger (2007) directs our attention to the sophisticated skills of media practitioners in using dramatic language and images in order to attract viewers and readers. Drawing on cognitive psychology, he points to the fact that humans use two systems to process incoming information: one is analytical and rational and another is intuitive. The two systems work in parallel, although one of them may be dominant at times. For instance, when information about a social or economic threat is presented in graphical form, it evokes the rational system as a tool to judge this type of information. Audiences who tend to rely more on their analytical thinking tend to rightly judge the news about threats and minimise its seriousness. On the other hand, when audiences are exposed to emotionally provocative or anecdotal news, both their intuitive and rational systems react to this information raising or reducing the audiences' apprehension. Thus, the intuitive system may trigger more apprehension among highly rationales audiences while dampen it among low rationales ones. As news and entertainment media rely on emotional

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language and dramatic images, media practitioners have managed to categorise audiences in a way that matches advertisers' needs. This is so in the commercial as well as political domains where audiences are the target of sophisticated marketing campaigns, featuring individual stories and emotional language to generalise certain phenomena in society as if they were prevalent phenomena. So, news and information communicated through emotion-laden language and images such as news about terrorism, crimes and road accidents or even health threats may encourage audiences to over-generalise the prevalence of such cases, and thus become more apprehensive. One solution, argues Berger (2007) is to train or support audiences to cultivate their analytical skills, not as a denial of the intuitive skills, but to encourage rational and logical thinking necessary to digest information about threats especially in our media-centric age, which tends to encourage intuitive and experiential thinking. This is mainly to avoid provoking misguided reactions to media messages rather than debating these messages as rationally and logically as possible.

More recently, Boczkowski (2010) examines audiences' consumption of news at workplaces during the working hours. This is rather different from other audience studies that tend to favour and focus on audiences in their domestic surroundings. He noted the contrast between first and subsequent visits to online news sites, where first visits are more habitualised and comprehensive than subsequent visits. He also argues that the office setting has become the new locus of news consumption, and discussions among work colleagues tend to favour more work-related topics than culturally sensitive ones. Thus, there is need to revisit news consumption at work and at home, removing the artificial boundaries between work and home sites, which were imposed by scholarly endeavours.

Kepplinger and Daschmann (1997) examined how audiences process television news through comparing objective news content to the subjective meaning implicit to the news stories. Through asking audiences to draw a list of important stories from a particular bulletin, the authors argue that audiences tend to attach more significance to the stories which come in the beginning of a newscast. They also

tend to remember the negative images and stories appearing in the beginning of the newscast. The audiences were also asked to recall the most significant points of each news story, and the results show that the majority of viewers reported information that could not be verified in the shown newscasts. Instead, they added information about people and places derived from general story lines or patterns, and may have come from other sources of news such as newspapers.

Shoemaker (1996) suggests that people watch news as a tool of surveillance so as to monitor threats in their immediate surroundings. This "surveillance function", argues Shoemaker, builds on the assumption that people, whether journalists or audiences, tend to monitor the world around them. This is in line with early research such as Lasswell (1960) who also suggested this surveillance function. This means that audiences are inclined to watch for news about threatening events to their society or environment, and this may also explain journalists' tendency to select this type of negative news.

Miller and Leshner (2007) tested the impact of negative stories with their emotional presentation style, on audiences' ability to memorise these stories. In particular, they focused on news items that evoked fear or disgust, presenting it as live, breaking or traditional news format. Their findings suggest that news stores that evoked disgust were less recognized and recalled than news stories that evoked fear, indicating that disgust-eliciting images on TV may hinder viewers' processing of these images.

Fujioka (2005) analysed the reactions of 90 Mexican and white American viewers to emotional TV news stories that feature Mexican Americans. Participants were asked to recall the important points in the news items in order to test the effect of the news on audience's attention. The Mexican American participants were inclined to recall stories about Mexican Americans more favourably and rated this news as positive, compared to white American participants who recalled this news as negative. Fujioka argues that the findings of his study enforce social identity

theories which demonstrate the difference in processing information if it includes self-referencing information.

1.5 Audience Responses: the Arab Perspective.

In the early 1970s, Counihan noted the increasing significance of a new approach to evaluating media consumption, called the 'uses and gratifications' approach (Morley 1992). Within this framework, the audience is considered not a mere passive recipient, but is seen as playing an active role. This perception prompted theorists such as Halloran to examine what people did with the media, rather than only what the media "did" to them (Halloran and Chaney 1970). One key advance in media studies, developed by the uses and gratifications perspective, was the variability of response and interpretation. From this perspective, it was no longer sufficient to discuss the 'effects' of a message on a homogenous mass audience such as Arabs, or make assumptions about a particular population, who were all expected to be affected in the same way. In other words, we use the media to achieve some personal purpose: even the same media product can be used by different people to obtain differing satisfactions.

Certain aspects of this theory of "uses and gratifications" will be useful to apply to this research project, as the participants, while displaying obvious differences, are united through a far larger set of commonalities (McQuail 1984). It can be argued that the theory's perspective remains individualistic and therefore is of limited use, insofar as differences of response or interpretation are ultimately attributed solely to individual differences of personality or psychology and not of culture or socialization (Downing, Mohammadi and Sreberny-Mohammadi eds. 1990).

It is nevertheless important to consider and evaluate this research, since the history of news media in the Arab world is relatively short, encompassing approximately the last ten years. Earlier research suggested that Arab audiences use the media to generally stay informed, or to follow a particular issue. Whether this usage is

gratifying enough to Arab audiences remains to be answered. Having to choose the media from what is available does undermine the idea of uses and gratifications for an audience, which brings us to the point that the media can create rather than respond to needs.

Arab audiences, then, are uniquely situated within audience theories; this awkward position is mainly due to their complex relationship with media and government control (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2002). Most of the governance in the Arab world is not democracy-based but dictatorship-based, with little or no freedom of expression, and near-universal control of the media by the government. This produces an understandable lack of trust between the population/audiences and their government, who are highly suspicious of the accuracy and thoroughness of government-controlled news. Lifestyles that are thought of by western cultures as existing only in futuristic fantasy novels are the reality for many Arabs, who live and work in the shadow of secret security apparatuses. The structure of this society is then necessarily quite different from that of the west; accommodations that are constantly made to preserve even a small level of individualism necessitate, for example, a stronger dependence on small group/family unity and less dependence on individualistic values. With its long history of occupation and colonial rule, the Arab world possibly can be seen to rely more heavily on religious and cultural traditions for a grounding in inalienable individuality.

The Arab population has experienced government propaganda throughout its media history. The early models of such propaganda were conducted by the colonial powers who occupied the Arab world. Later on, as Arab countries gained independence, Arab audiences experienced two different forms of propagandas: one from the former colonial powers, transmitted via radio (BBC Arabic radio); the other from their own government, which has lasted until today.

The current functions of most Arab satellite stations seem to be politically motivated, such as to promote and propagate certain countries' agendas, cultures,

or ideologies. Arab satellites are not commercially driven, and that must be recognized within the research.

Given the relatively new history of Arab media and audiences, it is therefore unknown how Arab audiences are reacting toward the new style of transnational media and how such reactions are effecting their sensing/interrupting of the media text (given their deeply-rooted suspicions of their own government owned media outlets). Current audience and media theories do not address such unique situations.

The arrival of new technology certainly weakened government control over media, but it did not abolish it by any means (Lynch 2003). Such control simply took different facets and forms, such as indirect control through individuals or financial subsidies, which brings up the issue of the creditability and ownership of television stations. In 2004, research conducted by the American Embassy in Abu Dhabi indicated that credibility is a major issue for young audiences when selecting TV media as a source for news. The research also found that Al Jazeera is the most watched station among the same group, keeping in mind that the government of Qatar owns it (Urbahn 2004).

Having said that, the issue of ownership and credibility is more complex than was earlier thought, since it is an important criterion in television selection and trust. Reception analysis accommodates this kind of audience as 'oppositional' readers; given the option, they simply reject the medium and its text if they suspect the station ownership. The case of the Alhurra channel was evident in the above study: viewed to be unfair and American, it received only a 2% rating (the last on the list).

Another study, among different young Arab nationals in the United Arab Emirates during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, showed that Western media and governments were viewed with suspicion in Arab countries and therefore were perceived as non-credible. This guilt-by-association argument goes back to the mid-1960s when Voice of America broadcasts were received negatively by Arab audiences who considered

the radio services as the propaganda arm of what was perceived as a hostile foreign government (Ayish 2004).

In the same study, respondents rated television news highest in credibility compared to print and online media, coinciding with several analysts and studies that indicated that television news was more credible than newspapers (Carter and Greenberg 1965). They also rated Al Jazeera satellite television as the most credible channel, followed by Abu Dhabi satellite television. The writer of the study argued that due to existing public anti-US sentiments and mistrust of the Western media reporting of the Iraqi situation, Arab audiences were more likely to trust Arab-based media services. They also found that audiences perceived Arab media as more credible than Western media in handling the Iraqi war developments (Ayish 2004a).

1.6 Conclusion

The above discussion selectively reviews parts of the scholarly debate surrounding the power of media versus the power of audiences. The period following the Second World War saw the emergence of audience studies based on the view that media, particularly news media, constituted a powerful force in manipulating citizens' attitudes towards politics. Then came another stage of audience analysis, during the 1960s and 1970s, where scholars debated the impact on media on social activities and phenomena such as violence in society. Other theories also emerged during that time such as the cultivation theory and uses and gratification theory. The latter, in particular, has been popular among Arab scholars who were more concerned with the motives behind watching certain programmes.

The rise of cultural studies during the 1980s directed the attention towards audiences' power in "decoding" and interpreting media messages. There were several studies of news and entertainment media that aimed to show these differentiate meanings.

There have also been debates, both in western and Arab scholarship, regarding the power of news media in influencing public opinion and the fear that the so-called "tabloid style" of news may direct audiences' attention away from shared political issues.

In an Arab context, news media can be argued to play a double-edged role: on the one hand it provides knowledge about regional events, e.g. war, and on the other hand it can play down or conversely enforce the feeling of shared group identity (pan-Arabism) among Arab audiences.

The above discussion is based on the Anglo-American scholarly debates which formed the discipline of Media Psychology. This is so because, as I argue in Chapter Two, Arab scholarship has been inspired by the trends in Anglo-American scholarship rather than seeking to develop an Arabo-Islamic media theories. Based on the discussions reviewed in the following section, the next chapter will seek to show how these theories were applied in the Arab context by Arab scholars.

2.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of previous studies about Arab audiences, following the theoretical discussion presented in Chapter One. As discussed in the previous chapter, several audience studies contributed to the growing field of Media Psychology beginning with an attempt to measure the impact of mass media on the public opinion (as it was in the USA during the 1920s) to measuring audience's cognitive processing of programming including news programmes.

This chapter complements this discussion by presenting the Arab scholarship in the field of audience analysis. From the following review, it will appear that Media Psychology as a field was not well–developed as an independent discipline in Arab universities; instead, sporadic analyses and studies were conducted in various Arab countries, either under the auspices of Ministerial and governmental bodies or by universities and independent scholars. However, two important themes seem to run across these diverse studies and both are linked to the overall conception of mass media (print, broadcasting or internet) as a powerful tool in influencing people's opinions and behaviour. One of these themes is the impact of mass media, particularly broadcasting, on influencing public opinion with regards to social and political affairs. The second theme is the impact of imported programmes on Arab youths' lives and behaviour.

The latter theme has ideological roots that should be analysed as part of the colonial legacy of the Arab region and the role of Arab researchers in post-independent Arab states. For instance, Mellor (2007, ch. 8) provides a critique of Arab media scholarship which, in her view, is characterised by its political derivation referring in particular to the numerous studies on American and European news and cultural flow and hegemony. Thus, Arab media scholars were seen as part of

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the overall state development policy rather than independent scholars with independent research agendas. This is shown, for instance, in al-Abd's (1995) overview of major academic studies on audience surveys carried out during late 1950s until late 1980s, which showed that the main aim of the research was to assist the communication process and facilitate development plans. One way of achieving this aim was to employ applied research to evaluate broadcasting material in order to measure their success or failure in delivering the goals of the state communication plan.

Seen in this context, audience research was supported if it contributed to an overall state policy. For instance, the Egyptian scholar Awatef Abdel Rahman (1989) argued that most media institutions were part of the governmental administration and hence were a tool to execute the government's policy. The Algerian scholar Mohamed Kirat (1987) argued that the lack of audience analysis in Algeria made it difficult for Algerian journalists to familiarise themselves with their readers' needs and thus distant from readers' daily concerns.

The result is that audience research among Arab populations is scarce (Ayish (2003), Boyd (1999), Hamada (2001)), except for recent attempts by marketing research companies (such as Arab Advisory Group, Jordan) to categorize television consumption in selected Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, which is the major source of advertising income in the region. Most of scholarly debate surrounding Arab media has focused on specific channels (particularly Al Jazeera, e.g. Zayani, 2005) with the aim of analysing how such media have been successful in fostering deliberative dialogue and reflecting ordinary citizens' concerns.

In the following sections, I review selected Arab studies from across the Arab region, grouping these studies into four main categories:

1. The first one is concerned with the impact of media on Arab public opinion, or the so-called Arab Street (Eickelman, 2002).

2. The second category is concerned with the impact of mass media, particularly television on changing audiences' habits.

3. The third category extends this line of research while focusing on one particular audience segment, namely Arab youths.

4. The fourth category is related to the emergence of satellite channels and is concerned with measuring the impact of such transnational media on Arab audiences, whether residing inside or outside the Arab region.

I have chosen to group these studies into these categories, rather than presenting a historical timeline of audience research, because I believe this grouping better reflects the focus of Arab media scholarship, and it also provided pointers for discussion in my fieldwork in Jordan, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapters five to seven.

2.1 Media impact on Arab public opinion

Historically, the scarcity of audience reach has been the result of government prohibition and control of this type of research (Boyd, 1987), except for sporadic studies by international advertising companies or research sponsored by the government. According to Boyd (1987), the first attempts of audience research in the Arab region were carried out by European radio stations who were broadcasting in Arabic during the 1930s to 1970s, such as the British BBC and its rival the Italian Radio Bari, which ran anti-British programming. In 1943, the American University of Beirut interviewed 4,427 Arabs in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine to survey preferences of radio programming. Radio Jordan also carried out a survey in mid-1960s on Saudi radio owners to test their preferences to convince advertisers that there was potential market in Saudi Arabia (Boyd, 1987: 16).

In addition, Boyd (1987, 19) discussed the Voice of Arabs radio service, launched in Egypt in early 1950s, suggesting that the service aimed to "change leadership in conservative states headed by royal families. The powerful effect of radio on largely illiterate societies at the time was validated when it was apparently successful in sparking demonstrations in remote Jordanian towns". The Voice of Arabs or *Sawt al-Arab* radio was launched in Gamal Abdel Nasser's era and aimed to spread the

Free Officers' socialist agenda throughout the Arab region, thereby combating existing ideologies of established monarchies such as in Saudi Arabia. The latter responded by launching Sawt al Islam, or Voice of Islam Radio as a counterattack to the Egyptian socialist propaganda to profile a shared pan-Islamic rather than pan-Arab identity (Habib, 1985: 49). The Voice of Arabs was notorious for its false account of the 1967 war with Israel where the service claimed that the Arabs won the war. However, the audiences shortly found out that it was Israel who won the war, depending on foreign media such as the BBC Arabic service as their main source of information (Fandy, 2000). Arab journalists then were regarded as a mouthpiece to the existing political regimes, such as Ahmed Said, who managed Voice of the Arabs radio, and was close to the Gamal Abdel Nasser (Fandy, 2000), or the Egyptian journalist, Mohamed H Heikal, the former editor-in-chief of the Egyptian *al-Ahram*, who was said to be the special advisor of Nasser (Nasser, 1979).

During the early decades of the 20th century, there were a few attempts to carry out quantitative surveys among a sample of Arab audiences in order to measure the outreach and preference of western-subsided Arabic radio services. For instance, The U.S. Information Agency conducted a number of surveys in the region, particularly in the Gulf States, which started to enjoy economic prosperity during the 1970s. Other European agencies also showed interest in this market such as the London Office of the McCann advertising organisation which carried out audience research in the Gulf as well as Jordan (ibid). Another early study was carried out by Boyd and Kushner (1979) among Egyptian news editors, and it concluded the editors' preference for television as the primary source of entertainment rather than news.

The European subsidized Arabic radio services flourished during the period between 1930s and 1970s, and such services made use of limited audience research. One of such service was supported by Italy. Italy began Arabic broadcasting with the anti-British radio Bari in early 1930s, which forced Britain to think of possible ways to counteract this Italian propaganda (Boyd, 2003:444). By the 1970s, there were around 22 Arabic services beaming from Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain, Switzerland,

Turkey, Senegal and even Seychelles and South Korea (Bumpus, 1979: 14-15). The Communist bloc at that time also devoted more than hundreds of programmehours in Arabic from the former USSR, Albania, former Yugoslavia, Cuba, China, and North Korea (Bumpus, 1979: 14). BBC Arabic Service was the "most widely respected international voice in the Middle East...it is also the doyen – and the largest in output – of the BBC's [other foreign services]" (Bumpus, 1979: 13) although Arab audiences were still skeptical of the complete independence of BBC Arabic from the British foreign policies (Ayish, 1991: 382). The proliferation of the BBC Arabic Service during the second half of the 20th century was made possible by the increasing ownership of radios in the region (Bumpus, 1979: 13).

The BBC still runs sporadic audience analyses, and one recent analysis was reported in 2009 by the BBC Trust which released a report detailing the findings of a study carried out among opinion leaders in six Arab countries including Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia. The aim was to evaluate the outreach of BBC Arabic television and its popularity among this cohort of audience. The study clearly shows that television is the main source of information for this cohort, as a dynamic and interactive medium. They also access news from more than one source to ensure balance in the news stories. An Egyptian male civil servant, for instance said, "Listening to the radio has become outdated. When you have 24 hour news channels on television and you can watch news bulletins every half hour, you do not need to listen to the radio" (BBC Trust, 2009, p. 14). Another man from Saudi Arabia agrees with this evaluation, "This is no longer the time of the radio. I may listen to it in the car, but no more than that" (BBC Trust, 2009, p. 14).

Other studies were carried out by Arab scholars but focused primarily on the impact of mass media, whether western- or Arab subsidized, on Arab public opinion. Hamada (1993) presented the first leading Arab study about the relation between the press and public opinion using Egypt as a case study. However, his interviews and surveys were confined to the editors in selected Egyptian newspapers rather than news consumers. Al Haqeel and Melkote (1995) provide another example of such studies focusing on the agenda setting effects on Saudi Arabian media. In total,

they surveyed 500 Saudi civil servants, because this cohort was easily accessible. Also, government organisations were (and probably still are) the largest employment provider in Saudi Arabia. They concluded that media did not exercise agenda-setting role in influencing respondents' interpersonal agenda, which means that social problems such as cost of living concerned the respondents despite its de-emphasis in the news media. On the other hand, media played a role in influencing respondents' international agenda and the author argues that this could be because international events are distant from the daily lives of those respondents, who therefore depend on the information provided in the news media.

A recent survey among Palestinian audiences (Internew, 2007) concludes that Palestinians are avid consumers of news. The study is based on a phone survey conducted in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip among about 1200 Palestinians over the age of 18, of which the majority (58%) were between the age of 18 and 35 years. The findings show that the majority of Palestinians follow the news on a daily basis, primarily on television (61%) rather than radio (21%) or press (8%). The majority were not impressed by the local media coverage of political and social affairs, to which they attribute to the Jordanian journalists' lack of experience and to political affiliation and bias. In general, audience's trust in television is higher than in radio or newspapers with Al Jazeera channel rated as the most credible source of news.

Qualitative studies based on face-to-face encounters with Arab audiences are rather scarce. Among the few existing studies was the one conducted by Hadj-Moussa (2003), and which provided an ethnographical study among a sample of viewers in Algeria. Hadj-Moussa showed how satellite television has driven Algerian men to stay in the domestic space of their homes to follow TV programmes. She also showed how Algerian viewers tended to use France as a reference point, arguing that this was a way of identifying oneself by observing a certain 'other'. In total, she conducted over fifty interviews between 1994 and 2000, mostly in Algiers suburbs. Many of her respondents confirmed that they watch foreign television particularly French television in order "to gain access to the world, access to the self

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through the other" (p. 458). They also watch television mostly for news, as one respondent put it, "mainly for news, for learning. With the goal of education in mind...I was speaking about news concerning Algeria" (p. 458). Another respondent said, "I like the news...the best is TF1 [French] because it speaks about us. I am interested in France to see if we are on their radar, to see if we are being observed, to learn what bad things they might be saying about us" (p. 459). The researcher concludes that "to use France as a vantage point is indeed to observe oneself, but it is also to observe how the other views one and how one observes oneself through the other" (ibid.).

2.2 Media impact on changing habits

Another type of study was concerned with the preferences and changing habits of Arab audiences. For instance, in Kuwait, there were studies commissioned by international radio stations as part of their market surveys, although some research was also conducted by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information to identify audiences' preferences prior to launching the main television station (Al Menayes, 1996: 124-124). However, the Iraqi invasion in 1990 has spurred several studies, particularly those focusing on "crisis radio listening" in the wake of the invasion (ibid.). Al Menayes (1996) provides the results of a survey among 359 Kuwaiti adults over 18 years, of which 51% were female and the rest male. The mean age of respondents was 31 and the median 29 years. His reason for choosing Kuwait was that the study was conducted in a crucial time in Kuwaiti history, only a few years after the Iraqi invasion in 1990. In particular, he was interested in the time spent watching television compared to radio and the type of programming watched. The majority (73%) agreed that they watched television on a daily basis. They also did not think highly of local media, whether print or broadcasting, while foreign broadcast media were regarded as a more credible source of news and information compared to local media. News was also the most watched programmes on television, while religious programmes were the least watched (this trend has changed now though, as discussed below).

Moreover, Failakawi (2005) presented a survey among a sample of the audience in Kuwait. His main aim was to track down the viewing behaviours of Kuwaiti television audiences, before they turn their television sets on, during watching and after they finish watching television. His main conclusion was that Kuwaiti viewers were passive because they did not actively seek ways to know what would be on television.

Research by Wheeler (1998; 2001; 2003) focused on the development of an Internet culture in Kuwait, claiming that while Kuwaitis are promoting Internet use, they are also worrying about the effects of foreign values and norms on their traditional Islamic society. Through investigating the practices of the Kuwaiti government, as well as companies and individual citizens, Wheeler noted that the notion of cyberspace and its uses was bound to differ based on the local culture. Another study by Wheeler (2004) examined Arab females' patterns of Internet use in Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain to find out what this new medium means to these Arab women. Her most important conclusion is that despite the fact that Arab women from the above mentioned countries stand to gain much from the Internet in terms of general empowerment and as an educational and professional tool, their use of Internet is varied by country. For example, surveyed women in Kuwait used the Internet mainly as a means of socializing and entertainment, but in Egypt women used the Internet for work-related activities.

Gerbner's cultivation theory (Gerbner and Gross, 1976) was another milestone in this line of scholarship. The main insight of this theory is that violence on screen may not necessarily lead to more violence in society but rather to the spread of fear. The theory aims then to determine change in attitudes and beliefs as a direct result of heavy television viewing in a particular cultural context. Television here is regarded to have long-term effects on viewers' attitudes, and that effect is not confined to selected programmes but rather to the audiences' overall pattern of consumption. Al Oofy (1992) applied that theory in his analysis of Saudi audience's consumption of the two main state channels, and its impact of social attitudes. The

sample included 289 students age 17 to 27. He argued that participants were less likely to consider the USA negatively than other Arab audiences despite their heavy consumption of American films on one of the main channels. Later, Al Oofy (1994) provided another study among 224 Saudi teenagers aged 5 to 17, both male and female. He concluded that there was a correlation between viewing foreign channels and positive attitudes towards western culture and media, without necessarily negatively impacting on their perception of their local culture. He also argued that heavy viewing of foreign channels did not necessarily lead to teenagers emulating western lifestyle.

The cultivation theory was adopted later by Al Shaqsi (2002) who applied it in his native Oman, based on a sample of 534 Omanis, and integrating theoretical approaches from Uses and Gratifications as well as Cultivation Analysis. The sample was students at Sultan Qaboos University undergraduate programme who were asked about types of television viewing. Al Shaqsi concludes that the only cultivation factor that correlated positively with television viewing was attitudes towards western media programming. He also argues that satellite television cultivated different effects on viewers, while terrestrial channels helped sustain cultural stability. On the other hand, avid consumers of satellite channels were not characterised as culturally reserved, especially this cohort who had the chance to travel abroad. In general, his study indicates favourable attitudes towards western lifestyle, and positive image of the West among heavy consumers of satellite channels compared to those who confine their consumption to terrestrial channels.

Other existing studies are also based on quantitative surveys and are anchored in the uses and gratification theory. In 1998, two studies were recorded, one in Saudi Arabia and another in Egypt. Marghalani, Palmgreen and Boyd (1998) surveyed the use of satellite channels in Saudi Arabia and argued that a mix of factors related to the particularly religious, economic and cultural context of the Saudi society impacted on audience's strong motivations to watch satellite television.

In Egypt, Abdel Rahman, H (1998) carried out a quantitative survey among a sample of Egyptian television audiences in order to explore their uses and gratification of satellite television channels. The results showed that the respondents spent longer time watching satellite channels than national television, and that they relied on satellite channels as a major source of news. Their preferred channels were news, followed by films and entertainment. In total, the author surveyed 310 viewers in Cairo, 57% of them were male and 43% female. They all subscribed to satellite television, and the majority of them were high school graduates. Her findings indicate that 42% of the respondents identify the desire to watch uncensored shows and programmeas the reason behind their consumption of satellite television. News scored highest on the list of top genres watched on western satellite television, while Arabic movies scored highest on the type of programmes watched on Egyptian television. The author concludes that gender constituted a factor in this consumption, with males more likely to fulfil their cognitive needs while females likely to fulfil affective needs by watching satellite television.

2.3 Impact on Arab youths

Youth (under age 18) is a very important segment of Arab society as they constitute the majority of population (Karam, 2007). The media are central tools to transform citizens into dynamic participants in deliberate dialogue. In the Arab context, Arab youths are exposed to a broad range of media programmes provided by local, regional (pan-Arab) and transnational outlets. This impact of globalised media is still to be documented as it covers all aspects of youths' lives including culture and politics. Although some commentators, e.g. Khoury (2006), claim that there is little scientific research on the media's impact on youth, there is a growing literature that deals specifically with such an impact carried out in individual Arab states. It was perhaps therefore that many Arab scholars dedicated several studies to measure the impact of mass media, particularly satellite and foreign television, on Arab youth.

For instance, Wahby (1996) carried out a survey among university students in Sohag, Upper Egypt. She was mainly concerned with the correlation between media consumption and youths' attachments to role models among public figures. Her findings indicate that all of the participants regard it important that public and media figures serve as role models for the youth and that mass media, particularly television, is responsible for mediating such role models. One such role model for the youths is the late Sheikh Muhammad Metwally El-Shaarawy who rose to fame after being featured in a weekly programme on the Egyptian state television in 1980, a programme that was massively popular in Egypt and other Arab states due to el-Shaarawy's lecturing style delivered in simple colloquial Egyptian and understandable to common people. The researcher concluded her study with the recommendation to Egyptian mass media to endeavour to offer good role models for the youth so as to engage them in their national problems and enforce their national identity.

Moreover, Abdulla (2007) focused on Egyptian students and their Internet use, and found that they mostly use it to seek information. However, her case study investigating Internet use by students at the American University in Cairo (AUC), Egypt, cannot be used to generalize the use of the Internet in other parts of the Arab world such as Qatar.

In Libya, Al Bayati (2001: 111) provides a study among Libyan youths investigating the impact of the proliferation of satellite television on their media consumption. He states clearly in his introduction that the Arab youths "are the most susceptible to the cultural invasion" as a result of the massive reach of satellite television thanks to the technological advance, particularly satellite technology. For Al Bayati (2001: 113), Arab youths are generally avid consumers of television and western television programmes thereby escaping from national programming, and this may at worst lead to their passive acceptance of foreign values. Al Bayati (p. 117) also states that there would always be superficial television programming that is consumed only to pass the time, and thus does not add up to the individual's cultural identity or values. His study focused on the 200 male and female Libyan

university students who own satellite television, asking them about the type of programming they tend to follow, the time they spend watching such channels, and the role of family and other groups in guiding those youths. More than 50% of his respondents have access to satellite programming in both English and Arabic and around 44% have only access to Arabic only channels. The author justifies the modest percentage of those who only had access to western (American or European) channels by the fact that most of the participants live in non-urban surroundings and thus had no access to the newest technology in satellite available in the capital. Also, a large percentage of his respondents spend more than four hours watching satellite television daily, particularly thriller movies followed by romance genre. Also, more than 90% of the respondents agree with the statement that satellite television had a negative impact on them in that it made them want to emulate the behaviour or appearance of television characters. They also agreed with the statement that such programming, although entertaining, might have been the reason behind any academic under-performance. Al Bayati begins with the hypothesis that watching satellite channels impacts negatively on the youths' lives, and he concludes with the recommendation that education and cultural organisations should be working together to "plan how to protect the youths from foreign media and cultural impulses and to help them use their time in personal development activities" (p. 124).

In Syria, Al Refaie (1995) provided an example of audience analysis based on a survey among a sample of 100 Syrian students aged between 17 and 22, and residing in Damascus. His study is based on his observation that video loans in the library in Damascus University exceeded book loans, and he set off to find out the reasons for this avid consumption of videos and its impact on the Syrian youths. However, he begins with the assumption that watching video films has a negative impact on the youths (p. 76) and this hypothesis might have already impacted his findings. The survey indicated the heavy usage among male students compared to female students, which the researcher justifies by the cultural habit of assigning females with house chores which leaves males with more leisure time to spend watching video films. He also points to the tendency of parents and guardians to

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choose the type of films watched by their youths, in the case of 30% of the male respondents and 80% of the female respondents. The researcher concludes by recommending more involvement of the parents and guardians in choosing the type of video films watched by their sons and daughters pointing to the negative impact particularly of thriller and violent films on the youths' behaviour (p. 83).

In Morocco, Tessler (2000) carried out systematic interviews among a sample of adults over the age of 18 in Rabat. He compared the consumption of younger versus older generations and showed that regular newspaper readership is spread among those with higher education. However, younger generations tend to read fewer newspapers, whether in French and Arabic, which he justified by the youths' disinterest in current affairs. Also, younger generations tended to prefer French newspapers whereas older generations preferred Arabic newspapers. The former cohort also tended to consume more western music than older generation.

In Saudi Arabia, Basfar (2007) provides a study among Saudi undergraduate students meaning the effect of their perception of the impact of imported films and videos on Saudi culture. In total, he surveyed 83 Saudi students, the majority of which were male. He concludes that such cultural products have an impact on students' belief in their role in society and their attitude towards family size, but they have limited impact on men's and women's perception of family ties. Moreover, the most watched films were American movies followed by Egyptian and Indian, the latter has gained an increasing popularity perhaps due to the large Asian expatriate communities in Saudi Arabia.

Melki (2010) provides a pilot study surveying 2,744 university and high school students in Jordan, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates enquiring about their media consumption. The findings indicate the youths' significant use of traditional and new media and preferred to watch news in Arabic. They also trusted new media and did not show much concern about online risk or privacy intrusion. The majority of them spent an hour or less per day following news mostly on television, rather than from newspapers, radio or magazines. Another important finding is that

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the majority of the youths, almost 90% of them, are likely to watch television at home but not in their own bedrooms, which shows that televsion watching is still regarded as a family event.

One of the most recent analyses was the one reported in Karam (2007). He provides an extensive study among youths in Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and the United Arab Emirates, focusing on those aged between 16 and 27. His research zooms in on the youths' media consumption, particularly satellite television, and its relation to their cultural identity. Karam's contribution lies in his challenge of Arab commentator's and scholars' warnings of the negative impact of American and European programming on their Arab cultural identity, arguing that there is little evidence of such an impact or that even when Arab youths adopt a "westernized" lifestyle, such as eating at McDonald's or wearing Levis, or watching XFactor, this does not necessarily mean that they abandon their Arabo-Islamic identity.

2.4 Pan-Arab and Diaspora

The fourth category of studies was concerned with the pan-Arab transnational channels such as Al Jazeera and a few of such studies were carried out among Arab Diaspora audiences in Europe and the USA. As audience involvement may also take different forms, other studies were concerned with the relationship of audience with media personalities whether it is through affinity, identification, fandom and Para-social Interaction (PSI). Viewers who are Para-socially involved with media celebrities feel a certain affinity with those celebrities, as if the latter were close friends. Audience also evaluate the celebrities (whether artists or anchors) personally and experience feelings toward them (Levy, 1979, 70) or show emotional involvement in responding to events in celebrities' lives. Auter, Arafa and Al Jaber (2005) provide an example of PSI studies in the Arab context. Their study aimed to explore the relationship between Al Jazeera and its audience, based on an online survey, linked to Al Jazeera website (www.Al Jazeera.net) asking viewers about their viewing habits. During a two-week period, the authors received over 5,300 responses from Arabic readers from 137 countries around the world. Nearly half of

those respondents aged between 25 and 35 and the largest group was between 18 to 24. Men also outnumbered women (92% and 8% respectively, and the results suggest a cohort of well-educated, well-off audience segment, where nearly 22% of them lived in Saudi Arabia and only 2% in Qatar, Al Jazeera's home, and nearly all of those respondents originated from the Arab region. The researchers concluded that there was a strong positive relationship between PSI and audience perception of the credibility of Al Jazeera news professionals. This PSI links to both television consumption and online use of Al Jazeera website. They also conclude that "Al Jazeera may provide a feeling of group cohesiveness that we tend to take for granted in the West" (p. 199). They also argue that PSI was not particularly stronger among Arabs living away from their home countries, thereby serving as a "functional alternative to socialization or cultural maintenance" (p. 200). Also, the strongest PSI links were among audiences aged 18 to 24, Muslim single youths.

Another survey carried out among 146 Arabs in London and supported with in-depth group interviews with a small number of Arab families, showed that news and religious programmes are the most preferred programmes in Arab satellite channels (Miladi, 2006). The study also confirmed the need of Muslim Arabs, in particular, to get news about the Islamic and Arab world and that they watch their national state channels as number four or five in preference (Miladi, 2006: 950). Another study shows that news, followed by religious programmes, is the most preferred programmes among Arab audiences in the UK. For instance, one study among a sample of Arabs in Wales showed that consuming political programmes was viewed as part of those Arabs' culture and daily activities. In general, these communities prefer television as the main source of news rather than newspapers, and their intake is primarily current affairs programmes (Harb and Bessaiso, 2006).

Major events, particularly 11 September 2001, have fuelled this need for "alternative" points of view, particularly with more and more Arabs feeling stereotyped in western media, as one Arab viewer said, "They call Arabs 'fundamentalist Arabs' – everyone classifies you as 'fundamentalist' "(cited in Hargrave, 2002: 26).

In fact, the 9/11 event pushed many Arab households to acquire satellite receivers in order to gain access to Arabic channels, and access diverse coverage on Arab affairs, to counterbalance the Anglo-American coverage, as one Yemeni viewer put it,

> Before it [9/11 event] happened I didn't have a TV at all. Then we just got satellite after it happened, you know just to see the news of what happened. The English channels wouldn't show everything, I mean from anything that had happened ... like for example Palestine, they had never shown the truth. What you see on the satellite is what's actually happened there. I mean you see little kids getting beaten up by Israeli soldiers, little kids beaten (cited in Harb and Bessaiso, 2006: 1068).

But even before 11 September 2001, Arabs and Muslims felt being in the spotlight in British society following the debates that began early 1980s with the Rusdhie affair, *halal* meat in schools and the 1991 Gulf War (Harb and Bessaiso, 2006).

Soap operas and religious programming have also been at the centre of a few recent studies. In her examination of the Egyptian TV series *Al Gamaa*, depicting the development of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, Vivian Ibrahim (2011) carried out a small-scale study among Diaspora Egyptian communities in the UK and the USA to examine their views on *Al Gamaa*. She argues that the series represents an attempt to reinvent collective memory while serving as a story of resistance against western forces but also against misinformed religious authorities that might harm the collective national identity binding Muslims and Christians.

The above studies then regard pan-Arab media as types of global media that connect Arab populations across the world. It is here important to reflect on the globalization debate and the role of media in this debate, as articulated by Arab scholars.

2.5 Globalization debate and Arab media

The scholarly debate surrounding globalization has been roughly divided into two opposing views. The first one is optimistic and sees globalization as a dynamic process that could ensure equality and freedom across the globe, although it is also a process that is accompanied by a great deal of risks (see e.g. Giddens, 2000). The second view is rather pessimistic and sees in globalization a negative force that could accelerate an inevitable clash of civilizations (see e.g. Huntington, 1998). In other words, the optimistic view sees the globalization as a force that pushes towards hybridity and heterogenization while the pessimistic view sees it as a force towards homogenization and hence increased resistance. Other scholars, such as Robertson (2001: 462) see globalization as "a complex mixture of homogenization and heterogenization". As such, globalization does not necessarily mean the "triumph" of one meta-narrative of one civilization or culture (Waters, 2001: 186). Moreover, globalization cannot be only interpreted as a means of cultural integration, as it is also accompanied by the process of localization (Lash and Urry, 1994), because recipients in different societies may interpret one particular media message in a variety of ways according to their cultural background.

Giddens (1991: 1ff) explains the dynamic process of modernity as based on three factors: separation of time and space, and the development of media technology is a good example of this separation of process, as audiences around the world can get instant access to information from all over the globe. The second factor is the disembedding of social institutions such as the rise of the so-called expert systems to guide out lives and the emergence of symbolic tokens such as financial currencies. The third factor is reflexivity or the continuous monitoring of social action.

Media here plays a vital role, which Giddens (1991: 25f) illustrates by newspapers as a catalyst of disembedding time and space. This is so because the print media offer news items from all around the world, sometimes even collated on one page united only by their newness or timeliness. What Giddens and other scholars stress,

moreover, is that globalization is indeed a dynamic process that is built on a dialectical relationship between structure and agency, or as Waters (2001: 185) put it,

> Modern society is therefore specifically reflexive in character. Social activity is constantly informed by flows of information and analysis which subject it to continuous revision and thereby constitute and reproduce it.

Arab scholars tend to discuss globalization as a process of western hegemony aimed at spreading capitalist values while eroding local, indigenous cultures (see e.g. Abdel Rahman, 2002: 8). They regard it a rootless phenomenon with no clear cultural identity to offer local cultures, and they often cite the increased consumerist cultures in Arab cities as a manifestation of this chaotic phenomenon (ibid). A content analysis of four Arab dailies (Kahtani, 2000) found that globalization is mostly mentioned in culture news rather than in economic news, which showed the Arab view of globalization as a western cultural project.

This project results in widening the gap between the rich and poor states and the dependence of the latter on the former (Abdel Rahman, 2002), and that the proliferation of American popular cultural products such as soap operas and game shows, not to mention the spread of American fast food culture in the Arab region, may all be a western, particularly American, project to erode the Arab tradition (Kahtani, 2000: 105-106).

Even pan-Arab news media are claimed to copy American news genres based on sensationalism and technical quality of televised reporting. For instance, Al Jazeera flagship programme *The Opposite Direction* is claimed to be moulded after the American programme *Crossfire* (al-Kasim, 1999). Also, pan-Arab news media are claimed to combine sensationalism reporting with the American confrontational debate style (Khouri, 2001). Arab satellite channels are also claimed to follow the example of the CNN, which was the main source of news during the 1991 Gulf War.

In fact, several Arab scholars (Ghareeb, 2000a; 2000b; Ayish, 2002) agree that the 1991 Gulf War marked a huge media reform in the Arab region. While Arab state

channels refrained from broadcasting news showing the development of the war, CNN, accessible to many Arab homes, was the main source to immediate coverage of the war. Behind these reforms are also other factors, which are summarized in Mellor (2005, Introduction). These include the emergence of a new cadre of Arab journalists, educated and trained in western institutions and who returned to the region to introduce new genre and new style of reporting. The other factor is the acceleration of competition between Arab news institutions to follow the CNN effect and establish themselves as technologically advanced and reliable news institutions. Indeed, the last decade saw the set up of tens of new pan-Arab satellite news channels, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. These stations depend on promoting the so-called shared topics and concerns such as the Iraq War or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while also promoting a new type of news which is human interest news, particularly with the rise of several tabloids across the region. In Jordan, for one, several tabloids have been set up, and one Jordanian editor, George Hawatmeh, then-editor of the Jordan Times, said once, "I personally think that the tabloids have had a positive impact...They have courage in exposing or talking about issues that the pro-establishment daily newspapers, basically do not tread on...They have investigative reporting, but it is not well-documented, it is not well-researched" (quoted in Jones, 2002:177).

In summary, while some Arab commentators see a threat in the increase of "imported" media genres, particularly talk shows, others see the spread of such genres, particularly in news and current affairs programming, is a welcome change towards more participatory programmes.

2.6 Conclusion

The above review shows the salient topics that occupied Arab scholars during the past few decades. Chief among those is the impact of mass media on changing the Arab public opinion, particularly with the increasing number of satellite channels owned by Arab and western organisations. This review has helped me shape the focus of my fieldwork, concentrating the questions I posed to my interviewees

around a few selected themes. One of these themes is the issue of media power and how audiences envisage this power and its outreach. Another theme is whether this power is confined to agenda-setting (providing the agenda of what to think about) or also impinges on audiences' opinion towards significant political issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If media power is discussed as a theme, it is difficult to disentangle it from the issue of ownership (as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven). Here it was important to enquire whether audiences attach a particular political agenda to different television channels according to their ownership. Moreover, the audience was also asked about the value they attach to news and current affairs programmes in their daily routine.

Before I elaborate on each of these themes, I dedicate the following chapter to provide a needed background about the media landscape in Jordan, as this is crucial to understand the importance of satellite channels in Jordanians' daily news diet. Then in Chapter Four, I account for my chosen method of analysis, presenting an overview of the chosen sample of Jordanian audiences.

Chapter three
Jordan Media - Background

3.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide background information about Jordanian society and media, which is instrumental in understanding and contextualizing the following analysis. I begin with a brief overview of Jordanian demographic and their impact on the Jordanian national identity, especially that more than half of the population are Palestinians. This fact also impacts on the official Jordanian-Israeli relations as well as Jordanian media's reporting on Israel. I shall dedicate a section to review this

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type of reporting on Israeli affairs. The following sections in this chapter will be dedicated to review the Jordanian state media and the problems they face with the current media legislation. These such laws usually constrain, if not directly censor, news media output, which has been the cause of recent demonstrations by Jordanian journalists. I conclude with a brief note on the impact of the recent Arab uprisings on these demonstrations in Jordan.

3.1 The Jordanian national identity

The most important characteristics of Jordan is that half of its population descended from Palestine who immigrated as a result of the wars with Israel in 1948 and 1967, while the native population descended from Bedouin villagers who moved from the Arabian Peninsula. Around 2% of the Jordanian population belongs to minorities such as Circassians and Armenians in addition to Kurds.

As many Arab countries which were formed by former European colonial powers following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Jordan has long struggled to affirm its national identity. Jordan began as the Trans-Jordan Emirate in 1921 and gained its independence from British rule in 1946, and it became a constitutional monarchy led by King Abdullah. However, neither Britain nor King Abdullah had a clear vision and plan for the new nation. Britain envisaged a plan for a Trans-Jordan while King Abdullah aimed for a pan-Arab nation. Both unfulfilled dreams, however, meant that Jordanians were not able to forge a sense of national identity until the middle of the 20th century (Layne, 1989: 24). Following the 1948 war with Israel, two parts of Palestine, namely West Bank and East Jerusalem, were united with Jordan, but the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel resulted in the fall of these parts under Israeli control. In 1988, Jordan cut off its administrative links with the Palestinian occupied territories and embarked on building up its own Jordanian national identity (Ayish et al. 1994: 126).

Indeed, Jordan's role in the Arab Revolt and its contribution in the above wars has been important in forming "administrative and legal ties with Palestine especially the holy city of Jerusalem and the West Bank" (Layne, 1989: 24). Another

component of Jordan's national identity is the Royal Family's (the Hashemite) claimed genealogical links to the Profit Mohamed thereby accentuating the Islamic identity of Jordan and its ties to the rest of the Arab region. However, one particular theme helps distinguish the Jordanian national identity, from the Palestinian in particular, and this is Jordan's tribal traditions. The Bedouin tribes referred to Jordan's past or what was geographically knows as Transjordan in 1921. The Bedouin culture also embodies a sense of native values unspoiled by the recent urbanization, such as honor, respect and moral virtues (Layne, 1989). Bedouins' traditional value of honor refers to the belief that the insult (however slight) of a member of a tribal group, particularly women, was an insult to all members of that group. The concept of honor thus enforces kinsmanship and that all members in the group were responsible for each other's actions (Al-Abadi 1998). That tribal social structure and the emphasis on kinsmanship was very much founded on the fraternal ties among men which in turn were significant in providing access to material and social resources.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is one of the small Arab countries, in terms of population but also in terms of its resources. Nonetheless, Jordan has a great political influence which is largely due to its central location and closeness to Israel and Palestinian territories. Geographically, Jordan is also a gateway to the Arabian Gulf on one hand, and to Egypt and North Africa on the other. It is also an important ally for Turkey and Europe. The country also leads a progressive political and economic agenda and is known for its diverse population structure and the intermixing of Jordanian Arab Bedouin tribes and Palestinian and Iraqi refugees. The native Jordanians then are composed of Bedouins and peasant farmers, but the Bedouins constitute the main cultural reference for Jordanian national identity. Peasant and refugees, however, are usually criticized for not upholding the pure Arab values inherited from the Bedouin traditions.

Following the war in Iraq in 2003, thousands of Iraqi refugees moved to Jordan and it is estimated that there are more than half a million Iraqis in Jordan as of 2007 (Fifo, 2007). The majority of those Iraqis fled to Jordan in groups of families who

fled Iraq in 2003 and later. The majority of Iraqis are Sunni Muslims (around 68%) whereas Shiite Muslims are around 17% and Christians are 12% of all refugees (ibid.). The majority of Iraqi refugees in Jordan are well-educated and around 22% of them have jobs in Jordan.

Native Jordanians, who descended from the Bedouin tribes come originally from the East bank of the river Jordan, and the rest (around half of the population) are descendents of Palestinian refugees mainly from the West Bank who fled from Palestine during the wars of 1984 and 1967 with Israel and also as a consequence of the war in Kuwait in 1991, where many Palestinians worked and lived.

There are often conflicting arguments between native Jordanians on the one hand and Palestinians on the other on how the country should develop in the future. Thus, while the native Jordanians would like to hold onto a native Bedouin and conservative culture, the Palestinians and Iraqi refugees would like to push for further modernization plans in line with those in other Arab states such as Lebanon and Egypt (Al-Robaiaat 2004). However, Jordan is part of the Arab region which has recently faced several incidents of political turmoil, which in turn make it difficult to implement modernization programmes.

Finally, Arabic is the official language in Jordan and it is spoken by all Jordanians. English is spoken at government and business levels and thus is the professional language of the educated population. The majority of the Jordanian people are Sunni Muslims. Christians, the majority of who belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, make up around six percent of the population. The annual GDP in 2009 was around $21.92 billion (figures taken from the US Dept of State, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm).

3.2 Relations with Israel

Historically, Jordan has been able to coexist with both Islamism and Zionism, the two important powers in the region (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 194). Jordan shares the

longest border with Israel and it did until the 1967 war, control East Jerusalem. Jordan has officially enforced a normalization strategy with Israel following the 1994 peace treaty. Israel has always seen in Jordan a moderate partner and the Israeli public opinion used to think favorably of the late King Hussein (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 194). In fact, Jordan joined the Middle East peace process in 1991 in Madrid and following the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty in Oslo in 1993, Jordan signed a separate treaty with Israel in 1994. The late King Hussein aimed to use the treaty to ensure closer relationship with the USA, particularly after Jordan's opposing attitudes towards the war on Iraq in 1991 in order to liberate Kuwait. The King wished that the treaty would boost the Jordanian economy with the flow of foreign investment (Lucas, 2004: 94). As part of this strategy, the late King talked about the treaty as a strategic solution for Jordan to win back its land from Israel (ibid.). The political opposition in Jordan criticized the peace treaty for abandoning the Palestinian cause and the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland (Brand, 1999). The normalization here means more than just acknowledging the existence of the Israeli state. It also means "warm peace" with Israel in contrast to Egypt's "cold peace" with Israel (Lucas, 2004: 94). The peace treaty has many benefits for Jordan, particularly in securing its borders and guaranteeing a safe environment for foreign investments in Jordan. However, during the past decade, many Jordanians felt that the economic benefits of this treaty were exaggerated, particularly that the U.S. aid to Jordan was rather modest, compared to the aids directed to Egypt (Lucas, 2004: 105).

In summary, the main issue that impacted upon the Israeli-Jordanian relations has always been the Palestinian cause and the right of return. During the 1970s and 1980s, Jordanian leaders feared that the influx of Palestinian refugees into Jordan might turn Jordan into a Palestinian state, which made the Palestinians living in Jordan seen as "a source of both conflict and cooperation between the two counties [Israel and Jordan]" (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 194-195).

3.3 Jordanian media

The Jordanian Radio was set up in 1959. It broadcasts audio programmes around the clock from inside Jordan and neighboring countries. It transmits in Arabic and English, in addition to certain programmes in French (Abu Hijlah, 2000). The Jordanian radio transmits news and current affairs debates as well as a variety of entertainment programmes such as music and drama. The radio broadcasts in English language as well airing programmes and American songs, for those who like to listen to this type of programming. In addition, Jordanian radio broadcasts Quran recitations on FM.

In 1968 the Jordanian state launched Jordan state television, which was propagandistic in nature (Boyd, 1993: 95). The channel also aired programmes including citizens' complaints about government services, which was seen as a new means of bridging the link between the government and people (ibid.). The state also launched another channel in Hebrew and English in order to reach out to audiences in Israel and the West Bank (Boyd, 1993: 103). The television station has grown into a major state foundation with about one thousand journalists, technicians and administrators. The station is exposed to critique by political commentators and citizens alike who are suspicious of the content of programming on Jordanian television.

FIGURE 3.2 LOGO OF JORDANIAN OFFICIAL TELEVISION STATION

The state usually appoints senior staff in these television channels, which hinders the stations' autonomy and their ability to function as the people's watchdog (see e.g. Sakr, 2007: 18). When King Abdullah assumed the throne following the death of King Hussein in 1999, he promised progressive plans including more freedoms for the press. The state also promised to allow the private licensing of media including television, so in 2002 the first private television station, Al Ghad was launched (Sakr, 2007: 15), although licenses were normally given to those who supported the Jordanian leadership. Recent market research suggested that the state Jordanian television is the second most watched station, particularly for those living in the capital Amman, although viewers tend to express their distrust of state media.

In 1996, the Jordanian satellite channel was established as an independent channel and it has its own programmes and transmission hours. The programme offerings were taken from the terrestrial channel in Jordan. However, with the increase and proliferation of pan-Arab satellite channels (which are now well over 700 channels), Jordanian audiences now have access to a range of news and information sources and no longer depend on Jordanian state media to get their information. This is so thanks to the proliferation of satellite technology and the increasing ownership of satellite receiver sets in Jordan, but also in the rest of the region. According to a survey by Iposos-Start, the percentage of those homes that owned satellite receivers in big towns was about 53%, whereas the percentage in all other provinces was around 45% (Al-Rai, 2001).

Since the 1990s, new pan-Arab radio stations proliferated in the region and one of them is the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) broadcast station which chose Amman as its base (see below for a more detailed discussion). It transmits its programmes on FM, and is privately owned and run by Saudi businessmen, with close ties to the Royal family in Saudi Arabia. The station is a sister of the MBC satellite channels, and is very popular among Jordanians. The station also broadcasts through the Internet and through the website of Amman Net. Other stations include the BBC Arabic radio, which got its license to broadcast on FM in

Jordan in 2001, the BBC preceded in the same year by Monte-Carlo station (based in Paris).

The last broadcasting company to be established was Radio Sawa, which is an American transmission to the Arab world in Arabic. It is retransmitted on FM from Amman. The USA-subsidized Radio Sawa was launched in Jordan in 2002. The station was supposed to replace Voice of America Arabic Service in the Arab world. The decision to set up the radio station was made by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) which regulates the funding for American media outlets overseas, with the aim of reaching as many Arab states as possible. The station necessitated the set up of FM transmitters in several Arab states, which the USA could do in early 1990s following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991. Jordan was one of those countries, outside the Gulf region, which signed such an agreement with the USA and the BBG decided that the station would be based in Amman, Jordan. The station has been very popular in Jordan and other Arab states, with its music and entertainment programming targeting the vast majority of youths in the region, between 18 to 28 years. In Jordan alone, around 60% of the population is under the age of 30 (Christie and Clark, 2011).

Moreover, community media emerged as a natural reaction to the increasing monopoly of media ownership in Jordan. First community radio was set up in Amman and was entitled Amman-net, as an Internet-based radio. In July 2005 it started broadcasting on FM focusing on social affairs in Jordan (Aqrabai et al. 2006).

In general, Jordanian state media is seen as a mouthpiece for the Jordanian leadership. The Jordanian press, for instance, is claimed to have limited credibility which made audiences drift away to other media particularly television, and recently satellite television (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 195).

Despite the political normalization with Israel, the Jordanian Press Association plays a key role in cementing the relations with Israel by, for instance, penalizing any

Jordanian journalist who travels to Israel to cover a story by ending his membership (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 196). Thus, Jordanian journalists, particularly in state media have found themselves pressed by two opposing pressures: on the one hand, the state would expect them to promote the normalization process with Israel, and on the other hand audiences would expect them to express a negative attitude towards Israel in their daily coverage, as one Jordanian editor put it,

> We tend to get conflicting pressures from different sources in society; the government mildly pushes us to promote peace and normalization with Israel, while the opposition, professional associations, and parts of the public at large pressure us against normalization of ties with Israelis. We have to be careful because in some cases the professional unions will expel members for dealing with Israelis, and this could mean the loss of a job. We do feel the pressures for and against normalizing ties with Israel, but we also devise ways to deal with them (quoted in Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 200).

This may mean that Israel does not always get a balanced coverage in Jordanian media, where negative news from Israel could be seen as a means to strike back, according to the same Jordanian editor, "People use their perceptions of Israel as a means of fighting Israel" (quoted in Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 200).

The spread of satellite receivers in Jordan is due to a number of factors: firstly, the Jordanian laws, unlike the Saudi laws, do not prohibit the ownership, sale and use of such receivers. Secondly, owning such a receiver has become a symbol of families' wealth and social status. Thirdly, the price of such receivers has been decreasing making it more affordable to many Jordanian families. In fact, the average price of the receiver has fallen from one thousand Dinars in 1995 to about one hundred Dinars in 2003. Thus, hundreds of Arabic-speaking satellite channels have become available to Jordanians as well as a number of English channels and channels in other European languages (Al-Robaiaat, 2006). The majority of the Arabic-speaking channels are free to air, with the small minority such as ART and Orbit channels being subscription-based (see next chapter for an overview of these channels).

Clearly, the plethora of satellite television offerings has resulted in significant competition to Jordanian state media (both radio and television). But the satellite technology was not the only threat. Since the 1990s, the state media has faced the competition of video technology with more and more audiences resorting to purchase video programmes and films rather than watching state television. This has promoted the launch of Channel 1 which is dedicated to Arabic programmes and Movies channel which airs cartoons and films around the clock.

As for the press, there are around 15 Arabic-language newspapers and one English daily and one English weekly in addition to 15 weekly newspapers in Jordan (Wolfsfeld et al., 2002: 196). The Jordanian printed media began in 1923, when the first semi-official newspaper, *Al-Sharq Al-Arabi*, was published two years after the formation of the Jordanian State. Before that, Jordan was practically isolated from the rest of the Ottoman Empire. Following the Arab Revolt of 1916 and the creation of the state of Jordan following arrangements with the British mandatory power, a handwritten photo-copied newspaper called *Al-Haq Ya'lo* (Right Prevails) was launched in Jordan in 1920-1921, when King Abdullah I, the founder of the Kingdom, moved into Jordan from Hejaz. In 1927, privately owned newspapers were spread, such as *Al-Urdun*, whose editor and owner Khaleel Nasser) lived from 1927 until 1982. Most of the papers during the 1920s to 1940s were weekly until 1948, when *Al-Nasr* weekly (whose editor and owner is Subhi Jalal Al-Quttob) turned from weekly to a daily paper for a short time. Others followed suit, such as the two Palestinian dailies, *Falasteen* and *Al Difa'*, which moved from Palestine into Jordan after the creation of Israel in 1948 (Mousa, 1998: 119-123). One of the main papers in Jordan now is *Al-Rai* daily, which was launched in 1971 as a semi-official newspaper. Later, it was sold partially to the private sector in 1984, and currently the private sector owns around 35% of its shares, and the public sector owns the rest. The editor is therefore appointed by a decision of the board of directors. *Al-Rai* is one of the widely circulated Jordanian dailies and it has the highest rate of advertising. The paper might therefore be considered as a leading broadsheet and

its commentators are among the influential opinion makers in Jordan (Mousa, 1998: 147-150).

Jordan has also witnessed a new range of ventures that utilise new and social media. For instance, in 2000, *Jeeran* was launched by two Jordanian entrepreneurs as an online site similar to Yahoo!'s Geocities. The site hosted an Arabic blogging platform in 2005, which later added other social media tools such as video sharing. By 2009, *Jeeran* had 8 million unique visitors per month and hosted 160,000 blogs (Arab Media Outlook, 2009: 72). Also, according to a recent survey by Ipsos-Stat in 2005, more than 67% of Jordanians have access to satellite dishes, while a large number of Jordanians over the age of 15 have access to the Internet, despite the government's censorship and filtering of the Internet (Irex, 2005).

3.4 Media legislation

Ayish et al. (1994: 128) argue that the Jordanian press experienced great freedoms during the period from 1920s to 1940s when it dealt with daring social and political affairs following the independence of the Jordanian kingdom from the British mandate. On the other hand, William Rugh (1987) classified the Jordanian press as "Loyalist", which means an amount of freedom is granted to the press and private ownership is also allowed. However, indirect control is still exercised by the national government, and the press owners themselves exhibit great loyalty to the existing regimes and their ideologies. In his recent work, Rugh (2004: 121) re-labels Jordanian media as "Transitional", which means it contains "strong elements favouring governmental controls over the press, alongside elements that provide some measure of freedom of expression and diversity" (2004: 121). In fact, according to Shreet (2011), 90% of the Jordanian journalists exercise self-censorship due to their fear of penalties if violating the state official policies or discussing sensitive issues that may anger official authorities.

The most prominent press law in Jordan is the Press and Publications Law which allows the authorities to prosecute and penalise journalists if deemed to jeopardise the country's internal or external security. In addition, it is prohibited that journalists publish any material deemed to offend the Royal Family or Muslim values. The continuous protests against these laws have promoted the government to review them seven times during the period from 1993-2004. However, several journalists were prosecuted during the past decade including serving prison terms, although many of the cases that reached the High Court were resolved in favour of the journalists (Irex, 2005).

In an attempt to signal a new progressive image of Jordan, King Abdullah II launched a number of reforms such as the National Agenda, which is a 10-year reform plan, including a plan to grant more freedom to the Jordanian media. One recommendation was to end the compulsory membership of Jordanian journalists in the Jordanian Press Association for Journalists and Editors, which is an independent professional organisation. However, the Association protested with a campaign against this recommendation which was then put on hold. The plan itself seemed to be put on hold, following the three hotel bombings in the capital in 2005, which resulted in tougher security policies in the name of fighting terrorism (Irex, 2005)

Journalists usually protest against their low wages with the average income estimated to be around $500 a month in a typical Jordanian newspaper and the state-run television. Recent Arab uprisings have affected the Jordanian political and media landscapes. In January 2011, protests spread in Jordan's capital Amman, and at other cities such as Ma'an, Al Karak, Salt and Irbid, among others. It is claimed that around 5,000 people joined the protests, which said to be the largest in Jordan. The protests, which were led by trade unionists and leftist parties, were inspired by the recent revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt. Protestors who gathered after Friday prayers, called for the government led by Prime Minister Samir Rifai to resign. There are also anti-government slogans calling for more social welfare and parity among social classes. The Muslim Brotherhood joined forces with several trade unions to

stage a sit-down protest outside Parliament in order to denounce the government's economic policies. The Jordanian government responded by reversing a fuel price rise. Then in February 2011, King Abdullah dismissed the government as a consequence of the street protests and asked Marouf al-Bakhit, a former army general, to form a new Cabinet. King Abdullah asked Bakhit to launch genuine political reform process, with the aim of putting Jordan on the path to strong democracy and social equality.

Recently, in March 2011, Jordanian journalists also protested in order to "liberate" the Jordanian media from official rule. Journalists' demands were the increase of journalists' minimum wages, end of censorship and transparency in information (Al Arab al Yawm, 2011). In general, journalists protested against the regime of fear which made them hesitate to publish or talk about certain issues that deal with the army, security forces or the royal family.

3.5 The Arab context

Before elaborating on audiences' interpretation of certain television content, it is important to identify the role of the Arab television industry, as articulated in different Arab states, and it is equally important to see this role within the political context in the Arab states upon their independence. Historically, mass media in the region were introduced by the former colonial powers, particularly Britain and France. For instance, the print press is claimed to have started in Egypt when Napoleon brought the Arabic types to the region in the early nineteenth century (Alterman, 1998). Likewise, radio was introduced in 1920s in Egypt and Algeria under colonial private enterprises that ran radio services for the national governments. However, national governments have assumed control of electronic media, whether radio and television and this control are still in operation in the majority of Arab States. Upon their independence in the 1950s and 1960s, Arab States struggled to identify their unique identity, preferably independent from western ideologies. One attempt was to emphasize the pan-Arab identity, which

triggered several inter-state initiatives such as the short-lived union between Egypt and Syria from 1958-1961 and the political and economic union of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) formed in 1981, comprising Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and UAE (Mellor, 2011a: 3-5).

Thus, that period was important in the history of the Arab world, because it was a period of seeking an "Arab" identity, and identifying the main characteristics of such an identity. Upon their independence, Arab states wanted to claim a pure Arab identity that could distinguish them from the former colonial powers. They certainly wanted to achieve the modernization of the west, but they wanted to do so without losing their indigenous character (see Mellor, 2007, ch 1). One strategy here was to identify the similarities, rather than the differences, with other neighbouring Arab States, and it was perhaps therefore that Arabization programmes were launched in several North African societies, such as Algeria and Tunisia, following their independence (ibid.). Mass media played a vital role in this identity-search process, particularly the broadcasting sector which was completely under the control of Arab states since its inception during the 1950s and the 1960s. Electronic media, which were totally in the hands of governments, were used to support this new sense of pan-Arabism. In Egypt, for instance, new patriotic songs were launched defending Arabism and socialist ideals, under Nasser rule (Massad, 2003). The first serious blow to this project of pan-Arabism was the Arab defeat in the 1967 War against Israel (between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, and which ended with Israel seizing the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights) which in turn triggered a sense of Arab frustration and despair (Massad, 2003), while the Egyptian peace treaty helped freeze the Arabism ideology for over a decade, and the ideology was nearly shattered with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

During that period, Arab television, in many Arab states, served as a platform to voice Arab unity discourse, and one can argue that such discourse helped group Arab populations in one imaged *umma* [nation]. Mellor (2011a: 117-120) provides a series of examples of such discourse which proliferated in film and TV. For instance,

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there were several films chanted for Arab resistance movements during the colonial rule, in many countries such as Algeria and Egypt. Another example is the way the Egyptian state used the television medium to broadcast songs about the 1952-coup d'etat led by the Free Officers. The Egyptian and Algerian states adopted a strong socialist ideology that was clearly reflected in their media strategies to ensure public consensus and subscription to such values. Moreover, Syria and Iraq propagated a pan-Arab nationality, seeking more unity among Arab states and they launched Baathist parties in both countries that were forerunners of such discourse. On the other hand, Gulf States led by Saudi Arabia chose to propagate a pan-Islamic, rather than a pan-Arabist, ideology because they saw the socialist values spread in many independent states as a threat to their regimes (see e.g. Tibi, 1997). Thus, when Egypt launched Voice of Arabs radio stations as part of this pan-Arabist discourse, Saudi Arabia launched Voice of Islam as a counter-discourse (see Mellor, 2008).

During these political turning points, the electronic media were used as a means of mobilising citizens, against foreign or even neighbouring Arab nations. Even when Arab nations came together to discuss common communication strategies (Rinnawi, 2006), their initiatives were doomed to failure due to fundamental disagreements amongst themselves as to the aims and outcome of such strategies (see Mellor, 2005). One such initiative was ArabSat which was launched in 1976 but took ten years to materialise and operate (Ayish, 2001), and it did not result in increasing programme exchange amongst Arab States (Turkestani, 1989). Nonetheless, programme exchange among Arab countries has been limited (see e.g. Abdel Rahman 2002).

Another ambitious project was the setup of a joint Arab news agency to balance the dominance of foreign agencies, but this in turn failed to materialize, due to disagreement about the form and content of such an agency (Qallab, 2002). The fact of the matter is that Arab States differ between themselves, not only in terms of material or natural wealth and resources (see e.g. Mellor et al. 2011a, ch. 1), but

also in terms of ideologies (Islamism, Socialism, Arabism) which impacted the development of local communication policies.

However, the defeat in the 1967 War and the Egyptian peace treaty with Israel have both accelerated the division among Arab states, threatening the pan-Arabist discourse and identity. This threat had become more eminent with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the disillusionment of Arab unity (Tibi, 1997). As such, joint Arab projects including a joint pan-Arab news agency were never completed and the ArabSat platform had limited effect with the withdrawal of Egypt following its peace with Israel. Indeed, the 1991 Gulf War marked a turning point in the Arab television industry with the launch of the first Arab satellite channel, Middle East Broadcasting (MBC), from London in 1991 and the increasing penetration of satellite technology in the region. Thus, foreign channels such as CNN were the main sources for news about Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (Ayish, 2001) and audiences marked their dissatisfaction with the traditional and censored news journalism offered in state-controlled media. The new satellite channels, such as the MBC, followed by many others later, marked their difference from traditional state-controlled terrestrial channels by providing a new type of television journalism with live coverage and interviews embedded with news bulletins (e.g. Ayish, 2001). One of such channels was Orbit, which was set up in 1994 in Rome, and entered into a joint venture with the BBC to launch an Arabic satellite channel in 1994. The venture was short-lived and was dissolved after Orbit protested to the BBC broadcasting an episode of Panorama which was critical of the Saudi government. The television producers and presenters in that short-lived venture were made redundant, but fortunately found new opportunities in the Qatar-sponsored Al Jazeera channel launched in 1996 (see Zayani, 2005).

3.6 The pan-Arab media penetration in Jordan

The ArabSat venture had an impact on the Saudi communication policies in the region, with the Saudi ambition to use mass media in order to propagate a pan-Islamist ideology across the region and indeed the whole world. For instance, the Saudi government used ArabSat in 1985 to broadcast the rites of Hajj (Mouad,

2000: 48). Five years later, the Saudi regime launched its first satellite channels, beaming religious programmes (ibid.: 50). Saudi Arabia was the main source of funding for this project and its capital Riyadh hosted its headquarters. On the other hand, Egypt, which is the main producer of media output in the region, withdrew from the venture after it was boycotted by the Arab League for signing the peace treaty with Israel.   Thus, the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) was launched in London in 1991, followed by Arab Radio and Television (ART) in Rome, thereby avoiding cumbersome television policies inside the region (Sakr, 2001). Several other channels followed such as Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, LBC International, and Egyptian Satellite Channel.

The total number of pan-Arab satellite channels was estimated at 600 in 2011, according to Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU). Around 44 of these channels are owned by states and the rest are owned by private corporations. Of the total number of channels, around 37 are classified as news and current affairs channels.

The following table shows selected channels divided by nationalities of owners and type of programming:

Table 3.1 selected channels divided by nationalities of owners

Channel	Owner	launched in
Egypt Satellite Channel	Egyptian state Radio and TV union	1990
Al Manar	Hezbollah (Lebanon)	1991
Jordan Radio and Television	Jordanian state	1993
Future News	Rafiq Hariri (Lebanon)	1993
Al Jazeera	The Qatar Media Corporation	1996
Al Mustakillah	Al Mustakilla TV Limited (London-based)	1998
Al Alam	Iran Broadcasting	2003
Al Arabiya	Middle East Broadcasting Centre (Saudi)	2003
Al Hurra	US Congress	2004
Al Ekhbariah	Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information	2004
JSC Mubasher	The Qatar Media Corporation	2005
JSC English	The Qatar Media Corporation	2006
Al Eqtisadiah	Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information	2006
Al Hiwar	Independent Arab businessmen	2006
Press TV (English)	Iran Broadcasting	2007
Russiya Al-Yaum	TV Novosti (Russia)	2007
BBC Arabic TV	BBC World Service (UK)	2008
Euronews Arabic	The European Commission	2008

What is unique in this new development is the revival of a new wave of Arab songs and films that chanted Arab unity, exactly as it was in the post-independence era. For instance, the Saudi Prince Waleed bin Talal, who owns the satellite group Rotana, sponsored a song called The Arab Dream (al Hulm al Arabi) in 1998, which became a major hit in the whole region. Moreover, a myriad of Egyptian films tackled acute pan-Arab issues such as the situation in Palestinian territories or in

Iraq, even using comedy as a medium to rejuvenate the sense of belonging to one Arab nation (see e.g. Mellor et al, 2011a: 19-20). Rinnawi (2006) also argued that there was indeed a sense of a rejuvenated Arab identity but went so far as to claim that it is easily consumed and abandoned like a McDonald's meal, or what he coined McArabism. This McArabism is evident, argues Rinnawi, in pan-Arab news bulletins which usually deal with pan-Arab, rather than domestic issues. Also, Khoury-Machool (2010: 315) argues that Arab audiences find in such content a sense of gratification, because such satellite channels air views that may hardly be presented in the state-controlled media particularly when it comes to the Arab relations with the USA or Israel.

The above channels made it easy to target and reach pan-Arab audiences across and beyond the Arab region, and therefore news about political crises and turmoil in one state would be broadcast directly to vast audiences inside and outside the region. This marked the start of a new wave of pan-Arabist content (whether news or songs/entertainment) that would be instantly exchanged amongst Arab countries and consumed by Arab populations, but this instant consumption is followed by instant digestion after which Arab consumers/citizens go back to their local and domestic problems. Such feelings were not only apparent in news e.g. about the Palestinian intifada or Iraq War, but also in children programmes and magazines and a series of films that depict the Arab-Israeli struggle (Mellor et al. 2011a: 19-20).

FIGURE 3.3 PAN-ARAB SATELLITE CHANNELS – (WHICH ARE ALSO ACCESSIBLE ONLINE)

Although Arab electronic media is still controlled by totalitarian regimes, and thereby self-censorship is practiced by journalists to avoid clashes with the regimes, new commercial media ventures have not ceased to dominate the pan-Arab media landscape, making it a unique case that marries commercialization and authoritarianism (Mellor et al, 2011a: 12). Mellor (2005: 9) provides several reasons behind this new phenomenon of private (yet censored) media outlets: these include the rise of a new generation of open-minded politicians, such as in Syria and Jordan, where new leaders wished to depart from the traditional regime and adopt a modern (westernized) image through modernizing state institutions including the media. Another factor is the rise of a new generation of journalists who adopted new Anglo-American journalistic practices and molded new media programming accordingly. For instance, a new host of shows have been introduced lately, including The *Opposite Direction* (Al Jazeera) which is moulded after the American *Crossfire* (Ayish 2001).

This development was accompanied by economic reforms to privatise state institutions, and the interest of media venture to reach as many Arab consumers as possible throughout the world. In addition, the competition of western media outlets that moved into the region, e.g. CNN Arabic, CNBC Arabiya, and the BBC

Arabic, has offered a healthy competition to the present terrestrial and satellite channels as well as traditional print media which were forced to develop its content and format (Rugh, 1987) e.g. new supplements to youths and women. Today, Arab audiences across the region have access to hundreds of satellite channels, which is currently estimated at more than 600 channels. The most popular of them are the family channel MBC, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) and Rotana channels. The latter group is owned by the Saudi billionaire Al Waleed bin Talal who is also a partner in several media corporations such as News Corporation, Time Warner, EuroDisney, LBC and various Arabic newspapers (Khan, 2005). The MBC has also expanded into MBC1 (family channel), MBC2 (film), MBC3 (children), MBC4 (American talk shows like Oprah), MBC Action, MBC Drama, in addition to the sister channel Al Arabiya news which is considered Al Jazeera's rival in the region. The MBC group is owned by the Saudi billionaire Walid al-Ibrahim, the brother-in-law of the former Saudi king. The increasing Saudi ownership of such channels raised the concern of several Arab scholars and commentators who feared that the new Gulf (particularly Saudi) ownership would mean the proliferation of Saudi-loyalist ideologies and suppression of opposition voices.

3.7 Saudi dominance

Indeed, the Saudi concentrated ownership of transnational media outlets has been seen by some scholars (such as Tash, 1983 and Al Rasheed, 2005) as replication of the old days' poets, who were used by each tribe leader to praise the tribe's reputation; similarly, Saudi loyalists used the mass media to reflect their own (tribal) image whether liberal or conservative.

Sakr (2001: 40) argues that the majority of the transnational pan-Arab electronic media are controlled by Saudi businessmen who are also behind pan-Arab newspapers such as *Al Sharq Al Awsat* and *Al Hayat*, both London-based. This concentrated form of ownership has triggered fear among commentators that pan-Arab media would likely serve the interests of existing regimes (Saudi) rather than pushing for the much-needed reforms (see e.g. Saghiya, 2006). Such fears, for instance, are behind claims that Saudi interests are the reason behind downplaying

criticism of the Saudi regime in e.g. the Qatari-owned Al Jazeera or even Hizbullah's owned Al Manar TV.

Because the owners of many of these new channels have close ties to the Saudi Royal family, they enjoyed unique logistical privileges such as giving MBC preference over the Egyptian Satellite Channel for the use of the Arabsat (Amin and Boyd, 1994: 47), of which the Saudi regime is the major shareholder. Such Saudi entrepreneurs have also enjoyed close ties with Saudi allies such as the former Egyptian president Mubarak, who facilitated a deal for both ART and Rotana to purchase a whole library of Egyptian films in return for investments in Egypt. The weight of Saudi Arabia is not only bound to the financial power of its entrepreneurs but also in its being the main source of advertising revenues in the region (Arab Media Oultook, 2007). Therefore, many channels (and print media) prefer not to risk their lucrative contracts inside the region, even it means compromising their programming to suit the Saudi regime. Mamoun Fandy (2001), for instance, argues that such channels operate on "anywhere but here model" which means they tend to be critical when covering foreign (and other Arab) states but remain silent towards violations happening on their own land, referring particularly to the Qatari Al Jazeera. In so doing, pan-Arab media contribute to increasing political and sectarian division in that each outlet can be used as a political tool by their owners.

Ayish (2011) summarises the history of Arab television by dividing the past fifty years into two epochs: the first covers forty years of television which was centralised and monolithic, while the last decade (the 1990s) marked a significant change with the proliferation of satellite (Saudi-owned) television which experimented with new Arabised programming as well as pushing for changes in terrestrial television to compete with the new competition. This new development was facilitated by the advance in telecommunication technology across the region. In Chapter Seven, I discuss in more detail the impact of media ownership on the Jordanian audiences' interpretation of news and current affairs offered by pan-Arab channels, the majority of which are owned by Gulf (Saudi) tycoons.

The current pan-Arab media landscape is seen by Arab commentators to have mixed impact on the audiences: while news channels are seen as competing to provide up-to-date and extensive reporting, entertainment channels are seen to spoil the Arab youths particularly with the spreading of the so-called "video clips" channels or music channels that broadcast music videos. Also, the culture of reality television has invaded pan-Arab family channels, with participation of audiences from across the Arab region (see Kraidy, 2011 for a full discussion). This situation can be summed up, rather cynically, in the following cartoon which depicts three types of Arab audiences: the first one (to the right) is the one is the avid consumer of news and who falls prey to the emotional tone of news coverage (see Chapter Seven), the second type (the middle in the picture) refers to audiences of video-clips who are only interested in female celebrities, while the third type is the reality television audience (the far left):

FIGURE 3.4 SATIRICAL DEPICTION OF ARAB AUDIENCES

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the Jordanian state and society in order to contextualize this present study. One important fact about Jordanian population is that more than half of them are Palestinians, which indeed has impacted on the official Jordanian-Israeli relations as well as Jordanian media's reporting on Israel. A large percentage of those Palestinians are immigrants and refugees of the wars with Israel in 1948 and 1967. The native Jordanians, on the other hand, are of Bedouin origin who emigrated from the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, Jordan has tiny minorities such as Circassians and Armenians and Kurds. Following the Iraq War in 2003, moreover, thousands of Iraqis settled in Jordan fleeing the war in their country.

The presence of the Palestinian majority has triggered continuous public debates about the country's foreign policies, particularly in its relations with Israel on the one hand and the rest of Arab world on the other. In any case, these debates have ensured that the Palestinian cause and the right of return have always been high on politicians' agenda.

As for Jordanian media, the above brief overview showed the state control of state media, particularly broadcasting, and which is illustrated in the state power to hire senior staff in television channels. This situation is not unique to Jordan, but has been prevalent in many other Arab states. This has also given journalists the image of serving as mouthpieces for the state rather than being an autonomous watchdog to the state policies. Since mid-1990s, however, Jordan and many other parts of the region have witnessed the advancement in satellite technology and the spread the of satellite receivers. The majority of Jordan has now access to hundreds of satellite channels, many of them are news channels such as Al Jazeera. The laws in Jordan do not prohibit the ownership of satellite receivers and the development of this technology has also made the price of receivers more and more affordable to many Jordanian families.

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to present my chosen methods of data collection and describe the overall methodology adopted in this study. The word "methodology" refers to the choices which I have made in deciding upon the methods of data collection (Silverman, 2001). This overview then presents the procedure of my research and points to the suitability of the chosen methods to the particular aims and objectives of this study (see Hayne, 1998: 99). I have adopted a multi method approach of qualitative and quantitative for this study in order to increase the credibility and validity of the results.

My research project has the following objectives:

- To examine Jordanian audiences' viewing habits.

- To explore the impact of viewing satellite channels on viewing local Jordanian media.

- To examine the role of local and satellite (pan-Arab) television in promoting Jordanian and/or pan-Arab national identity

- To examine the impact of this television on the level of politicization of Jordanian audiences

- To examine the way Jordanian audiences evaluate and think of their pan-Arab news outlets

- To examine the way Jordanian audiences interpret news and current affairs offered by pan-Arab and state channels.

In order to address the above objectives, the research was designed to address the following key questions:

- What is the impact, politically and socially, on the regular Jordanian citizen of news consumption through the Arab satellites?

- Do Arab satellites accelerate / maintain a high level of politicization through their news programmes?

- How do the Jordanian audiences interpret received news programmes?

- In what way does this interpretation affect how the population views itself as well as the world around it?

- What relationship, affiliation or identification does the audience have with its television station(s), and to what extent would such a relationship affect the station's credibility?

- To what extent is the audience's perception and understanding of news/current affairs programming affected by education, income, cultural background, national identity, and geographic location?

Roughly, the above questions address two main analytical categories:

- Audiences' interoperation and interaction/identification with the pan-Arab news, and

- The relationship between the audiences' socio-economic background and their preference and perception of news and current affairs programming.

In order to explore these two analytical categories, the research adopted a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods including questionnaires and in-depth interviews. In the following sections, I describe the adopted methods in more detail justifying the appropriateness of each method:

Overall theme	Operationalized questions	Method
Audiences' interoperation and interaction	1. Do Arab satellites drive a high level of politicization through their news	Qualitative interviews

	programmes?	
	2. How do the Jordanian audiences interpret received news programmes?	
	3. In what way does this interpretation affect how the population views itself as well as the world around it?	
	4. What relationship, affiliation or identification does the audience have with its television station(s), and to what extent would such a relationship affect the station's credibility?	
The Relationship between the audiences' socio-economic background and their preference and perception of news and current affairs programming	5. To what extent is the audience's perception and understanding of news/current affairs programming affected by education, income, cultural background, national identity, and geographic location?	Questionnaires

4.1 Quantitative vs. qualitative

As media and communication studies have grown into a multi-disciplinary field (Jensen, 2002), this analysis will reflect this inter-disciplinarity in the research design chosen for this inquiry, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods and thus benefiting from the synergy achieved by applying both methods (Newman and Benz, 1998). Both quantitative and qualitative inquiries seek to analyze the content of the data in a systematic manner. The difference here is that the former is mainly used to process a large amount of data, while the latter is used to elaborate on selected themes.

As a complementary approach to the quantitative method, the present study incorporates qualitative analysis of the news text. Qualitative analysis methods grew as an independent discipline in the 1920s and 1930s in the fields of anthropology, but were soon employed in other disciplines as well, e.g. political science and communications (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 1). Qualitative methods were not particularly welcomed in the beginning because they were regarded as methods of "soft science" and a result of the researcher's subjective interpretation and not of his/her thriving for objective presentation of 'reality' (ibid.: 7). The word 'qualitative' itself points to the 'qualities' of the research object which are meant to be examined in terms of how the object is created and denotes meaning and not in terms of its quantity or frequency.

The choice of incorporating quantitative or qualitative approaches is, moreover, further evidence that all research is inevitably interpretive, or as Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 19) put it:

> All research is interpretive; it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Some beliefs may be taken for granted, invisible, only assumed, whereas others are highly problematic and controversial.

4.2 Questionnaires

In order to answer the questions that the study addressed, the researcher adopted a survey study method, which incorporates a structured questionnaire. The aims of the questionnaire were to provide information about the audiences' opinions and perception of satellite channel news and current affairs programmes. Leedy (1997) provides guidelines for the use of questionnaires to include the formulation of clear statements that cannot be misinterpreted by the informants, and the need to link the questionnaire to the original research aims and objectives.

A questionnaire is defined as a group of questions which are designed to trigger a response according to a certain scale. The purpose of well-designed questionnaires is to enable a certain degree of generalisation where the researcher is able to generalise the finding from that questionnaire to the population as a whole (Wimmer and Dominick, 1997).

One advantage of the questionnaire is that they enable the collection of considerable amount of information at a relatively low cost and less time. In countries like Jordan, where informants may feel unease talking to strangers about daily habits, such as watching television, questionnaires can be an easier tool to use to get an overview of the informants' habits in a less intimidating way compared to face-to-face interviews. This research, however, utilised both questionnaires and interviews, but the questionnaires primarily targeted a larger population (of 180 respondents) unknown to the researcher, while part of the interviews were carried out with informants known before hand to the researcher and thus they felt less intimidating talking freely about their views.

Thus, questionnaires can serve as a suitable instrument to collect information from a large number of people about their attitudes and conceptions (Hansen et al. 1998: 225). There are also other advantages of using questionnaires, in addition to being less expensive and fast method (Kumar, 1999). These are, for example, identified in

Seliger and Shohamy (1995: 175), the fact that questionnaires can collect information while ensuring the respondents' anonymity. Another advantage is that the data is more standardised than in other methods such as interviews.

According to Munn and Dreyer (1995), questionnaires can also be used to understand the characteristics of, for instance, a particular audience in terms of their attitudes to media programmes, or their preference or the extent of watching certain programmes. It can also be an effective method to indicate differences across gender, educational or socio-economic background, not to mention age groups (Marghalani, 1997).

Of course, there are also disadvantages of using the method of questionnaires such as the risk of low response rate, which threatens the validity of data or the unsuitability for people who cannot read (see e.g. Seliger and Shohamy, 1995; and Kumar, 1999). Another disadvantage is the risk of misinterpreting the questions. In order to avoid some of these pitfalls, the researcher carried out a pilot study among a small sample of only 10 Jordanians in his hometown Amman in order to test their understanding of the questions in the form before distributing to a larger sample. Their responses were helpful in reformulating and clarifying the questionnaire. I find this tool particularly helpful in obtaining precise data about a sample of audience's preferences and news consumption and in giving straightforward data which is needed for this research (see also Oppenheim, 1993).

The data was analysed statistically to examine the validity of study hypotheses, to become familiar with both the practical and theoretical studies and research, and to determine the previous salient studies considered as a vivid resource for them. The community of this study consists of all Jordanian people who are able to express their wishes and who are 22 years old and more.

A convenience sample selection was used to get the study subjects with the help of local Jordanian governmental agency called "The Department of Statistics" and who were met to collect the data directly. Table 1 shows that 47% of the study sample

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was from Amman, 17% is from Karak, in southern Jordan, and 10% is from Irbid, in northern Jordan. In addition, all remaining regions of Jordan were distributed with different percentages as shown in Table 1.

Table 4.1: the size and distribution of the sample on the study community

region	Territory	Frequency	Percent
Amman	Middle	84	46.7%
Salt	Middle	15	8.3%
Tafilah	South	9	5.0%
Ghour Al-Hadeetha	South	6	3.3%
Aqaba	South	9	5.0%
Karak	South	30	16.7%
Irbid	North	18	10.0%
Al-Qutranih	South	3	1.7%
Madaba	Middle	15	8.3%
Total		180	100.0%

As for the age of informants, the following table shows the distribution of informant by age, where about 28% of subjects were 35-45 years old, 22% were 55-70 years old, 18% of subjects were 22-26 years old, 15% were 45-55 years old, 12% were 30-35 years old, and 5% were 26-30 years old.

Table 4.2: distribution of the study sample due to the age

Age(year)	Frequency	Percent
22-26	33	18.3
26-30	9	5.0
30-35	21	11.7
35-45	51	28.3
45-55	27	15.0
55-70	39	21.7

Total	180	100.0

Also, in terms of gender, about 72% of the study subjects were male, whereas 28% of them were female as shown in the following table:

Table 4.3: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the gender

gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	129	71.7
Female	51	28.3
Total	180	100.0

Moreover, the following table presents an overview of the distribution of these informants divided by their education backgrounds. As it is shown in the table, about 12% of subjects were with primary education, 27% were with basic education, 12% were college degree holders, and 50 % of them were university degree holders:

Table 4.4: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the educational level

the educational level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	21	11.7
Basic	48	26.7
College	21	11.7
University	90	50.0
Total	180	100.0

To achieve the study objectives, a questionnaire was designed after taking into consideration the written literature and previous studies. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: The first part is about the social and demographic variables. It includes the social data of targeted subjects in the form of demographic variables. It includes gender, age, and the educational level. The respondents were asked to provide data about where they lived, their age category, gender, education and ability to read and write Arabic fluently.

The second part is about the extent of watching the advertising channels and it includes 18 items, which aim to determine the importance of watching the advertising and news channels in terms of the type and source of the channel, the type of the advertising material watched, and the time, place and hours of watching news and current affairs programmes. The respondents were asked about the number of hours they spend watching television on a daily basis, whether they watch foreign channels and/or pan-Arab channels, their preference of news and current affairs programmes, and their favourite channels.

4.3 Validity of the study tool

The validity of the study tool was determined by having it reviewed by a professional Jordanian referee who works as a professor of Computer Sciences in Yarmouk University. He helped identify the validity of the questionnaire content and suggested a number of modifications. I have incorporated these suggestions and modified the content accordingly in order to ensure the accuracy of categories and to avoid any obscurity in content and also to ensure that each category has only one unified entry.

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used as a reliable and user-friendly statistical analysis tool. (Al-Shaqsi, 2000) and a range of statistical analyses were employed, such as simple percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviations. These analytical categories were deployed to reflect the demographic

trends of satellite television viewing habits. In addition, t-Tests, Chi-square, and One-Way ANOVA were utilised to compare some variables.

To answer the study questions and determine the validity of its hypotheses, the study used SPSS 19 in order to analyse the study statistically through the following statistical techniques:

- Descriptive Statistics: Measures in order to describe the characteristics of the study sample, depending on frequencies and percentages in order to answer the questions and identify the relative importance of using averages and standard deviations.
- Chi-square is used to test differences between two samples, or between an actual sample and another hypothetical sample (Popham and Sirotnik, 1973).
- T-Tests for difference between two averages: this is one of the most common and powerful inferential statistics and it can reveal the differences between the mean of two groups and gives the probability that they are from the same population.
- Kendall's tau_b to measure the relationship between the perspectives of the study community.
- One way ANOVA to determine the difference between averages and LSD test to discover the sources of differences. ANOVA is also an appropriate test to compare the means of more than two samples.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter which aimed to explain the research objectives while assuring the respondents of their anonymity and the confidentiality of handling the data. The questionnaire was distributed in Arabic but an English translation is provided in Appendix 1.

In summary and in order to give a more detailed picture of the Jordanians' views to the news and current affairs programmes, the research combined both quantitative

and qualitative methods. The quantitative method is based on the above questionnaire while the qualitative method is based on one-to-one interviews with a sample of forty Jordanians. The combination of methods here is aimed at complementing one another and overcome any gaps in the use of only one of these methods (see e.g. Robson, 1997; Oliver, 2000; Allan, 1993; Vulliamy, Lewin and Stephens, 1990).

4.4 Qualitative Analysis

In authoritarian states like Jordan, television plays an important role in promoting a sense of national and regional identity. In an attempt to unravel such an intricate role, I carried out in-depth interviews with forty Jordanians with the aim of exploring how those audiences make sense of mediated news and thus is focused more on the meaning rather than quantitative measures as in the above questionnaires (Bell, 1999).

The method of interview can be defined as a conversation between the researcher and the informant with the aim of inferring information deemed relevant to the research questions (Frey and Oishi,1995:01; Frankfort and Nachmias, 1992). The advantages of the interview method can be summarised as follows:

- It can be a flexible method to elicit information
- It guarantees a good response rate compared to questionnaires
- The answers are collected directly from the informant, which adds to the reliability of the method
- The researcher can modify the questions or the sequence of questions as needed.

On the other hand, this method has also the disadvantage of being time-consuming if compared to questionnaires, and it takes additional time to transcribe and analyse interview data. The method is also criticized for not protecting respondents' anonymity, while also being influenced by the researcher's subjectivity, particularly

in interpreting the informants' responses (see e.g. Robson, 1997; Cohen and Manion, 1994).

In general, there are two types of interviews: structured, semi-structured as follows:

1. Structured interviews which are usually used to find out about people's views on specific topics. The questions of the interviews are determined before hand and it is quick to conduct, compared to the semi-structured interviews. In this respect, it may resemble a questionnaire in that it provides a checklist to go through with each informant and it quickly reveals any variation among them (Bell, 1999).

2. Semi-structured interviews, which has been chosen for this study. This is a flexible method to engage in a formal conversation with the informants, based on an interview guide or list of questions prepared before hand to guide this conversation. Although I have followed pre-defined list of questions, I allowed some flexibility in conducting the interviews so that I could stray from these questions if and when appropriate or when the informants brought to my attention interesting issues that I had not included in my guide. This type of method is a good tool to use for informal purposes and it also allows for a better understanding of the research topic, as it is flexible to adjust the questions as necessary.

Thus, semi-structured interviews give the freedom to adjust the questions in order to clarify responses and experiences. This freedom to elaborate on informants' responses is the reason why this method is recommended to get a more "on the ground" view (see e.g. Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995).

The interviews focused on the following themes:
News consumption:
- The favourite channels and the reasons behind this choice
- The advantages of watching satellite channels (pan-Arab) as well as foreign channels, such as CNN

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<u>Political views derived from watching news:</u>

- Views on the differences in presenting political news as news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

- Views on the use of certain terminologies in the news, e.g. martyr, invasion, etc.

<u>Views related to the news institutions</u>

- The credibility of favourite station

- Views on ownership and censorship.

In the planning stage, I made contact with five relatives in Amman, each from a different age category, and asked them to provide me with names and contact information of colleagues and acquaintances for the purpose of my research. I then contacted those people and visited them to present myself and the purpose of my research. However, I did not carry out the interviews with them, but rather asked them for more contacts within their age group and professions. When I had collected information of at least 50 contacts, I selected 40 of them divided by gender, age, profession, and city of residence, although the majority are from Amman (East and West of Amman). As such, the sampling is based on availability and feasibility.

I carried out my fieldwork over four trips to Jordan during the following periods:

- December 2005

- April 2006

- March 2010

- December 2011

The sample can be tabularised as follows:

	Between 22-34	**Between 35-44**	**Between 45-60**	**Above 60**
Age	18	9	8	5

	Male	**Female**
Gender	27	13

Location	**Number of interviewees**
Zarqa	6
East Amman	10
West Amman	12
Irbid	4
Karkak	3
Sahab	2
Ghour	2
Salt	1

I planned my questions in advance and prepared a letter in consultation with my supervisor, where I explained the purpose of the research, asking for the informants' consent to be included in this study. However, Jordanians are keen to favour informality in conversation and in the majority of cases, it took nearly an hour to explain the formality of the research project in a British university and why the consent form was an important document to go through before carrying out the interview. I reflect on this and other difficulties below in a separate section. As for the interviews with the editors, they were more straightforward, perhaps because such professionals are used to this type of research.

Each interview session lasted for nearly one and a half hours talking about their views and perception of the various news and satellite programmes. I endeavoured to make my informants feel at ease in order to talk freely about their views, and I therefore began each session with a form of "chit-chat" talk about their life in Jordan and my life in the UK. I recorded the majority of these interviews, while 12 informants were very reluctant to have their conversations recorded. Again, this is part of the informality and rapport building needed by Jordanians otherwise they may feel suspicious of using a recorder, as this formalises the conversation. This is despite the fact that I strongly emphasised that the recorded data would solely be used for the purpose of this research and would not be shared with another person or institution (see e.g. the guidelines in Burgess, 1993). I also explained to all informants that the main purpose of recording is to aid my memory so that I do not miss any important comment or theme.

4.5 Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

This research is based on integrating quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide an insight into Jordanian audiences' perception of news and current affairs. Each of these methods supplements the other; thus for instance, while the quantitative data describes the trends of news consumption, the qualitative interviews explain and interpret these trends. In other words, while one method provides an answer to the "what", the other answers the questions "how" and "why" (Hunting et al. 1986).

The quantitative data in this study, 180 questionnaires in total, was analysed and tabulated for analysis through the use of the by the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The system analysed and manipulated collected data through frequencies and percentages. Each category in the questionnaire was coded and entered into the system, including for instance, age, gender, location and so on. The system was then used to calculate the percentage of informants in each category.

The qualitative data was categorised into sub-topics through sorting out field notes and transcribed interviews into broad categories or topics and sub-topics as appropriate. The categories here refer to the themes emerging from the interviews. I labelled each category using headings and sub-headings. The following table summarises the main categories and sub-categories derived from the 40 interviews:

Questions	Overall categories
Why watch the news?	Empowerment Knowledge Information Topics for conversations,
How does the news influence their political views?	Pan-Arab, nationalist Views of the West and other Arabs Relation to the West
What is their view of state television?	Controlled Propaganda Unprofessional
How do the audiences evaluate the credibility of each station?	Ownership Censorship Audiences' power to see between the lines

I reflect on these themes in more detail in Chapters Seven and Eight.

In addition to these interviews, I carried out five interviews with Jordanian commentators and editors in leading Jordanian newspapers and TV stations, who also often appear on television as media commentators.

The main themes of the conversation are as follows:

- Choice of news
- Views of local versus pan-Arab news diet
- Views on censorship
- Ideas about their audiences
- Ethics in reporting conflicts

The editors were from Nourmina TV, Al Bawaba portal and Jordan Days Online TV. The aim here was to trigger some answers regarding their views of the Jordanian media environment and the news content available now through satellite television. The distribution of those five informants was as follows: two from Al Bawaba, two from Nourmina TV and one from Jordan Days Online TV. While the number of informants here is rather limited, the general aim, as mentioned, is to supplement my research about the Jordanian media environment rather than to provide an in-depth analysis of the journalistic views about this environment. The latter deserves a book-length analysis, which is beyond the scope of my present study. These interviews were then analysed and fed directly into Chapters 7 and 8 which focus on the audience's perception of the Jordanian media's offerings. In the following, I present a brief description of the outlets where my informants work, which should supplement the general discussion of the Jordanian media environment in Chapter Three.

Nourmina TV is Jordan's first private entertainment station that started broadcasting in 2003. Combining forces, Nourmina has joined with Abu Lughod Studios (ALS), which is a leading production house in Jordan, to produce news content that could profile Nourmina as the number one family channel in Jordan.

Jordan Days Online TV is a web-based television medium which was set up in 2008 as a young station. It has a page on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. It also re-publishes articles from the German site Deutsche Welle Arabic. Its content

focuses on local affairs that are not extensively covered in major mainstream media such as local demonstrations, conferences and symposia.

Al Bawaba portal is a network of sites, which combines news, blogs and interactivity. It was founded in 2000, and is one of the oldest online media websites in the Middle East. Al Bawaba (which means "gate" in Arabic) consists of several web portals and media platforms, including www.albawaba.com, Sharekna (www.sharekna.com), Al Bawaba Music (music.albawaba.com), Al Bawaba Blogs (blogs.albawaba.com) and Syndigate (www.syndigate.info). Al Bawaba News covers the Middle East from a local perspective (as they claim on their website). Sharekna is an Arabic-English online photo and video management service, which is based on users' sharing of pictures and videos with each other. Al Bawaba Blogs offers a free service so writers can start their blog and broadcast themselves, and SyndiGate is a digital content syndication service which licenses multi-lingual content in electronic format from 1,100+ publishers and creators of text, photo, video, music, games and mobile applications.

4.6 Ethical Issues – doing fieldwork in one's homeland

This research follows the ESRC research ethics guidelines (http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Key-ethics-principles-15). It follows its main guiding principles including the principle related to obtaining the consent of informants before collecting data, which states, "Research subjects must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved."

It also abides by the principle of voluntary participation, and thus all informants were invited to participate without force or deception. The researcher also respected the wishes of some participants not to record their interviews and resorted to taking notes instead. Also, the anonymity and privacy of participants was respected at all times.

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On reflection of my fieldwork, I approached my subjects as a "fellow Jordanian", or an insider (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). My being "native" has equipped me with the necessary knowledge about the local language and culture and this has helped me tremendously during the interviews. For instance, I speak Jordanian dialect, and this helped me communicate effectively with all informants, even if they could converse in English. Some of them, particularly those from affluent parts of Amman, deliberately switched to English during the interview, when they knew that I was studying at a British university in London, in an attempt to highlight professional similarities between me as a researcher and them as interviewees.

However, I was not always treated as an "insider"; for instance, some informants regarded me as an "outsider", because I had moved out of Jordan a long time ago and was now affiliated with a British university; thus, I was both an insider and outsider (Henry, 2003).

Although I was supposed to be an insider, several informants were reluctant to talk to me about news and current affairs. They were much more at ease talking about their media consumption as a whole or particularly about entertainment programmes. It was particularly when I mentioned channels like Al Jazeera and Jordanian Satellite Channel that I noticed some reservation and slight discomfort. It is also noteworthy that informants from affluent areas in Amman were more willing to talk than informants from poorer areas of the city. As for the countryside, people there were either completely suspicious of my work or completely open to talk to me as if they had nothing to lose by talking to an American-Jordanian like myself. I particularly felt this unease when raising issues such as censorship, ideologies and democracy, which made some informants rather suspicious, as if I were a spy on a secret mission (see e.g. Clark, 2006: 418).

4.7 Conclusion

There were several considerations in connection with the research design and analysis in this project. Central among these was the way I should position myself as

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a researcher. I have argued that I approached my subject as a "fellow Jordanian" and yet it proved hard to win my informants' trust to speak freely, given that my questions are related to "foreign-"owned media such as Al Jazeera or BBC. Nonetheless, the interviews helped to allow my informants a certain degree of freedom to elaborate on the importance of satellite television in their daily news diet and it helped me remarkably in getting an "on the ground" view of a good sample of Jordanian audiences.

In this chapter, I have also provided a brief overview of my chosen methods, which is based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative tools, including questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The quantitative part was based on questionnaires distributed to 180 Jordanians, the majority of whom are aged 35-45, and all respondents were asked about their social and demographic variables such as gender, age, and educational level. They were also asked to account for the pattern of watching local, pan-Arab and western television channels.

In the following chapter, I discuss my findings beginning with the results of the quantitative study (in Chapters Five and Six), followed by the findings from the qualitative method (Chapters Seven and Eight).

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to highlight particular quantitative findings, while keeping all tables and statistics in the appendix. I also aim to integrate the qualitative findings in this discussion about media consumption, and more specifically about the reasons for keeping up with news channels (whether satellite or terrestrial).

The quantitative data presented in this and next chapter centres on audiences' favourite channels and news programmes. In addition, the qualitative data integrated in this presentation will discuss the reasons given by selected informants justifying these trends in news consumption.

In the following sections, I present an overview of the trends in news consumption focusing on the time spent on watching television in general, and news in particular. I also tabularize findings regarding viewers' preference of Arab and foreign news channels as well as their preference of programming. Drawing on selected interviews, I argue that the audiences' preference to follow news and current affairs programmes is due to their perception of such news media as a source of knowledge not only about their local politics but about regional and international affairs. I also argue the audiences' need for news as a source of knowledge and hence power, which is, according to them, no longer restricted by state control, as it was before the advent of satellite technology.

5.1 Trends in media consumption

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the present study incorporated quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative findings are based on questionnaires which included open-ended questions aiming at analysing media consumption trends

(particularly the news) among a representative sample of Jordanian audiences. The sample was a stratified random sample of 180 Jordanians, who are 22 years old and above. The sample was organized with the help of the Jordanian governmental agency called the Department of Statistics, who also helped in collecting the data. The main aim of the questionnaire was to indicate trends in satellite and terrestrial television consumption, and the preference of television programming.

Indeed, my findings show that all respondents do follow Arabic-speaking satellite channels.

The following table shows the time spent watching television

Table 5.1: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the hours of daily watching

Daily hours spent watching TV	Frequency	Percent
1-2	39	21.7%
3-4	108	43.3%
5-6	51	28.3%
7	3	1.7%
11-12	6	3.4%
15	3	1.7%
Total	180	100.0%
Mean	4.17	

As shown in the above table, the average daily hours spent on watching television was 4.17 hours with a standard deviation 2.59 hours. In addition, we can note that 43% of the sample subjects watch television from 3-4 hours daily, 28% of them watch television 5-6 hour daily, 22% of them watch television from 1-2 hours daily, and 15% of them watch television 15 hours daily.

When asked about the particular times dedicated to watching television, about 47% of the respondents said that they watch television at night, 20% during prime time, 15% after midnight, and 2% in the afternoon. In addition, 17% of them watch television anytime during the day/night.

Table 5.2: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the times of daily watching

Time of watching	Frequency	Percent
Afternoon	3	1.7
Evening	36	20.0
At night	84	46.7
Night end	27	15.0
No time limited	30	16.7
Total	180	100.0

When asked about their preference of TV programmes, around 99% of subjects responded that they mainly watch news programmes, while 75% responded they regularly watch debate programmes. Also, around 60% watch the religious and entertainment programmes, and 24% watch sports programmes.

Table 5.3: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the type of programmes watched by subjects

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	99	55.0%
Speech debates	75	41.7%
Religion	60	33.3%
Amusement	60	33.3%
Sports	24	13.3%
Others	51	28.3%

*Subjects can choose more than one program

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The vast majority of respondents (91.5%) also indicated that they watched Arab satellite channels, such as Al Jazeera, while a tiny minority (8.5%) stated that they never watched such channels:

Table 5.4 watching foreign vs. Arab channels

	Frequency	Percent
Foreign satellite channels	15	8.3
Local television	18	10.0
Arabic satellite channels	132	73.4
Others	15	8.3
Total	180	100

When asked about the type of programmes watched on these Arab satellite channels, the majority (75%) of respondents stated that they watched news programmes, while 62% regularly watched debate and current affairs programmes. Also, 57% watch entertainment programmes, while 52% watch religious programmes, and 28% watch sports programmes:

Table 5.5: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the type of programmes watched on Arab satellite channels

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	135	75.0%
Speech debates	111	61.7%
Religion	93	51.7%
amusement	102	56.7%
Sports	51	28.3%
others	57	31.7%

*Subjects can choose more than one programme

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Around 36% of the respondents also stated that they watched foreign channels (non-Arabic speaking), while the majority stated that they never watched such channels. This could be primarily because such foreign channels are usually in English (such as CNN) and it requires a good degree of proficiency in English language, which makes it inaccessible to the majority of Jordanians:

Table 5.6: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the extent of watching the foreign satellite channels

	Frequency	Percent
Watch foreign satellite channels	57	36.5%
Never watch	99	63.5%
Total	156	100.0%

For the minority who followed non-Arabic-speaking channels, the main motivation was to follow the news about local, regional and international events, even if only out of curiosity:

Table 5.7: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the type of programmes watched on the foreign satellite channels

Type*	Frequency	Percent
Local news	9	5.0
Arab news	39	21.7
World news	18	10.0
All of the above mentioned	90	50.0
Curiosity	24	13.3
Total	180	100.0

Subjects can choose more than one program

The same is true with local news channels, which are usually watched in order to follow local, regional and world news:

Table 5.8: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the type of news and local sources of news.

News type	Frequency	Percent
Local news	21	14.9%
Arab news	21	14.9%
World news	18	12.8%
All of the above mentioned	21	44.7%
Curiosity	18	12.8%
Total	141	100.0%

More specifically, about 15% of the sample watches the news on local channels in order to identify the local news and Arab News, whereas 13% watch these channels to follow global news, and 13% watch the news out of curiosity.

Thus, the news is seen as a source of knowledge, not only about one's local environment but about the global affairs as well. Clearly, Arab audiences in general would also like to follow local and international news to keep abreast of the developments of conflicts that affect the Arab region, and which involves other Western countries, particularly the USA. As one Saudi academic put it,

> One should be aware of all events happening in the Arab and Western world. Middle Eastern news covers our main causes, like those of Palestine, Iraqi, Iran and the Gulf. There are subjects which you need to be aware of. You need to know the news of your Arab and Muslim brother and know how you can offer help (quoted in the BBC Trust, 2009: 14).

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Indeed, my interviewees also indicated their *need* for news and to keep up-to-date with the events in the region. For instance, Salah (67, m) said,

> I can recall events that influenced my identity, it was the massacres that were committed against the Palestinians, like Sabra and Shateela in Lebanon and the Israeli siege of Palestinian cities like Ramallah and Gaza. If I had heard about these massacres from the radio, it would have had a totally different effect, but seeing it on TV made it unforgettable.

This indicates the power of television as a visual medium in communicating information. Snoeijer et al. (2002: 86) argue that television is "believed to be a strong medium in terms of getting information across to viewers" and that this visualization of television helps make audiences recall the news stories. It is in fact this visualization that bestows a certain aura of credibility on the television news, addressing people's needs to seeing as a basis for believing, because "people trust what they see more than what they hear" (Graber, 1988: 172).

Moreover, satellite television can play a significant role in forming the public opinion, which is why Cultural Studies has long stressed the political significance of the cultural sphere, including what David Morley (1986) calls 'the politics of the living room'. In the Arab region, for instance, such channels can function as a political space that is not otherwise locally available. Hafez (2004: 1), for one, suggests that television, and particularly satellite television channels such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, can function as an alternative to political opposition parties, or as he put it, "since political parties and parliamentary opposition in the Arab world are still rudimentary, Arab television seems to be performing their role". Likewise, El-Gody (2009) claims that Arab satellite television, particularly Al Jazeera serves as a political party with its own political agenda and ideology and with 50 million members (audiences). Saghieh (2004) also argues that Al Jazeera, for one, fills an important role in the Arab political scene due to the declining role of pan-Arab nationalist parties such as Baath party and the weakening discourse of pan-Arabism across the region.

Several of my informants also suggested that watching satellite channels helped compensate for the fact that they do not live in a democratic society. For instance, Zeid (39, m) said,

> News helped form my identity... I live in a third world country with no democracy... We have deep problems and issue that we need to solve and I learned all that from news programmes on satellite TV... It helped me realize how far behind we are as Arabs [compared to western counterparts].

Likewise, Um Mohamed (61, f) said the news for her is a source of empowerment making up for the missing opportunities to actively participate in the political life in Jordan:

> I watch the news to know what's going on around me in the world....events, problems, developments...I care most about news from Palestine... it's quite important to me and my family...The news empowers me to be socially active and participate in any political or social discussion with my friends and neighbours...I could sit with friends and talk about politics or any other topic drawing on what I've heard in the news... I feel like news helps uplift my social ranking.

This is in line with previous studies which documented the Jordanians' dissatisfaction with the state television, such as this male respondent,

> As a person from Amman, I cannot connect with JTV [state television]. The reason is a dichotomy between Amman and the rest of Jordan. I imagine those sitting on a rugged mattress in Al Ghour [a rural area in Jordan] are happy with this programme (cited in BBC World Service Trust, 2009: 45)

The above opinion reflects the dissatisfactory tone which is particularly spread among the educated audiences who see the simplistic coverage of the state television as a belittling of their intelligence. Such a view is expressed in another female viewer (Abeer) who likes to watch other channels to compare and contrast between their coverage versus that of the state television, "I constantly compare

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JTV's coverage to Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera to know what JTV leaves out" (cited in BBC World Service Trust, 2009: 40).

Although television channels, particularly Arabic-speaking satellite channels, do not show enough women's programmes, Um Mohamed is keen to watch these channels, which for her has become like an addiction. So that if she could not access these channels in her home, she would not hesitate watching them at a neighbour's home if necessary:

> I don't think women issues are appropriately covered on TV...For me, satellite TV is a source of information but it isn't a powerful tool to change who I am...If I had to live without satellite TV, I'd go crazy...I think I'd go to the neighbours to watch Al Jazeera there or even listen to the radio... I can't give up the news but I can give up anything, even coffee or smoking but not the news. I just have to have news....I feel that news boost my understanding and help me integrate in my society ... politics and conflicts are parts of our life and society anyway...satellite TV filled a huge gap in our lives especially to those [women] who are at home most of the time because they're housewives or unemployed.

Similarly, Kifayah (36, f) expresses the same view when she stressed that she could not "live without news" and has just realized she was "addicted to news more than coffee and cigarettes and willing to give them up in trade for keeping the news".

Another informant, Nabeel (51, m) said that he watched news because he saw it as relevant to his daily life, particularly the local news. He also saw in foreign news a tool to broaden his horizons and increase his knowledge about other parts of the world:

> If I had no access to news, I'd feel quite isolated... I may read the newspapers but they will never make up for any news channel...they can't make up for the power of picture, sound and emotions expressed on TV...News presenters certainly add credibility to the news items... especially in debate programmes.

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Again, the main theme here is that news (as a source of information) can give a sense of empowerment and minimize the feeling of being isolated from the rest of the region and/or the world. This does not necessarily mean that those audiences believe in all news items they watch on TV, or indeed read in the newspapers. Ali (52, m), for instance, said that he watched the news on a regular basis "particularly when there are major events in Jordan or Palestinian Territories", and although he admitted that he could be emotionally influenced by such events, he firmly stated that he did not believe everything he sees:

> Although I don't believe all the news, if I had no access to it I'd feel quite misinformed and I'd be very frustrated...although when I watch the news, I still feel frustrated because of the bad news around us... but without the regular news bulletins, I might feel isolated.

This relationship between watching news and feeling empowered is so strong that those informants expressed their fear of being "disconnected from the world" if news was not accessible to them, such as Salah (67, m):

> If I didn't have access to Al Jazeera I'd feel lost, empty, misinformed, and disconnected from the world...although I'd still feel this strong belonging to my local society...The role of any news station should be to educate and move the people and to deliver accurate information.

In addition, news can also be seen as a tool to (re-)enforces one's Arab identity. For instance, Lana (33, f) claimed that watching news channels helped her learn and develop her Arabic identity and her own self identity. She also said that she used to feel that she only belonged "to the Arab world" and not "to the world". However, as she got older, and had access to more news sources, she now feels that she belonged "to a global world". Although she marked her Arab identity, she still stressed the differences between her and Arab nationals in e.g. the Gulf region, thereby identifying more with nationals of Syria, Egypt and others in countries in

closer cultural proximity to Jordan. In contrast, Emad (44, m) said that he would

follow the news about all Arab countries, including the Gulf region:

> I am originally Palestinian and I am Jordanian citizen...I grew up in Saudi
> Arabia...I like to follow the news about the Arab region... I watch the news
> for nearly 12 hours everyday...while working [as a barber]...I even like to
> follow news about immigration policies in other countries to know if I could
> travel there.

At the social level, watching news and keeping abreast with major events in the

region and abroad can also provide material for conversation with friends and

family. For instance, Mikhlid (35, m) said that watching news programmes helped

him carry a number of social conversations with colleagues. Thus, the absence of

news, for him, could trigger the feeling of loneliness and isolation. He also stressed

that he associated news with "bad news" particularly from Palestinian territories

and Iraq, and that if he did not listen to bad news from those countries, he'd "feel

on holidays". For him, news is there to "educate and inform rather than

propagating for a particular culture or ideology...not should it promote any

revolutions or street movements". On the other hand, Ibraheem Salem (25, m) said

that he would not learn new things from the news, or television in general,

although he still credits television for connecting him to the rest of the world:

> News connects you to the other world and gives an idea to what's
> going on all level, economical, sports, all of it...I don't feel I learn
> much from TV in general, especially about my own country. I mean
> this is where I live, I know our way of life and I don't see how TV can
> teach me about my own culture.

News can also be a means to connect Jordanian audiences to the global debate

about terrorism, such as in the case of Ayyad (43, m) who watched news regularly

"following the recent attacks on the Arab and Islamic world in the name of fighting

terrorism". This global debate made him convinced that Arabs (and Jordanians)

have been victimized and that there is need to get as much information about

terrorism in order to identify the truths in it. He also acknowledges the role of TV in

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informing and educating audiences. Also, Sami (48, m) shared this view as he's interested in knowing about major events that may interest him and his family particularly news about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict:

> I watch the news to know what's happening in the world around me...I am interested in the Palestinian-Israeli issue and I am keen to follow it on TV...sometimes it's good to follow the news to feel optimistic about the future especially if there's some progress in the Palestinian negotiations...I don't expect the news to teach me about my culture...but just to give me the information about what's happening [in politics]...I'm addicted to the news...if I didn't have access to TV, I'd resort to reading [newspapers and magazines].

The same view is echoed by Adel (48, m) who claimed that if television was not available, he'd turn to the Internet for news:

> If I have no access to TV, I can always turn to the internet ...and if I have no access to Al Jazeera for a week or more I will certainly feel lonely, isolated, wrong information and feel quite lost, although I'd feel relaxed as well, because news is about accidents and killings...all Arab news is painful and negative...this has always been the case even before we've had satellite.

In summary, news is important for those audiences as a source of information about local and regional, but also international, events. It is also important to feel connected to the rest of the world and to keep abreast with the political developments affecting the Arab region. However, this connection with the rest of the world does enforce their national identity, or as Zeinoun (25, m) put it,

> News is important to know about what's going on in our lives, regionally and internationally....but also how it's going to affect my life now and in the future...I can't say that I only watch local, international or regional news, because I watch all of this.... As Jordanians, we might be influenced by what we watch in the news, but news can't change our identity, perhaps our beliefs about particular individuals or organizations or it can confirm what I already believe.

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5.2 Favourite channels

Recent research shows that Al Manar is one of the important news sources in the Arab region, particularly when it comes to Palestinian news. For instance, the Jerusalem Media Communication Center estimates that Al Manar, along with Al Jazeera, is the most watched news source among Palestinians (Baylouny, 2006). Also, an international market research firm by Zogby International conducted a survey in 2004 showed that Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya are the most watched news channels in the region, while the US-subsidized channel, Al Hurra, scored very low ratings (Baylouny, 2006). The common belief is that Arab populations, particularly Palestinians in Jordan and in the Palestinian Territories, do not trust Al Hurra, or even their own state satellite channels, but prefer transnational channels beaming from outside their countries such as Al Jazeera (in Doha) or Al Arabiya (Dubai) (ibid.: 20). Moreover, a research report commissioned by the BBC Trust concludes that the BBC Arabic enjoys reputation of being a credible and trustworthy news source for Arab opinion makers, even if it is not their number one source (BBC Trust, 2009) It is known that the BBC Arabic Service launched with the Saudi Arabian Mawarid Company the Arab Service TV, which closed down two years after its launch in 1994. This was due to a documentary aired by the channel and which was critical of the Saudi royal family. The Arabic-speaking staff was made redundant and they found in Al Jazeera in Doha new employment opportunities.

In addition, according to a survey by the BBC Trust (2009) in six Arab countries, including Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, the majority of respondents confirm their reliance on a variety of news sources and formats, particularly television as the most preferred source. The survey was conducted among opinion makers in these countries, and this cohort confirmed that they would access more than one source in order to "ensure balance in their news consumption" (BBC Trust, 2009: 9). One Egyptian respondent, for instance, expressed his preference for television as follows, "Listening to the radio has become outdated. When you have 24 hour news channels on television and you

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can watch news bulletins every half hour, you do not need to listen to the radio"
(quoted in the BBC Trust, 2009: 14).

The findings of my survey show that Al- Jazeera is the most favourite
channel with 77% of the audiences, followed by local Jordanian channels,
which is favoured by 10% of the audiences. Then comes the Saudi-owned Al-
Arabiya channel in third place (3%), followed by the Saudi-owned MBC
(3%) which is a family channel; Al Manar, however, was not included in top
7 favourite channels:

Table 5.9: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the selection
of the channel:

Channel name	Frequency	Percent
Al Jazeera	138	76.7
Local Jordanian channels	18	10.0
Al-Arabiyah	9	5.0
MBC	6	3.3
Al-Aqsa	3	1.7
Al-Hura	3	1.7
MBC	3	1.7
Total	180	100.0

One of my informants, Zeid (39, m) stated that he is happy with Al Jazeera, although
he finds it biased towards non-Muslims,

> I am very happy with Arab satellite news stations...I usually follow Al Jazeera
> and hardly any other news channel... I have compared this channel with the
> rest of satellite channels and I've found it the best offer so far... There is that
> religious side to Al Jazeera programmes which I'd not really like...it isn't fair
> for the non-Muslim Arabs who do not for example have a dedicated show
> for them on Al Jazeera.

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Thus, Al Jazeera is the favourite channel despite the audiences' criticism of its content and its ideology. According to an international Gallup poll in nine countries including Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Morocco (Zayani, 2005: 4), Al Jazeera is one of the preferred channels for news, and viewers would likely to turn to Al Jazeera to catch up on important international events. Thus, it is a favourite channel despite the fact that many viewers find it biased, such as that Egyptian journalist interviewed in an audience study by the BBC World Service,

> Al Jazeera is biased. Even the analyst is usually biased towards a certain party...During the Gaza War [2009], Al Jazeera distorted the truth so people started resorting to BBC Arabic TV to get the truth of all things happening in Gaza (Egyptian journalist quoted in BBC Trust, 2009: 38).

On the other hand, local Jordanian channels remain an important source of information and entertainment, with about 85% of the respondents indicating that they regularly or irregularly watch local TV channels, in contrast to only 15% who said that they never watch those channels:

Table 5.10: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the extent of watching the local TV channels

The extent	Frequency	Percent
Watch	153	85.0
Never watch	27	15.0
Total	180	100.0

Thus, news remains the most important programme on television, as 50% of the respondents assert that they watch the news, followed by debate programmes (38%) and religious and entertainment programmes (28% each):

Table 5.11: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the type of programmes watched

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	90	50.0%
Speech debates	69	38.3%
Religion	51	28.3%
amusement	51	28.3%
Sports	12	6.7%
others	45	25.0%

*Subjects can choose more than one programme

The time spent on following local channels can vary between 1-6 hours or more. The majority of the respondents indicated that they would rather watch local channels for 1 to 2 hours on a daily basis:

Table 5.12: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the number of hours spent watching the local channels daily

Watching hours	Frequency	Percent
1-2	105	72.9%
3-4	27	18.8%
5-6	6	4.2%
> 6	6	4.2%
Total	144	100.0%

More precisely, about 73% of the sample watch programmes on local television for about two hours daily, while 19% watch local programmes for 3 to 4 hours, and 4% watch these for 5 to 6 hours daily.

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Watching news is not necessarily a lonely experience, but it also serves a social function. For instance, 53% of the respondents claim that they watch the news programmes with their families, while 45% said that they would watch it alone:

Table 5.13: the relative distribution of the study sample Based on the way of watching news programmes

Way of watching	Frequency	Percent
Alone	81	45.0
With family	66	53.3
With friends	3	1.7
Total	180	100.0

Consequently, the majority watch the news at home (96.6%), making the news an integral part of family and personal activities at home:

Table 5.14: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the place of watching news programmes

Place	Frequency	Percent
At home	171	96.6%
Outside home	6	3.4%
Total	177	100.0%

5.3 Conclusion

The above discussion shows the general trends in news consumption and the fact that Jordanian audiences seem to favour television over print press as a source of information.

News, in particular, was the main preference of television programmes for the majority of respondents, particularly in Arab channels such as Al Jazeera.

The above discussion also shows that news is considered a viable source of knowledge, not only about local surroundings and politics but about global and regional affairs. Many of my informants expressed great interest in following regional and global political news, feeling that such news impacts on their local politics, and hence feeling part of a global polity. This knowledge of global affairs gives the informants a sense of empowerment that might compensate for the lack of genuine opportunities for political participation in Jordan.

This knowledge of regional affairs is also linked to informants' feeling of being part of a pan-Arab polity where the affairs in one country would impact on other states in the region.

I also argue that one reason for keeping up to date with news and current affairs programmes is to provide enough information for social conversations with colleagues and friends, which shows the politicization of audiences in Jordan, and perhaps in the Arab region, as a whole.

While western audience studies (e.g. Williston, 2001; Gans, 2003; Hjarvard, 2002) show the prevalence of entertainment programmes and cultures, and usually only a modest degree of interest in political affairs, my study shows an opposite trend in the Arab region, or at least in Jordan, where viewers are more interested in politics as a major source of debate between them. This could be due to the particular political situation of the region stricken by conflicts and wars since its independence, and news keep audiences abreast with the development of such conflicts, or as Abdel Raheem (66, m) put it, "The role of any news station is to educate by touching our wounds".

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I continue presenting the quantitative findings while incorporating selected parts of the qualitative interviews in order to illustrate in more detail the viewers' opinions of the satellite channels and their programming.

6.1 The extent of following satellite channels

To begin with, the vast majority of respondents stated that they depend on satellite channels as their main source of news and information (around 65%), while only 15% depend on local channels. Also, the print press is only followed by 8% and a tiny minority depends on interpersonal communication as a source of news and information. This clearly shows the important role of television, particularly pan-Arab channels in informing Jordanian audiences.

Table 6.1: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the sources of watching the news

	Frequency	Percent
Satellites	117	65.0
Local TV	27	15.0
Newspaper	15	8.3
Audible news	9	5.0
Other resources	12	6.7
Total	180	100.0

The following table also shows the prominent role of Arab satellite channels, compared to local and foreign channels, as source of news and information:

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Table 6.2: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the main sources of news information by type of source

	Frequency	Percent
Foreign satellites channels	15	8.3
The local T.V.	18	10.0
Arabic satellites channels	132	73.4
Others	15	8.3
Total	180	100

Respondents also stated that they usually watch satellite channels including foreign channels regularly (62%).

Among the most important foreign channels are the CNN and the BBC, which are watched by nearly 22% and 24% respectively:

Table 6.3: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the name of the satellite channels watched

Satellite channel name	Frequency	Percent
CNN	24	21.6%
BBC	27	24.3%
ONE TV	6	5.4%
LBC	3	2.7%
MBC	3	2.7%
MBC2	3	2.7%
SKY NEWS	3	2.7%
No answer	42	37.8%
Total	111	100.0%

What is striking in the above table is the percentage of respondents who refused to declare the name of their favourite channel.

The majority of respondents also declared that they watch foreign news channels for only one hour per day on average, while a tiny minority, nearly 3%, would watch it for up to 6 hours a day. This indicates that the abundance of satellite channels may leave the Jordanian viewer with a plethora of choices making viewers prefer to change between channels rather than depending on one particular channel:

Table 6.4: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the daily average number of hours spent watching foreign news channels

No. of Hours	Frequency	Percent
1	48	47.1%
2	36	35.3%
3	9	8.8%
5	6	5.9%
6	3	2.9%
Total	102	100.0%
MEAN	1.91	

Also, the average of the number of times spent watching news during the day was around 2.26 times with a standard deviation of 1.10 times: watching twice was the highest portion with 35% twice, followed by 30% for once, 20% for four times, and 15% for three times.

Table 6.5: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the number of times of watching the channels daily

No. of Times	Frequency	Present
Once	48	29.6%
Twice	57	35.2%
Thrice	24	14.8%
Four times	33	20.4%
Total	162	100.0%

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The most favourite programmes are phone-in programmes such as the Opposite Direction, the flagship of Al Jazeera channel. Such programmes allow viewers' contributions to the televised debate through phoning in:

Table 6.6: the relative distribution of the study sample based on the name of the programme watched.

Programme name	Frequency	Percent
The contrary direction	54	37.5%
Face to face	18	12.5%
Behind the news	12	8.3%
The speech is ours	9	6.3%
Happens today	6	4.2%
Pulpit of Al Jazeera	6	4.2%
60 minutes	6	4.2%
Good morning	3	2.1%
Your weight is gold	3	2.1%
Al Jazeera correspondents	3	2.1%
What life does	3	2.1%
The soft speech	3	2.1%
Against the direction	3	2.1%
Policy	3	2.1%
The life is a word	3	2.1%
An open dialogue	3	2.1%
The Arab dialogue	3	2.1%
Opera	3	2.1%
Total	144	100.0%

Such interactive programmes are also watched regularly and more often and around 78% of respondents stated that they watch such programmes without

specifying the frequency, e.g. daily, while 21% stated that they watch such programmes daily.

Moreover, such interactive programmes give the audience the opportunity to debate not only with the television presenter but with studio guests and even answer other callers' questions. Indeed, there is a trend now among satellite channels to incorporate this interactivity factor in their debate programmes, following the example of online forums, with the exception that such an interactive debate is obviously much more organized and moderated on television compared to the Internet.

Indeed, new media, such as the Internet, has opened up new networking opportunities particularly to Arab youths. The Internet forums provide a platform to exchange political ideas and opinions and many youths in Jordan, among other countries, use the Internet as one source of accessing news especially news that is not covered well on TV or radio (Wheeler, 2006: 14). For instance, a Jordanian Internet cafe user in Jordan said that she found in the Internet an opportunity "to know many girls and made many good female friends in Amman...I became more open minded and less conservative since I started talking with people in chat" (quoted in Wheeler, 2006: 10). For other female users, the Internet chat was also a means to change their behaviour and make them more sociable and relaxed when dealing with the opposite sex such as this 21 year old Jordanian, who said,

> On the Internet, I talk to many people. I made many friends in other
> countries. It is really interesting to know how men think about girls and
> relationships (quoted in Wheeler, 2006: 10).

Clearly, it would be simplistic to claim that the Internet is in itself a means of democratic participation and debate, for such activities need to be based on media literacy. For instance, Lewis (2006) argues "informed cultural citizenship involves understanding the range of cultural possibilities, and ultimately, having a voice in defining the scope of those cultural possibilities" referring particularly to media

literacy which "is not just about the way that we consume media but the policy framework within which it is produced".

The above data resonate with previous studies that highlight audiences' inclination to turn to electronic media in times of stress and conflicts (e.g. Greenwood, 2008), particularly in Jordan where a great percentage of the population are Palestinians pre-occupied with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Audience studies tend to argue for a correlation between behaviour and preferred programming, thus for instance aggressive children may be attracted to aggressive programmes, and (Huesmann et al., 2003). Similarly, there is some evidence that religious people may be attracted to religious programming (Abelman, 1987). As for news, some studies (e.g. Perse, 1992) argue that people watch the news out of curiosity to know what is happening. Overall, people may watch television out of totalitarian motives (to gain information) or entertainment or simply to pass the time (ibid.). In general, uses and gratification approach (see Ch. 1), is based on the assumptions that the media use is indeed motivated based on the audience's needs and selection of programming to satisfy those needs.

Other studies point to the fact that motives behind watching the news can be more subtle serving multiple functions and desires (e.g. Wenner, 1985). Thus, audiences may be watching the news for a variety of reasons: e.g. to know about a future expected event (such as a strike), to know about an expected policy (such as budget cuts), or simply to know about the weather or traffic news (see also Gantz, Fitzmaurice and Fink, 1991). Other audiences may watch the news to satisfy their desire for knowledge about politics, whether internal or international. Such audiences would be more inclined to compare different sources and angles of the news stories.

Psychological studies (e.g. Reiss, 2000: 18) argue that there are few main motives that prompt people to action; these are the desire for power to influence others, for independence, for knowledge to satisfy our curiosity and for acceptance to satisfy the desire for inclusion. One can argue that watching the news fulfils

people's need for knowledge while satisfying their curiosity even if the news does not directly impact on their daily lives, or as a Saudi female academic put it,

> One should be aware of all events happening in the Arab and Western world. Middle Eastern news covers our main causes, like those of Palestine, Iraq, Iran and the Gulf. There are subjects which you need to be aware of. You need the news of your Arab and Muslim brothers and know how you can offer help (quoted in the BBC Trust, 2009, p. 14).

6.2 Gender variation

In order to analyse whether there are statistically significant differences between the extent of watching news programmes and respondents' gender, I used Chi-Square statistical analyses, of which results are shown in table 6.8. The result shows that there are significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) and the percentage of females who watch satellite channels late in the night increases between male respondents rather than female ones.

Table 6.7: the relative distribution for the times of watching the channels due to the gender

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Afternoon	0	0.0%	3	5.9%	3	1.7%
Evening	30	23.3%	6	11.8%	36	20.0%
At night	72	55.8%	12	23.5%	84	46.7%
Midnight	24	18.6%	3	5.9%	27	15.0%
No specific time	3	2.3%	27	52.9%	30	16.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square = 26.097		$\alpha \leq 0.001$				

The results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) or a mismatch between the two genders in terms of the source of news: around 76.7% of males use the satellite channels to get the news, whereas 35.3% of women rely on the same source, and 35.3% of female respondents also watch local channels, compared with only 7% of males. The proportion of males who read daily newspapers is only 4.7%, while this percentage was 17.6% among females.

Table 6.8: the relative distribution according to the source of news divided by gender

| | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
Main news source	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Satellite channels	99	76.7%	18	35.3%	117	65.0%
The local TV	9	7.0%	18	35.3%	27	15.0%
Newspaper	6	4.7%	9	17.6%	15	8.3%
Audible news	6	4.7%	3	5.9%	9	5.0%
Other resources	9	7.0%	3	5.9%	12	6.7%
	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=12.261		*α=0.016*				

The results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are no significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) or a match between the type of foreign satellite channels the both genders watch, that is, 75.6% of males and 76.5 of females rely on the Arabic satellite channels.

Table 6.9: the relative distribution according to the main source of television channels

| Channels | Gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Foreign satellite channels	15	12.2%	0	0.0%	15	8.6%
Local TV	15	12.2%	12	23.5%	27	15.5%
Arabic satellite channels	93	75.6%	39	76.5%	132	75.9%
Total	123	100.0%	51	100.0%	174	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=3.069		α= 0.216				

The results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are no significant differences (α ≤ 0.05) or a match between (not) watching foreign satellite channels with difference of the main source of news, that is, 65.1% of males and 52.9% of females who watch the foreign satellite channels.

Table 6.10: the relative distribution according to whether the respondents watch the foreign satellite channels, distributed by gender

Total

| | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	84	65.1%	27	52.9%	111	61.7%
no	45	34.9%	24	47.1%	69	38.3%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=0.764		α= 0.382				

For the type of news information respondents watch on foreign satellite channels, the results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are no significant

differences (α ≤ 0.05) or a match for all the news types related to world , that is, 50% of males and 64% of females watch all types of news: local, Arabic, and foreign.

Table 6.11: the relative distribution of the information type received from foreign sources based on the gender

| Information type | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Local news	3	4.2%	3	7.1%	6	5.3%
Arabic news	12	16.7%	3	7.1%	15	13.2%
World news	12	16.7%	3	7.1%	15	13.2%
All mentioned	36	50.0%	27	64.3%	63	55.3%
Curiosity	9	12.5%	6	14.3%	15	13.2%
Total	72	100.0%	42	100.0%	114	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=1.716			α= 0.788			

Likewise, there are no significant differences when analysing the type of news information followed on local satellite channels, where the statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are no significant differences (α ≤ 0.05):

Table 6.12: the relative distribution of the information type received from the local resources based on gender

| Information type | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Local news	18	19.4%	3	6.3%	21	14.9%

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Arabic news	15	16.1%	6	12.5%	21	14.9%
World news	15	16.1%	3	6.3%	18	12.8%
All mentioned	36	38.7%	27	56.3%	63	44.7%
Curiosity	9	9.7%	9	18.8%	18	12.8%
Total	93	100.0%	48	100.0%	141	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=3.524   α=0 .474

As for favourite programmes, the results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are no significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) by gender, as 59% of male respondents and 64% of female ones watch debate programmes, whereas 44% of males and 57% of females watch entertainment, and 22% of males and 14% of females watch sports programmes.

On the other hand, there are significant differences between genders in terms of the extent of watching religious programmes with 37% of male respondents and 71% of female ones watching such programmes.

Table 6.13: the relative distribution of the desire to watch debate programmes divided by gender

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% of total
Do you watch debate programmes?						
Yes	48	59.3%	27	64.3%	75	61.0%
No	33	40.7%	15	35.7%	48	39.0%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=.098   α=.754

Table 6.14: the relative distribution of the desire to watch entertainment programmes divided by gender

| | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
Do you watch amusement programmes?	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% of total
Yes	36	44.4%	24	57.1%	60	48.8%
No	45	55.6%	18	42.9%	63	51.2%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=.595			α=.440			

Table 6.15: the relative distribution of the desire to watch religious programmes divided by gender

| | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | female | | | |
Do you watch religious programmes?	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% of total
Yes	30	37.0%	30	71.4%	60	48.8%
no	51	63.0%	12	28.6%	63	51.2%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=4.364			α=.037			

Finally, the results of statistical analysis of Chi-square show that there are significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the two genders in terms of whether they watch television programmes alone or with others: 55.7% of males and 17% of females watch TV alone, whereas 41.9% of males and 2% of females watch TV with friends.

Table 6.16: watching television alone or with others, divided by gender

When watching the news, do you watch it	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% of total
Alone	72	55.8%	9	17.6%	81	45.0%
With family	54	41.9%	42	82.4%	96	53.3%
With friends	3	2.3%	0	.0%	3	1.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=8.085			*α=.018*			

6.3 Conclusion

Accordingly, the younger audiences are more likely to watch foreign satellite TV programmes. In contrast, older viewers prefer the news programmes. The order of most watched foreign channels in the above analysis was the BBC followed by the CNN. The rate of watching foreign news channels also increased with the increase in the educational attainment of respondents. In addition, those who have a strong sense of their Arab and Jordanian identity are less likely to watch foreign programmes, although they are likely to want to watch entertainment programmes.

Also, there were some gender variations. Male respondents are less likely to watch religious programmes compared to female respondents, while the latter tend to watch more local programmes and read newspapers to get the news compared to the male respondents. Both males and female respondents prefer watching Arab satellite channels and programmes followed by foreign (non-Arabic) ones. The number of hours spent on watching satellite and local news media also decreases

with the decrease of the respondents' educational level. However, all respondents across age and gender prefer the use of satellite channels, especially Arabic ones, as the main source of news.

As argued in the previous chapter, audiences tend to find in the news and current affairs programmes a regular source of knowledge and hence empowerment. Such programmes also provide a means to enforce one's local (Jordanian) and Arab identity as pan-Arab satellite channels usually centre on regional affairs. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

7.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the Jordanian audience's views of the issue of ownership of satellite channels, and whether this ownership plays a role in their perception of the local and regional news. Another aim is to analyse whether the ownership contributes to steering the public opinion in Jordan, juxtaposing previous studies about the news ownership and content with this study which focuses solely on the audiences' views.

In order to contextualise my findings, I dedicate the first part of this chapter to a discussion about the ownership models drawing on the relevant literature and focusing on the political economy approach. I then juxtapose these models to other typologies of Arab media, discussing the strengths and weaknesses in such models and typologies. Such a discussion will then pave the ground for the audiences' views presented in the second part of the chapter. My main argument is that the Jordanian audiences in my study are fully aware of the role of ownership on the news content but they tend to background, or rather bracket, this issue in an attempt to signal their ability to distinguish between news (information) and propaganda. I also present the audiences' views on the emotional language used in satellite channels, particularly the use of words such as "martyr" and whether such words have an impact on the audiences' interpretation of the news.

In the following two sections, I begin with an overview of the scholarly debate about media ownership focusing on the political economy approach.

7.1 Media ownership: the scholarly view

It may be safe to claim that the scholarly debate about media ownership paralleled with the beginning of Media Studies as an academic discipline with debates about

ideology and the way it may impact audience behaviour. The Marxist view on ideology and the success of the ruling classes to legitimize their views on the ruled classes (Marx and Engels, 1970: 64) has been rejuvenated during the 1940s and 1950s in the works of the Frankfurt School. Works by pioneering figures of the Frankfurt School such as Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) and Marcuse (1968) marked the new debate about the role of media in modern democracies. These views, although inspired by the Marxist ideas, marked a clear departure from the economic and political determinism that characterised the Marxist thinking. Rather than viewing the struggle as being confined to a political battle between the ruling classes versus the proletariat, the Frankfurt School sought to empirically investigate the subtle means by which the ruled class was integrated into the dominant culture. Such an investigation triggered a range of new theoretical concepts that are still to-date informational strands of media and culture scholarship, such as social alienation, ideology, or political pessimism (see Ch. 1).

The Marxist view separates culture from finance, and sees the capitalist system driven by profit at the expense of the dominated labour force, and the latter was in constant oppression by the ruling groups who owned means of production. Thus, the primary mode of dominance is the economic system, and can only be remedied if and when the working classes rise against the ruling classes. On the other hand, the Frankfurt school rejected this economic determinism looking instead for the subtle means of projecting the interests of the ruling classes onto the actions of the ruled classes. For instance, Gramsci introduced the concept of hegemony to denote the complexity of this dominance that reaches far beyond the economic and/or political control. Instead, the dominant classes here would constantly seek to reach consensus among the subordinated classes by making the latter willingly accept the ruling classes' ideas as common sense. This hegemony then would ensure the compliance of the subordinated classes who would hardly rebel against the ruling classes, as predicted by Marx. The question here is how the working classes are so integrated into the dominant culture that they do not seem to question, let alone rebel against, it. Such debates triggered a new wave of media scholarship that sought to examine audiences as consumers rather than as potential instrument of

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revolution. Subsequently, Adorno (1991) launched his critique of "media industry" (in singular rather than plural – see Hesmondhalgh, 2002 for a discussion about the difference here): in particular, he sought to analyse the ways such industry managed to stabilize, rather than doubt, the capitalist consumer system. His investigation aimed at identifying political change and new strategies for citizens' emancipation from this subtle form of dominance. In summary, the Frankfurt School began with Marxist ideas in their critique of modern capitalism but parted company with Marxism because they could not use its notions as tools of analysis in empirically grounded work. It remains, however, critical of capitalist culture and it was perhaps therefore that their strand of scholarship is referred to as part of Critical Theory.

This conceptual framework was to dominate the media scholarship for decades roughly from the 1920s to 1950s. In tandem with this critical approach, media scholars then aimed to investigate and prove the power and direct influence of mass media on (rather passive) mass audiences. The subsequent decades, however, witnessed a radical shift away from seeing media as such powerful tools in the hands of the ruling classes or seeing audiences as passive dupes. However, scholars from the 1960s onwards did not agree on one unified scholarly approach to analysing media and its role in society. Curran et al. (1982) provide an overview of the different approaches in media scholarship dividing it into three main strands, Structuralism, Political economy approach, and Cultural studies approach, led by Stuart Hall. The Structuralist analysis would focus on the "signifying systems of the media" (ibid.: 28), while the political economy approach would link the media ideologies to the economic structure within society as a whole, or in media ownership and its relationship with certain media messages, and finally the culturalist approach would see the mass media as playing a pivotal role in influencing the public opinion.

7.2 The political economy approach

This approach focused primarily on the issue of media ownership and its relation to control and power in society. Leading figures here include Murdock (1982) and Murdock and Golding (1977), who were partly concerned with the effect of ownership on audiences' views, although this approach was critiqued by other scholars for being difficult to prove empirically, or as Curran et al. (1982: 18) put it,

> The workings of these controls are not easy to demonstrate – or to examine empirically. The evidence quite often is circumstantial and is derived from the 'fit' between the ideology implicit in the [media] message and the [economic and political] interests of those in control.

Here, Herman and Chomsky (1988) has been a classic example of such approach. Their volume *Manufacturing Consent* did what the title already allude to, i.e. suggesting a causal relation between media and people's behaviour, by seeing (powerful) media as manufacturing public consent. Their main concern was the role of media in orchestrating propaganda and thereby managing public opinion or as they put it in their first paragraph,

> The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, inform and inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs and codes of behaviour that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfil this role requires systematic propaganda. (1988: 1)

For them, media messages could influence public opinion, which constituted a major threat to pluralism in society.

Decades later, the question of ownership remains highly important tomedia scholars who see in it as an invitation to partisan media bias and hence a direct violation of democratic ideals. On the one hand, there are those who argue that

private media ownership will only respond to market mechanism (of supply and demand) and therefore undermine quality programming such as educational and informative programmes in favour of cheap and populist output (see Curran, 1982). On the other hand, there are those who argue that state-controlled (or –run) media may be susceptible to political control and therefore function as tools of government propaganda (see e.g. Splichal 1992; Splichal and Wasko 1993). The argument here is that state-operated media can literally save the media from the market tyranny where profit is the ruling factor and where advertisers may be able to assume part of the control of media outlets. As such, both approaches operate in a sort of "pull-push" relationship where both the market and state battle for the role of the saviour; either from state tyranny (liberal approach) or from market tyranny (public owned media). In between these two extremes, several European countries such as the UK operate in a mix of these two systems where they run a public service outlet (such as the BBC) but give it enough autonomy from state and market. The underlying principle here is that totally commercial media market may undermine the representation of all voices in society (including minorities) not to mention that the prime concern of media outlets here would be to please their advertisers rather than inform the audiences (citizens).

These debates are of paramount importance to non-western societies such as the Arab world, where there exists a variety of ownership models but none of them resembles the public service model such as the BBC, where the media can enjoy a degree of autonomy from the state although supported indirectly by the state. In the following section, I offer a historical overview of the role of media, particularly broadcasting, in the Arab region, particularly after the independence of Arab States in 1950s and 1960s. I also highlight different models of ownership and its impact on media output, offered by Arab and western scholars.

7.3 Typologies of ownership

There are several western models that account for different types of ownership of media institutions. Perhaps the most classic model is the one reported in Golding and Elliott (1979), where they divided the media/press into four types:

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authoritarian, libertarian, communist and social responsibility. The first one refers to a system that controls the opposition voices and restricts pluralism as a threat to the foundation of its system; the second system calls for private ownership as a guarantee to the spread of pluralist voices and views, while the communist system refers to the use of media as a tool to spread the regime ideology (in a linear communication model of sender ->message->receiver) and finally the social responsibility model refers to the media that operate under commitment to its "duty of care" paying head to diversity within society and serving all tastes. The last model is perhaps the founding conceptual framework of the Public Service Broadcasting such as the BBC.

Hallin and Mancini (1996) propose another typology that looks at cross-national differences among world states while seeing a strong link between the media and the surrounding political context. Building on data from eighteen countries (largely democratic countries in Europe and North America), the authors categorize the differences according to three models: the Polarized Pluralist (e.g. in Southern Europe), Democratic Corporatist (central and Northern Europe e.g. Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Sweden), and the Liberal Model (e.g. in Britain, Ireland, Canada and the USA). But this model is, so far, only applicable to European media systems (Sreberny, 2008: 19). In addition, el Masry (2009) attempted to apply this typology on the Egyptian press system, placing Egypt as "polarized pluralistic" press model, with some state intervention, low levels of professionalism and a low amount of corporatization. However, he found this categorization, insufficient to capture the nuances throughout the system, not to mention that it does not accommodate Egypt's unique pattern of state intervention with a mixed ownership.

According to Mellor (2005), Arab scholars prefer to categorize Arab media systems in terms of their social responsibility; for instance, Hamada (1993:172) views the social responsibility theory as the most applicable to the Arab context, where media ought to contribute to the developmental plans of Arab societies without necessarily being owned or monopolized by the state. Media here would serve the citizens (rather than consumers) in furnishing them with the necessary information regarding their developmental plans and projects, in a similar way as the public

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service model of the BBC. Critical to this role are certain normative concepts such as accuracy, objectivity, and ethical responsibility towards society in refraining from inciting for any form of hatred, violence or chaos (Abu Zeid, 2000). In addition, a new typology of the Arab media is the so called "dependency theory" in which Arab media systems are seen as a by-product of decades of colonialism and as such they can only replicate and depend on European (or Anglo-American) media as sources for inspiration (see e.g. Hamada, 1993:169f).

Sakr (2001) argues that the Arab ownership system is characterised by the blurring of the boundaries between private and public ownership. Thus, some privately-owned channels may enjoy state support and the state may also function as a shareholder in private outlets. Also, private media ventures do not necessarily belong to private entrepreneurs seeking commercial profits but also to political factions that use the media to propagate their own agenda. In the case of state-owned media, the ministers of information in these states are responsible for charting the policies of the media outlets in terms of production and distribution.

Ayish (2002) offers another typology of pan-Arab news media, in particular, dividing them roughly into three categories: Traditional government-controlled, Reformist government-controlled, and Liberal commercial. The first system refers to traditional communication channels, such as the Syrian Satellite Channel, and still follows traditional practices in news gathering and presentation. The second system refers to channels such as Abu Dhabi TV, where journalistic practices are inspired by Anglo-American professionalism in an attempt to balance professionalism with the unique Arab political and cultural practices. Finally, the third system refers to channels like Al Jazeera, where journalists are driven by their professionalism rather than serving a particular political interest or agenda (for criticism that refutes Al Jazeera's impartiality, see Fandy, 2007).

In summary, Arab governments tend to control electronic media as a means to harness the public opinion and a tool to refute political and religious ideologies. The latter aim highlights the role of media professionals and their ethical (or social)

reasonability in not agitating the public opinion in order to maintain a sense of national unity. Despite recent western pressures on the Arab regimes to loosen their grips on the media systems, following the 9/11 event and the subsequent war in Iraq, Arab states still seem to deal carefully with the electronic media out of their conviction of the media's huge role in mobilizing the public. This is evident in the political and scholarly debate about one particular channel, namely Al Jazeera.

7.4 Al Jazeera effect

Al Jazeera is indeed a unique case in the Arab media scene: on the one hand, it can be classified as "state-owned" media because the Qatari Emir has been the main source of its funding, and on the other hand, Qatar has abolished its Ministry of Information, to signal its dedication to freedom of speech and pluralism, and hence Al Jazeera is not directly controlled by a governmental apparatus (Sakr, 2001). When it was set up in 1996, Al Jazeera began with an interest-free loan that was supposed to be paid back to the Qatari Emir. Owing to its controversial news coverage, however, advertising revenues have been scarce in its first years, particularly after Al Jazeera began to broadcast Bin Laden's tapes, thereby angering the Saudi and American advertisers alike. Yet, the channel reaps a reasonable advertising income from advertising by Qatari enterprises such as Qatar Airways and to supplement this income, the Qatari Emir keeps pumping into the channel handsome amounts as needed (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002).

Several volumes have been dedicated to discussing the so-called Al Jazeera effect on Arab journalistic practices and, more importantly, on the Arab public opinion (see e.g. El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002, Lynch, 2006; Sakr, 2005; Miles, 2005, Fandy, 2007). Zayani (2005: 1), for instance, argues that Al Jazeera "not only has ... left a permanent mark on broadcasting in the Arab world, but it is also developing the potential to influence Arab public opinion and Arab politics". He goes on to argue that the channel fills a political void in the region particularly with the absence of political opposition, although this argument should be seen in the recent uprisings in several Arab states and the toppling of dictatorships in Tunisia and

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Egypt. Zayani (2005:2) refers in particular to the channel's tendency to provide a platform to dissenters and opposition groups in exile and even to Jewish groups to present their views, in contrast to traditional news practices in terrestrial channels. In so doing, Al Jazeera has not only succeeded in branding itself as a pioneer in news making in the region but also in re-branding Qatar itself. As such, Qatar has managed, through Al Jazeera, to exert a certain degree of influence in the region, seen in contrast to, and competition with, the Saudi media empire in the region. For instance, Qatar has offered new proposals in regional crises such as in Lebanon and Iraq not to mention its offer to mediate in the Sudan and between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Qatar has managed to extend on this new brand by hosting a whole range of initiatives such as Doha Forum, Doha Debates and recently the Doha Centre for Media Freedom.

The above discussion provides a contextual background to the following analysis among sample of Jordanian audiences. The above discussion also illuminates three important pointers for the following analysis:

1. Firstly, Arab audiences, not only in Jordan but in the whole region, are used to having state-owned media, which were the backbone of communication strategies for several Arab regimes.

2. Secondly, the new satellite channels have had limited impact in providing truly pluralistic platform due to the close ties between owners (particularly Saudi) and Arab regimes.

3. At the very least, these channels have managed to introduce new journalistic practices in form and content, e.g. interviewing groups that were never before visible in the media scene, thereby pushing the boundaries for ethical and responsible journalistic practices in the region.

The question that is central to the following analysis is this: what impact does this new competition have on the Jordanian audience's perception of news, particularly with their knowledge of the ownership behind each channel? Another important question is about the impact of these channels in steering the public opinion in Jordan, e.g. with regards to vital issues such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

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7.5 When ownership matters

To start with, the majority of my informants mistrust the news channels which they watch on a daily basis. For them, news channels may follow their own agendas or even the whims of their owners. Nonetheless, they, as audiences, insist on their ability to discern propaganda and bad from good coverage, such as Yazan (37, m) who expressed this view about one of the channels he followed on daily basis, Al Hurra,

> Some stations are obviously misleading and they have a private agenda such as Alhurra which is owned by the US....although it must have a shred of credibility or else no one would watch them.

For Hussein (39, m), the ownership is not only a matter of Arab states or businessmen controlling such stations, but it could also be western institutions that support these channels,

> Ownership does not stop at Arab channels, I believe that certain western agencies have a huge hand in Arabic news stations...the identity of those organization is irrelevant, but what they are trying to do is relevant... Everyone seems to have an agenda. Whoever owns the station, wants to communicate his or her message, otherwise why would they own it?

For Um Mohamed (61, f), what matters is the type of coverage and not necessarily who owns the channel, "I care about the news item rather than who owns it, it filters back to me to decide whether I believe it or not, rather than who owns the station". Another informant, Salem prides himself of his ability to discern the American propaganda of Al Hurra and Al Jazeera's lack of coverage of Qatari internal affairs:

> Ownership is clearly important and it causes some kind of bias, like Alhurra station which is owned by the US, so their terminology is biased towards the Americans... it's like watching the CNN... it only reflects the American point of view....but the fact that Qatar owns Al Jazeera doesn't bother me at all,

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although I know that they can't report objectively on Qatar, especially the [Qatari] royal family.

Salah (67, m) agrees that the ownership of Al Jazeera has an impact on its coverage of Qatar, "Al Jazeera ownership by the Qatari royal family affects their reporting which somehow favours Qatar", he said. He also compares Al Jazeera with its rival Al Arabiya, which is owned by Saudi businessman, and whose coverage may be contingent by this Saudi connection,

> Al Arabiya is owned by Saudi Arabia and its credibility is conditioned by this ownership...its stance to the Palestinian issue is restricted by the Saudi policies...if Al Jazeera does not tackle problems inside Qatar, it affects its credibility as to the Qatari news (but not news about other regions).

For the majority of the interviewees, the issue of ownership does not bother them, except if the station is owned by non-Arabs, "Ownership may and may not be important... All Arab stations are owned by the same people, but if the station is owned by an enemy, then it may make a lot of a difference" (Kifayah, 36, f).

Husain (39, m) shares the view that all channels seem to propagate their own agendas,

> Ownership does not influence me as such, because I'm aware of the political agendas they're trying to promote. Everyone seems to have an agenda. Whoever owns the station, wants to communicate his [sic] message, otherwise why would they own it in the first place? Ownership does not stop at Arab channels... I believe that certain western agencies have some power over certain Arabic news stations... who these agencies are is actually irrelevant, but what matters is what they're trying hard to promote ...this is important [to analyse].

Talalaat (36, m) agrees,

> I don't care about who owns the station, but I care about the ideology of the station and whether it is nationalist, pro-American, Christian or Islamic.

Ayyad (43, m) also is not bothered by who owns news stations, although he is fully aware that his favourite station Al Jazeera is owned by the royal family in Qatar. And Abdul Rahim (66, m) is likewise aware of this ownership but still follow these channels, for the lack of better options, "Al Arabiya is owned by the MBC which is owned by Saudi Arabia...and I watch Al Jazeera for the lack of other channels....it is good, but what is behind the news [they offer]?"

Although the majority of informants are aware of the ownership of many of their favourite channels, a few of them even believe that some of those channels are either owned or controlled by foreign states such as Israel or the USA. For instance, Salah thinks that "Al Jazeera could be partially owned by Israel", and Hussein estimates that Al Jazeera is "not only owned by the Qatari Emir, but also owned by a western organisation...but I still evaluate their news regardless of this [suspicious] ownership". Thus, even if the audience seems doubtful about the ownership and the channels' relations with foreign states, they still follow the channels and claim their responsibility in "analysing" the news.

For Zeid (39, m), Al Arabiya is another example of "pro-American [coverage]...reflecting the Saudi policy" and Zeinoun (25, m) provides an array of other examples including Al Manar,

> Al Manar is good but it will always come second best...I feel as if I see Nasrallah [Hizbollah leader] in everything they broadcast...when you watch Al Manar, you interpret it according to your prior knowledge...I also see a strong link between the channel and its owner...I can still trace the American policy in Al Jazeera news, no matter how hard they try to cover this up...Al Hurra is completely unreliable because it is pure propaganda...In Iraq War, I can say that all channels [including Al Jazeera] were biased favouring American policies...Al Manar tried to offer good news during the war, but they are inherently biased.

Abdel Rahim (66, m) sums up the view of such bias,

The owner is the address of the station...Al Arabiya is owned by a Saudi

sheikh...I do not doubt the good news they broadcast about Saudi Arabia but

if there is bad news it may never broadcast....take Al Jazeera as another

example, their reporting is excellent and they do a good job at it, but I am

still highly suspicious and careful of what I watch at it.

In summary, audiences seem mistrustful of the use of pan-Arab channels and

believe each one comes with a different message and ideology. This view is shared

by the journalists I've interviewed such as Mohamed, from Al Bawaba, who reflects

on the status of Arab journalists as "messengers",

Jordanian journalists like many Arab journalists seem to practice mission

journalism, meaning they have some sort of a message to deliver, often it is

an ideological message.... although a journalist the Arab world should be

free from such pressures.

Editors also acknowledge the restrictions imposed on Jordanian local media, for

instance, Ahmed from Jordan Days TV said,

My staff was harassed in the past and had their equipment confiscated, all

was done by the *mukhabarat* [secret service]...we also monitor the

comment section on our website in order not to upset the government. But

because we are a small outlet, they tend to leave us alone most of the time.

Another reason behind the Jordanian audiences' consumption of pan-Arab news

media, such as Al Jazeera, despite their scepticism of its ideology is the low quality

of what they see as censored news in Jordan. In addition, Mohamed from Al

Bawaba, also stressed the heavy censorship imposed on Jordanian journalists not

only in covering local affairs but also in covering regional news. This in his opinion

contributed to Jordanian audience's mistrust of local media:

We get interrogated quite often, and the owners are concerned about

having the website banned locally or in any other country...I was even

interrogated by security agencies in Jordan, Syria, Yemen and Saudi

Arabia...for example we are currently banned in Syria because we ran a story

about the assassination of a Syrian army general. The Syrian Security Service

interrogated us and made us withdraw the story and they asked about our sources...they do not know that my source was simply social media, and I simply gathered different small items from the Syrian social network and was able to figure out what happened.

This view was shared by Tareq from Nourmina TV,

We try to push the envelope as much as possible but it depends on how much we are allowed to tell any story in great detail without offending the government....after all we are licensed by the government...sometimes the Secret Service would ask us not to interview a certain guest, or not to broadcast certain news items.

7.6 Emotional news

In her analysis of Iraq War coverage in both Al Jazeera and the CNN, Al-Jenaibi (2010) argues that Al Jazeera was biased in reporting about Palestinian suicide bombers, for instance. This bias is reflected in Al Jazeera's use of words such as "martyrs" to modify the bombers, which may be regarded as a violation of the unwritten code of news objectivity. For Al-Jenaibi (2010: 87), this rhetoric of martyrdom is the reason why Al Jazeera is popular among Arab audiences and is preferred over other western news sources, which would refer to the Palestinians in this case as "assassins or terrorists." The word martyr here refers to anyone who is killed during the occupation even if those killed were not involved in stone throwing or violent acts, e.g. children (see e.g. Allen, 2008: 478, n.6). Martyr images and rhetoric may be utilized in the media discourse as a tool to emphasize the horror or wrongdoing (Moeller, 1999).

Allen (2008) provides an ethnographic study among Palestinians following the second intifada and argues that there existed a new "martyr geography" as daily deictic references; for instance, certain streets were referred to as "Martyrs' Passing," "Martyrs' Street," and "Martyr Square," making these streets official locations to which even journalists refer in their daily coverage. In another study,

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Allen (2009) argues that the spread of visual media in the Palestinian Territories have had an impact on the Palestinian politics and society in as much as it has changed the way Palestinians represent themselves whether to each other or to the whole world. With focus on the second Palestinian intifada which began in 2000, Allen argues that representation of distressed Palestinian formed an integral part of the Palestinian media coverage which profiled those who were killed in the intifada as "martyrs",

> The morning radio news broadcasts always started with a list of people martyred the previous day, proceeding town by town, announcing the names and ages of those killed, where they were from, and how they were killed. As Ayman, a local TV director in Ramallah explained, "We began with [the news of martyrs], because the human is the most important subject. The martyr is more important than a destroyed house. The martyr is the peak of the news" (p. 170).

For my informants, such uses of the word "martyr" did not add to or subtract from their perception of credible news and they claim to have the power to pas over such terminologies and reach deeper for the factuality of the news. For instance, Zeid (39, m) said,

> I do take note of such terminology, and I understand why it's there and used [that way]....but I only want the news and I won't let these words distract me. Some terminologies are unforgivable such as calling the American forces liberators or just forces [not occupiers]...this is a major issue because it simply isn't true. News has to be based on facts and this is what may make a big difference in believing or discrediting a TV station.

Others, such as Yazan (37, m), are not even affected by the modification of Americans as liberators, "It doesn't matter if they call them American occupation forces or allied forces, and it doesn't affect the news credibility".
Indeed, many of my interviewees confirm that they would expect the Arab news media, whether local or regional, to draw on such terminology as "martyr" or

"shaheed" as a tribute to those killed during occupation or violence involving foreign nations. For instance, Talaat (36, m) said,

> I get very offended when this terminology isn't used, like not using the words *shaheed* [martyr], or occupation forces, although [for me] it doesn't affect the credibility of the station. I just don't like it...it is against my religious belief to describe someone who was martyred as someone who was "killed".

Likewise, Ayyad (43, m) argued that such words are indeed part of the "Arab" and "Islamic" perspective,

> I care a great deal about terminologies used and this certainly affects the station's credibility, and that is why we watch Al Jazeera, because it offers the news from an Arabic and Islamic perspective.

This terminology then is not only used to appeal to people's emotions but in fact some of my informants see such terms as "factual", and hence crucial to the credibility of the news. Adel (48, m), for instance, argues that there is a

> Strong Relationship between terminology used and the credibility of the news item... terms such as occupation forces [in Iraq] make it more believable and accurate. But to call them American forces will only make the news items inaccurate.

Also, Abu Mousa (75, m) acknowledged the sensitivity of such terms, particularly "martyr" in covering the Palestinian news, "I am very sensitive to the use of the word *shaheed* ....such words are relevant to the Palestinians' [suffering]".
For others, this use of such words does not affect their interpretation of the news coverage. For instance, Ibraheem Salem (25, m) said that he tried not to be influenced by the terminology of the news, because it influences news credibility, "Terminology is not natural... it carries with it certain political and ideological messages...so you can tell a lot about the station and the news items. "

Moreover, for Husain (39, m), such terminology may be irrelevant because his analysis of the news is based on his own beliefs and not the TV channel's values,

> I already have certain beliefs as to how things are... these terminologies
> don't affect my beliefs since I already know the truth and I have my own
> understanding of things, so it does not matter what words they use.

Abdel Raheem (66, m) shares this view and asserts his authority as a well-informed viewer,

> I don't personally care about such terminology to describe dead persons, or
> whether they call him dead or *Shaheed*...I already know what's going on, and
> I know the main issues here. I don't look for the station to guide my beliefs.

Audiences' knowledge then is their main guidance and although some may expect Arab TV stations to use the word "martyr" almost as a courtesy to the dead Palestinians or Iraqis. They still see such terminologies as bearing a value judgement which should only lie with them as viewers and not the TV journalists, or as Sami (48, m) put it, "It doesn't affect me if they use the word martyrs...this is a verdict that should be issued by me as the audience not by the channels". On the other hand, such terminology can also be a means for the audience to reveal the ideologies of each TV station, "Terminology tells you a lot about the station...it tells you who controls it, what kind of agenda they have" (Zeinoun, 25, m).

7.7 Journalists' views on the use of shaeed/martyrs

I also asked professional journalists and editors about their views of the use of special terminology such as *shaheed*/martyr when reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian issue or on Iraq. They all seem to agree that the use of such terms is important to attract and maintain their audiences. As such, they see the use of such terms as part and parcel of their journalistic mission to reflect the struggle and values of their society. If they would refrain from using such concepts, they agree that they would not only lose their audience but they might also feel that they had let down their nation and their countrymen.

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For instance, Zaid Abu Ouda, from the *Arabs Today* suggested that such terms are important particularly if the Arab nation/*umma* is in conflict with other foreign nations:

> It should be used, however, as we currently have wars against many foreign occupiers and dictatorships. It is important to use as it will bring enthusiasm. My personal opinion is different as I am a secular person. This is not the time to discuss these issues as we need all the resources. We need to focus on the enemy, which is Israel

Tareq, from Normina TV, agrees with him and sees the use of such terminology as a reflection of the "Jordanian street":

> We are a private TV station, we try to reflect the street, therefore, we will use the terminologies that are used in the street, we will use Palestine, or Occupied Palestine. We use *Shaheed* as well. Our audience will feel that we are closer to the truth and more honest and their side of the story rather than the government.

Those journalists have also been honest in admitting that they would not personally prefer to use such biased terminology but that the pressure of owners and station managers, such as Mohamed from Al Bawaba,

> Well, I personally don't believe in these terminologies, however, I used them as if we don't, we will lose our audiences. It is used for marketing purposes only. As a journalist I don't like , but the owners feel it will bring more traffic to the site. At the end it is not harmful to any of us

The consensus remains, however, that the use of these terms is important as a marketing tool to attract audiences while fulfilling an ethical duty towards the Arab nation, or as Zeid, from *Jordan Days* put it,

> It [such terms] is good and bad, but why not, as I said before it is a good thing to use, I feel somehow morally obligated, my audiences also would

rather hear *shaheed*/martyr rather than *qateel*/killed... if they want it, I will write it.

7.8 Conclusion

The above discussion centred on the question of ownership as a basis of media bias in a region which is struck by political turmoil and crises. In such a region, pan-Arab channels mark their dedication to the shared political issues or what Rinnawi (2006) coined McArabism. It is particularly after the 9/11 event and the subsequent war in Iraq that the role of news media has become of paramount importance as a tool to mobilizeArab public opinion.

As the Arab states have always controlled their state media, private television stations, particularly those broadcast from abroad such as Voice of America (and now Al Hurra), the BBC Arabic or France 24 Arabic, Arab audiences feel that they have the option to compare and contrast between what local versus foreign news diets. However, the abundant private news satellite channels have had a limited effect on mobilizing the Arab public opinion due to their different ideologies and stances. As the above discussion shows, Jordanian audiences seem very aware of the issue of ownership (whether Saudi, Qatari, Egyptian, etc.) and its effect on the type of reporting provided in such channels. However, even when they seem suspicious of the ownership, the audience still follow these channels including Al Jazeera. This is in line with previous studies such as the one conducted by the BBC World Service Trust where an Egyptian civil servant expressed his views on Al Jazeera as follows, "Al Jazeera is biased. Even the analyst is usually biased towards a party" (BBC World Service, 2009: 38).

The above discussion also shows the journalists' views on the use of such terms as part of their ethical duty and as a courtesy to those who die for shared Arab causes. They also agree that they use such terms because their audiences expect them to do so and not necessarily because they believe in the use of these terms.

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Their audiences, on the other hand, see the bias in using such terms and insist on their ability to see through such bias and that they would expect Arab news to use such terms as part of their patriotic duty. Yet, they still insist that the use of such terminology is biased and it is up to the audiences to reflect on the value attached to such terms.

Indeed, the majority of my interviewees expressed mistrust towards such channels and their messages as the audiences see such channels as tools in the hands of their owners. However, the audiences see themselves as equally capable of discerning propaganda from professional objective coverage (as will also be discussed more fully in the next chapter).

8.0 Introduction

The previous chapter showed how the informants understood the mechanism of power, ownership and ideology in the pan-Arab news media industry. In this chapter, I continue this discussion, focusing on the informants' emphasis on their ability to resist any propaganda; and being active audiences, they claim (back) their power to decode the message regardless of the messengers' efforts to manipulate that message.

Indeed, the concept of audience as active decoders of media output has gained currency in recent media scholarship. Stuart Hall's (1980) work on Encoding/Decoding has been the classic reference in this respect, but John Fiske (1987, 1989a, 1989b) has offered rigorous arguments against the passivity of audience who ought no longer be seen as passive recipient of media messages or an easy target for manipulative ideological content. Instead of referring to recipients as "audiences", Fiske choose the term "readers" in order to emphasize the individuality and subjectivity attached to the act of receiving and decoding media messages. Here, Fiske's concepts have been in tandem with sociological theories (e.g. Giddens, 1984) which acknowledges individual identity and positioning and the dialectic relationship between social context and individual interests/actions. Clearly, such theoretical frameworks still acknowledge the presence of power in society and the "hegemony" of certain social groups. Rather, this shift in sociological theories reflects an acknowledgment of the role of "agency" in an overall "structure" rather than seeing one of these concepts subsumed by the other (see Giddens, 1984). In this respect, Fiske's contribution lies in his acknowledgment of the "polysemy" of meanings and interpretations attached to media messages, which may undermine the "preferred meaning" pushed by media producers.

According to Fiske (1987: 313), audiences engage in a form of "semiotic warfare" where they engage in constant interpretation and appropriation of media texts adorning the media output with their own individual meanings. Indeed, Fiske here echoes Michel de Certeau's (1984) idea that audiences deal with myriad media messages in the way they want, even if this means adding new meanings that were not inscribed to these messages before. This meaning making process is easily out of sync with the media producers' (or owners') ascribed or intended meaning. Thus, media texts, as a commodity, "provoke" myriad of meanings and interpretations rather than merely encapsulating a fixed, static meaning or pleasure. Audiences then engage with the media text they consume and claim sole responsibility for deriving pleasure and meaning out of it, and any claim of media producers of succeeding in enforcing (or rather imposing) a fixed meaning is well challenged. Subsequently, producers and audiences are in constant struggle around the intended meaning, with the audiences showing resistance and resilience to accepting a preferred meaning. In so doing, audiences are active "creators" of their own popular culture, which means the consumer/audience becomes the producer, and this creativity in meaning-making may result in social change, however small, because the dominant mainstream values are constantly challenged. Fiske's concepts of "micro-rebellion" and resistance have helped counterbalance previous media models where audiences were seen as victims to be protected from the tyranny of imposed meanings and ideologies.

However, a number of scholars challenge Fiske's concept of resistant audiences, seeing in it a rather unrealistic evaluation of the audience's ability to resist dominant ideologies (e.g. Gauntlett, 2002; Barker and Brooks, 1998). Such critique points to Fiske's failure in discerning between "active" and "resistant" where the former refers to the capacity to bestow a myriad of meanings on a given media text, while the latter denotes a powerful viewer that is conscious about dominant values and ideologies in popular culture and willingly push those aside. In this case, audiences can choose to be "passive" or "done to" or to derive pleasure form the spectacle. Barker and Brooks (1998: 143-149) provide an extensive list of such choices arguing that audience's subjectivity and positioning must be contextualised

according to the pleasures derived from the act of watching. Audiences here may choose to be affected by a certain degree of excitement e.g. in watching a thriller, or in seeing a particular star on the screen or merely be present in a movie theatre as a social event and then discussing the film with friends as another social event. They also emphasise the need to unearth the various layers of the word "active" in modifying audiences in order to document the various degrees of activity. This activity may be harnessed or influenced by a number of paratexts (see e.g. Macksey, 1997) where audiences may show involvement in the media message/product even before being exposed to it, and their active interpretation after being exposed to the message may deviate from or consolidate a priori interpretation.

In summary, the word "audiences" denotes diverse groups and individual differences but which nonetheless share certain consumption patterns. Those audiences are far from passive, but each of them brings into the act of consumption and process of decoding a range of individual characteristics derived from their particular socio-cultural context. They also identify themselves with others and therefore they can be grouped as research subjects, and the main research task here is to deconstruct the specificity of their groupings or communities.

The new competition among (pan-)Arab satellite channels on the one hand and with them and the terrestrial channels on the other hand has only proved to be beneficial for Arab audiences who can now access more than 600 satellite channels, the majority of which are devoted to entertainment and social talk shows. The news satellite channels such as Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and the many other western-subsidized channels such as BC Arabic TV, France 24 TV or Russia Today, have triggered hopes among commentators and scholars alike who found in this new competition the beginning of an Arab public sphere where Arab populations can engage in meaningful discussions surrounding their societies and their Arab identities (see Zayani, 2005). This public sphere did not only serve Arab audiences inside the region but also Arabs in Diaspora. In so doing, these new media ventures revived the discourse of pan-Arabism which came to a standstill during the 1970s

and 1980s. This situation has also triggered a new wave of studies aimed at identifying the impact of such channels on the Arab public opinion or the so-called Arab street (see Nisbet et al. 2004).

8.1 Arab public opinion

Some of the first studies about the role of media as agenda-setters can be found in Al-Haqeel and Melkote (1996) who argued that Saudi media might have had an impact on steering the Saudi public opinion about foreign policies, but it had much less impact when it came to international affairs. Another example is reported in Hamada (1993) where he investigated the applicability of the agenda-setting role of the media in Egyptian media, and argued that it has little impact on the public opinion. He also argued that the print press was given a far more important role than television media, perhaps because television had been associated with entertainment (during early 1990s) rather than news. Hamada (1993: 296ff) pointed to the lack of applying opinion polls to measure public opinion on political and social issues, because of the restrictions surrounding this kind of research and the bias of the researchers at times.

Recently, a poll on Arab public opinion on environment have shown that the most important source of environmentally-oriented information is daily newspapers (71 per cent) followed by television (63 per cent) and specialised magazines (45 per cent), thus pointing to the relevance of comparing regional newspaper coverage of climate change (Tolba and Saab, 2006).

In addition, several studies were dedicated to the scrutiny of one particular channel, namely Al Jazeera and its impact in forming a pan-Arab public sphere (e.g. Zayani, 2005). Lynch (2003), for instance, argues that the term "Arab Street" undervalues the role of public opinion in the Arab region, which is now greatly affected by the transnational Arab television operating beyond local state control mechanisms.

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Hashem (2005) argues that Arabs' attitudes towards the USA should be seen as the convergence of two factors: cultural capital and global market. Based on this approach, he offers a typology of three groups of Arab audiences: the common person, the professional and the learned. The first category refers to the least educated group who feels isolated from the outside world. They depend largely on radio and television news rather than newspapers as sources of political information. The second category refers to the professional university educated cohort who may interact with westerners in international work environments, and depend on new media as well as traditional media as sources of information. Finally, the learned are those who are well-read and well-travelled; they feel at home both inside and outside the region and they are up-to-date with recent publications in Europe and the USA.

In addition, several surveys and polls have been conducted to identify Arabs' perception of the west, particularly the USA. For instance, a large study commissioned by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Islamic Affairs in 2006 aims to understand Arabs' perception of the West particularly major EU countries including the UK as well as the USA. The study is based on the assumption that there are key drivers that may influence Arabs' perception of these western societies with the media being one of those key drivers. The study covered 2,000 people from several Arab countries, including Egypt and Jordan in addition to interviews with scores of experts in governments, academia and the media. The study concludes that people with higher education tend to view those western societies more positively with the exception of Egypt and Palestinian territories, where education and religiosity did not seem to affect the attitudes towards the west. It was particularly the USA and the UK that received the poorest perception ratings among the respondents and overall roughly half of the respondents held a somewhat favourable opinion of the USA, particularly in Lebanon and Kuwait, but not in Egypt where the majority held unfavourable views (Kuwaiti Ministry of Islamic Affairs, 2006).

Also, a poll by the Pew Institute (2002) concludes that the majority of respondents in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon had unfavourable views of the USA. Nisbet et al.

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(2004) provide an experimental study testing claims regarding the sources of anti-American sentiment and its Relationship with television news. In their study, they draw on survey data gathered by the Gallup Organization in 2002 in five Arab states, among others. They conclude that television news coverage contributes significantly to anti-American perceptions and they recommend the previous American administration to provide access to Al Jazeera similar to that offered to U.S. networks (Nisbet et al. 2004: p. 33).

Other surveys were particularly concerned with the correlation between watching television (whether pan-Arab or American) and the perception of the USA, such as the survey reported in Zogby (2004). Here, it was argued that the Arab attitudes towards the USA cannot be solely attributed to the consumption of television and news about the USA. In fact, the survey showed that Arabs had a negative attitude towards the USA regardless of whether they visited the USA and watch American televisionor not. Moreover, Baylouny (2006: 20) reported the results of similar surveys about the effect of Al Jazeera and Al Manar (Hezbullah channel) and argued that such studies hardly found a correlation between consuming such channels and the attitudes towards the USA and other western countries. What is more is that the most negative attitudes came from countries with low percentage of satellite television viewers, such as Egypt and Jordan, where the penetration of such channels is around 26% and 58% respectively, compared to the situation in Lebanon and Palestinian territories where the satellite penetration is around 85% and the attitudes towards the west was less negative.

El-Nawawy, Mohammed and Shawn Powers (2008) provide another study focusing on Al Jazeera English viewers among selected Muslim populations in different countries, and argue that the channel functioned as a "conciliatory media," or media whose coverage of conflicts and contentious issues may contribute to creating an environment conducive to reconciliation. They also argue that the longer the viewers had been watching Al Jazeera English, the less dogmatic they were in their thinking.

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Finally, Arabic-speaking media outlets, subsidised by western governments including the BBC Arabic (UK), Voice of America (USA), Detusche Welle Arabic (Germany) and France 24 (France), have been launched as tools of public diplomacy to reach out to Arab populations while offering an "alternative" news diet to what pan-Arab and local media is offering. For instance, the USA used the Voice of American radio station as part of its media outreach projects, which has later been replaced by Al Hurrah TV and Sawa radio station following the Iraq War in 2003. Al Hurra is claimed to lack credibility among Arab audiences (Dabbous and Nasser 2009), while listening to Radio Sawa may have resulted in no change of people's perception of the U.S. policies, if it did not even make it more negative after people listened and watch Sawa and Al-Hurra (El-Nawaway 2006).

In summary, television has been seen as an important tool in influencing public opinion, despite the recent increase in studies that stress audiences' power in interpreting and decoding news. Studies about Arab news media, in particular, are usually based on the assumption that news media might indeed influence Arab audiences' views on e.g. the USA or other nations. It is particularly after the 9/11 event that there has been an increased interest in studying the impact of news media on Arabs' views and perception of foreign political issues including terrorism and relations to the West. Not many studies, however, have attempted to empirically highlight the role of audiences in interpreting the news, however biased. In the following section, I present my informants' views of what they watch on pan-Arab news media and I argue that they would like to see the power of analysing news lying in their own hands as audiences, not in the hands of news professionals and media owners.

8.2 Audience as analysts

Um Mohamed (61, f), for instance, said she would follow the news rather addictively and yet she does not necessary believe everything in the news,

> I watch the news, but will only believe it after I've listened to similar news
> from several sources...based on my own experience and understanding...in

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the middle of the item, I could zap into another channel to hear a different perspective...I think that most stations are dishonest; actually many times they contradict themselves within the same news report.

For Um Mohamed, the use of martyr or such terminology, although important, does not necessarily affect her interpretation of the news, or as she put it, "Terminology is quite important to me, but it doesn't influence the credibility of the item, and the final say so is for me...only me." Even if she relies on satellite news channels for political information, she still depends more on her own personal knowledge to analyse the news, as she argued persistently, "I analyse the news, and sometimes if it contradicts my beliefs, I wouldn't believe it even if 100 other stations confirmed it". Her analysis, as she argued, is based on her "knowledge and beliefs and information" which she accesses from other sources such as books.

In so doing, Um Mohamed refutes being loyal to one television station, or dependent on one source even if it is her favourite channel, Al Jazeera,

> I think Al Jazeera is a daring station, and fast in bringing the news... I feel it speaks to me and speaks my language. But it doesn't understand all of my needs.... I don't feel I can belong to Al Jazeera's audience or community...and I can't describe myself as loyal to it, because I also watch other channels where I can find more information...I like to look for more details.

This analysis is usually based on comparison between different coverages of the same item, as Emad (44, m) revealed, "I analyze the news...I make estimates and guesses based on what I watch...there are many channels out there and you can make your own analysis by comparing different channels". He analyzed the news items based on his own knowledge, and he flips between stations almost every ten minutes, as he claims, for constant comparison.

Thus, trust in the news is rather limited, but contingent on the audience's own judgement and background information,

I always compare news from different channels [Al Jazeera, BBC Arabic and Al Arabiya]...I use my own judgement based on my readings and education...I trust the news media [local and international] to a certain degree but certainly not 100%. (Sami, 48, m).

As a Palestinian, Um Mohamed is affected by Palestinian news but not to the extent of being biased, as she claimed, although the news can play on this sense of patriotism and appeal to the audience's emotions,

The loss of Palestine doesn't affect my news analysis, I sympathise with Palestine, I am a Palestinian but I'm not biased... of course, I sympathise with the Palestinians but I also have sympathy for all humans in similar situations... We are very emotional people and that is reflected in our news as it speaks to our emotions, but that doesn't last for very long, because we all tend to lean back on our rational minds.

This personal knowledge, for Um Mohamed, rivals that of the TV pundit and experts, and she could even bring examples of these experts' misjudgements,

I don't like or believe the so called experts on the news and events... look at Iraq for example, all the news analysts said Baghdad wasn't going to fall, but it did fall.

For Adel (48, m), the pundits' talk is scripted, "Everything is scripted...even the experts' commentaries". Similarly, Taxi pal, who is also a Palestinian claims to receive what the television news channels broadcasts with a grain of salt, "I do not believe every item I hear....I find most foreign news rather suspicious". He is convinced that many channels have their own agenda and they may be misinforming the public on purpose,

I don't believe many news items... they can never be taken at face value. Many of these news stations have an agenda, such as propaganda, misinformation. It really depends on the person who watches, I mean it depends on your knowledge and intellect, background, and education.

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Like Um Mohamed, he also recognises the emotional impact of the news, and he also sees this as a means to undermine the audience's intelligence,

> I am a Palestinian and some stations appeal to this identity and some stations don't. As Arabs, we always sympathise with each other and that's why we watch the news. But again some stations would treat us like stupid as if we'd fall for its propaganda.

Rasha Lana (33, f), also affirmed her "disloyalty" to any television station, and so did Kifayah (36, f), who claimed to use her common sense in interpreting the news, "I don't take news at face value...I tend to use common sense in analysing the news items before I accept it".

The variety of channels and news sources makes it possible for my informants to compare and contrast news coverage. For instance, Yazan (37, m) says, "Depending on the news item, I will decide whether to watch it on local or satellite TV. I then compare the two sources all the time as long as I have time and the news item is really important ". Like him, Ali (52, m) prefers to compare and contrast between news channels,

> I don't have loyalty to any station, I listen to what suits me and I think I can believe...I always compare news items from different stations even if it is a local item... it's hard to believe one source.

Also, Ali claims that he would only believe the news if it "makes sense",

> I don't believe all the news... it has to make sense to me... sometimes I hear news that I don't believe because it didn't make sense. I use my own judgment and analysis, and my own information on certain subjects will help me a lot.

The credibility of news items is not necessarily related to the channel's credibility or the use of pundits, but only to the audience themselves who see the last verdict with regard to credibility is theirs to make,

> Having a news analyst will make the news items more believable...but still the final word of believability is mine regardless who they bring as experts,

although I have great respect for such experts and I tend to believe them as long as they make sense and don't express any extreme view (Ali).

The process of comparing and contrasting does not only reflect the audiences' "power" in interpreting the news, regardless of the coverage, but it seems to be an "enjoyable" process as well, as Talaat (36, m) put it,

> Because of the many stations' ideologies, I like to see how each station reports the same item, like the Saddam trial. What I really enjoy is to compare stations' [coverage]... it helps me better understand the news.

Although he follows Al Jazeera on a daily basis, he evaluates it as an "aggressive" station,

> To me, Al Jazeera is quite aggressive. They sometimes exaggerate facts, and they may want to please a particular party by manipulating the truth... I don't feel they are talking to me when it comes to news... may be their documentaries about animals are more believable....but not the news.

The only impact such news channels may have, according to Salem (25, m), is on his understanding of other distant nations, particularly if his knowledge about those nations is limited,

> I don't feel there is any influence when it comes to local and Arab news and they [TV stations] can't show you the whole picture anyway, especially when it comes to my own country where I live ...they'd hardly change my point of view about my own country...they might change my view if the news is about some [far away] African countries or an issue which I don't know much about.

For Salem, news simply has "no face value", and it has therefore to be analyzed and processed by the viewers, "There is no face value news; every news item has some sort of story behind it, that's why everyone needs to analyze the news."
Salah (67, m), also enjoys the process of comparison and zapping between channels because news has to be "analyzed",

When I listen to news items and events I always zap between channels to compare the news... I don't take the news at face value, but I conduct my own analysis, based on two main factors...first the credibility of the station where I heard the news and second it depends on the coverage of other stations. Stations also have to bring analysis of the news and events...and they have to do this very fast.

Even when the audience has a certain channel as preference, this does not necessarily mean that they do not decipher this channel's ideologies. For instance, Husain says this about his favourite channel, (39, m) Al Jazeera,

My favourite station is Al Jazeera, simply because it's the best available but not because it's the best... but I still feel that they manipulate the public feelings and emotions... somehow I feel they're quite subtle promoting a particular agenda. I feel my relationship with Al Jazeera is a captive one...it is as if I were in jail and Al Jazeera was the source and there were no other source for the news, so I am forced to follow their perspective on the news... I have no other choices, but this makes me do my own analysis and not just believe what I hear from them...I don't watch their debate programmes because they express personal opinion rather than being informative... they also seem to create division and problems among guests.

This power, which the audience claims for themselves, also includes an understanding of the process of news making in that they are able to discern "sensational" coverage and bias, and in so doing, they may be even better than western audience who only have one or few sources. This is shown in Ayyad's (43, m) view,

News is always sensationalized...this is part of the news making. This is how they make the news and this is the difference between western media and Al Jazeera...in the west, they're more subtle but Al Jazeera provides several [biased] perspectives rather than just one angle...I usually don't believe any news item, although it'd depend on the item itself...so if it's an important topic, I usually watch different sources and channels to compare, and I zap between local and Arab channels like Al Jazeera. I like to see what the other

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side has to say. I know westerners don't compare because they tend to trust their news sources.

For others, the impact of TV news is a matter of personal conviction, so if they are persuaded with a certain news angle, they tend to believe the coverage, as Adel (48, m) put it, "Al Jazeera may or may not move me, depending on my own personal conviction, and in fact any station may move me as long I am convinced".

Others see TV channels' ideologies as irrelevant and unattractive if compared to political values and politicians' ideologies. For instance, Abdel Raheem (66, m) said that he could adopt the Nasserist pan-Arabist ideology but no TV station reflects such a clear ideology. On the contrary, they could "distort" such values,

> I don't belong to any news station. I can say that I belong to Jamal Abdel-Nasser [ideology], but not to Al Jazeera for sure...I watch the news because I want to follow our pain...but the news sometimes distorts my thoughts...I feel they sometimes want to convince me to normalise [relations with Israel]...I suspect their [the stations'] motives.... I don't care if they use the word martyr or not...I know the whole issue and I realize our pain...what I care about is for the news media to show the outside world [not me]...although I sometimes feel that the news availability has made us more tribal in our societies rather than more attached to our neighbouring countries.

By declaring his analytical power in interpreting the news and even scrutinizing experts' and pundits' talks, Abdel Rahim places himself in an equal position with those experts and with professional journalists based on his own experience with political events in Jordan,

> I am of a generation that will never change, we had suffered so much that it's impossible to change any ideas in our mind. I consider myself expert in politics and I can't get it out of my system, I am addicted to politics and most people like me are....Arab news is extremely exaggerated when it come to heads of states, but when they report on the *intifadfa* and other sad news

they will only give you a small part of the truth...it's almost accidental that they got an effective news footage.

8.3 Conclusion

What the above analysis shows is that Jordanian audiences reclaim their power in interpreting the news in their own way, regardless of the ideologies or stance of the news institutions. The analysis also indicates the audiences' mistrust and scepticism of what they watch on news channels, and yet the audience seem persistent on following these very channels. In fact, as I argue in the previous chapter, many informants expressed their near addiction to watching TV news bulletins on pan-Arab channels such as Al Jazeera, although they are still sceptical of what they watch and hear on these channels. The question that begs for an answer here is why would the audience keep watching and consuming news which they are profoundly sceptical about?

I've found some answers in media psychology literature, and particularly in an article by Tsfati and Cappella (2005), where the authors investigated the reasons behind people's consumption of mainstream news media which they do not trust. Based on empirical findings, the authors suggest that people do so in search for cognition; in other words, they like hearing diverse arguments and to engage in such arguments themselves. In fact, this study showed that those with high level of scepticism are also those with high level of news consumption.

Previous studies tend to argue that audiences' scepticism may damage their political participation. Cynicism is usually seen as a serious mood with grave consequences for democracy (see e.g. Cappella and Jamieson 1997; Chaloupka, 1999; Warren, 1999). For instance, Cappella and Jamieson (1997: 17), argue that "cynicism saps people's confidence in politics and public officials and it erodes both the standing and the standards of journalism; if the assumption is that nothing is on the level and nothing is what is seems, then citizenship becomes a game for fools and there is no point in trying to stay informed". It may also lead to people's

isolation from collective action such as demonstrations and protests. In other words, people or citizens may end up surrendering their rights of political participation due to this high degree of cynicism and scepticism. Moreover, Cappella and Jamieson (1997) argue that the disjuncture between politicians' promises and their actual performance may lead to increasing scepticism and cynicism. People's cynicism may also be the result of politicians' scandals and personal disputes which lead the media to frame politicians in a negative way.

Nonetheless, audiences can still follow political news, such as in Jordan, because they feel that there is no viable alternative to these media (see Tsfati and Cappella, 2005). They might also be in need to be exposed to different political arguments, many of which do not affect their daily lives directly, such as news about neighbouring countries that do not directly impact Jordanian politics. However, the pan-Arab news media have managed to frame these pan-Arab issues as "shared" causes and concerns, which are worthy of following because they might impact local politics.

In summary, I argue that audiences' scepticism of what they watch on news channels may not necessarily damage their engagement in the political affairs, whether locally or regionally. In fact, I argue that public opinion studies tend to ignore people's power in interpreting the news, and only empirical studies, like the present study, can reveal such power.

Chapter nine

General discussion

The main aim of this study was to arrive at plausible explanation regarding how Arab/Jordanian audiences make sense of the news media, with the availability of tens of satellite news channels. The aim and focus stem from the burgeoning scholarly interest in and publications about Arab media environment and the impact of satellite television on audiences (or the so-called 'Arab Street'). The findings, summarised in the next chapter, clearly show avid consumption of satellite as well as local news media, to the extent that some of the informants declared themselves as "addicts" to the pan-Arab news channels. This is so despite their reservation about the ideology and agendas of such outlets. What this indicates, I argue, is that Arab audiences (and here Jordanians) may enjoy and value their access to a plethora of television channels, and this should be separated from the issue of the credibility of news sources. In other words, they might be distrustful of the source(s) (say Al Jazeera) but they would still like to follow it and watch it on a regular basis. In so doing, audiences' choice of news sources is not necessarily linked to the credibility of these sources. A study by Guo et al (2010) may be illustrative here: their study among a sample of audience in Hong Kong showed audiences may read a newspaper even if they do not find it credible, and thus the newspaper credibility is delinked from readership. The credibility here refers to the audiences' trust in a news medium which is usually linked to the reputation of that outlet, and its influence among the public.

As I argue in the above analysis, Jordanian audiences' scepticism of what they watch on news channels is not necessarily damaging on their engagement in the political life. Therefore, opinion polls carried out by PR companies or media outlets, or even governmental organizations, cannot alone serve as a proof of audiences' disengagement or negative attitudes towards a certain issue, e.g. towards the USA, Israel of local affairs.

Such polls must be anchored in qualitative studies among samples of Arab audiences in an attempt to make sense of the audiences' interpretation of news in a complex media environment such as the Arab one.

As I argue here as well, Jordanian audiences were avid followers of Al Jazeera, among other satellite channels, although they are also suspicious of the channel's motives and agenda. Although they are aware of the pattern of ownership in pan-Arab media, and know who owns Al Jazeera, and who owns Al Arabiya, etc., they do not seem to give much weight to the issue of ownership or let it intervene in their judgement of the news output. This is a very important point, because it indicates a high degree of media literacy felt and enjoyed by this sample of audiences. Media literacy here refers to the audiences' ability not only to access but also to analyze and evaluate media messages (see e.g. Hobbs 2008). Audiences here set aside the issue of ownership, although it is believed to shape and influence news content with the disadvantage of limiting diverse viewpoints. It is perhaps therefore that several scholars have studied the issue of ownership of Arab media in an attempt to design typologies and specific models of Arab media ownership (see my detailed discussion in Chapter Seven). The above analysis, however, finds limited evidence to support that knowledge about media ownership may decrease its credibility among audiences. In fact, the informants were very well aware of the owners of each outlet, and they were aware of the Saudi (and Qatari) dominance, and yet their scepticism of media content was justified by their own cognition of the news output. This cognition is a result of their constant comparison and contrast between news content in local versus satellite (pan-Arab) channels. Thus, audience knowledge about media ownership may make them healthy sceptics about the media offerings, but without necessarily rejecting the media output altogether (see also Ashley et al. 2010).

What the above analysis also seeks to show is that Jordanian audiences' perception and acceptance of diverse viewpoints may be intensified with their exposure to a variety of news channels (whether satellite or terrestrial channels). Thus, it is not

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only a matter of integrating different viewpoints within one media outlet (such as Al Jazeera which propagates the motto 'the opinion and the other opinion') but also in following diverse viewpoints in different outlets. This resonates with a previous study about audiences in Ireland and the Netherlands which argues that contents in both popular and quality news media does indeed allow citizens in these two countries to accept diverse ideas about European integrations (van der Wurff, 2011).

Clearly, these diverse views come not only from the different angles and perspectives in news coverage but also in the diverse views expressed by the experts interviewed in news and current affairs programmes. The role of experts is critical in understanding distant events and systems, such as Europe or Asia. It is the combination of news reporting and opinions as well as hosting expert voice that give these Jordanian audiences the knowledge they need to understand local, regional and even international events. And it is here that television news is valued as an important source of news for my informants. News channels here help the audiences to orient themselves in their surroundings and understand the implications of distant events on their local environment and thus the increasing interdependence on political and economic levels (see e.g. Giddens, 1990).

Jordanian audiences also understand that the diversity of views offered by satellite news channels is based on the selectivity of each channel (and its editorial team as well as owner). Thus, it is not a question of evaluating the news content according to abstract concepts such as objectivity or truth, but rather according to specific selections. This may be true in understanding local events (that concerns Jordanian, Palestinians or Iraqis) as well as distant events from western countries. Clearly, if the event is local or regional, audiences may be evaluating the news output while drawing on their own experiences, e.g. as Palestinians. But if it is a distant event, then they evaluate the selectivity by comparing and contrasting outputs from different satellite channels (see also Kohring and Matthes, 2007 for a discussion about the term selectivity). Chapter Seven and Eight aimed to present selected quotes from informants which showed their understanding of the news selectivity

and their constant comparison between channels. This is also reflected in previous studies, such as the one carried by the BBC World Service in 2009, where one Jordanian viewer commented on the performance of the state Jordanian TV as follows, "I disagree with the presenter's language. The current parliament is the worst according to recent polls. Yet, he describes it as 'the distinguished parliament'. Such lingo is unprofessional and old school" (cited in BBC World Service Trust, 2009: 40). Another viewer refuted the references to religion or the royal family as the only references to justify unreasonable deeds, "Using tradition, the royal family, or religion to prove an opinion weakens this opinion. It's like using something big to justify something wrong" (ibid).

One final point concerns the audiences' interest in having access to diverse news outlets, regardless of who is behind these outlets. It is worth noting that this preference indicates that the audiences do not object to having private news outlets to compete with their local channels. As such, they may not necessarily be looking to a public service model such as the BBC (see e.g. Ayish 2002), but they would prefer to have access to a variety of sources because it means more information, and hence more power in analysing and interpreting the news. In fact, the range of negative comments about the local news media, cited in the previous chapters, indicates the audiences' mistrust of their local news providers.

This is a very interesting point to consider when researching the media in developing nations such as the Arab States, where the economic pressures that characterise cutthroat private media environment (such as in Europe) may not be prevalent as media owners (from the Gulf states) are willing to inject incredible sums of money in their media outlets even if they do not generate economic profits. Rather, the pressure is usually political where conglomerates are usually close to the ruling families or parties, and hence may aim to spread certain messages that maintain this strong link to the political elites. However, the pan-Arab media environment has created a unique situation worthy of analysing in more depth in order to understand the characteristics of the new competitive environment among media conglomerates that might push the limits in their media coverage just to attract more viewers. One recent example is the set up of Rotana Masriya, a new

addition to the Rotana group owned by the Saudi Prince Al Waleed, in the wake of the 25 January revolution in Egypt. The channel is dedicated to discussing the new political environment and its flagship programmes hosted by the famous presenter Hala Sarhan, who was claimed to have lived in exile in Beirut for crossing the lines with the Mubaraks. In this example, Al Waleed, who himself has benefited from the previous Egyptian regime, has contributed to an outlet that attacks the same regime, who is still claimed to have strong relations with the Saudi royal family.

In other developing nations, such as in Africa, audiences may be suspicious of private outlets. For instance, a recent study by Moehler and Singh (2011) argues that African audiences show more trust in their public media than in private media. Those who trust private media may belong to the politically sophisticated and democratic groups in society. This is in spite of the fact that the private media in Africa are subject to strong market pressures where owners may encourage the use of provocative language and exaggeration in the news. The authors argue that there exists a form of "gombo journalism," where journalists may supplement their income with bribes by the subjects being covered. Although the same discourse is prevalent in the Arab region, and certain commentators are claimed to be receiving bribes to express opinions in favour of (or disfavour) certain regimes, Jordanian audiences here have chosen to foreground their own ability to interpret the news and distinguish between propaganda and facts rather than discussing who may be bribed by whom. This is regardless of the degree of political participation and freedom available to the Jordanian citizens, or contrary to what Moehler and Singh (2011) claim that the higher levels of corruption in a country may trigger greater preference for private news media over public media. In fact, one Jordanian viewer has previously expressed his distrust of public media linking privatization with diversity and hence better coverage,

> A TV under the public sector will present the sectors decisions positively. But a private one would express ideas fairly...lack of privatization means lack of trust, and of motivation. Work ethics differ. Generally, those in public leading positions would have taken the change of someone more deserving.

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This is the case in JTV [Jordanian state television] (cited in BBC World Service Trust, 2009: 44).

Another viewer supported this view when she called for more media privatisation in Jordan, "Why don't they privatize JTV? Privatization means larger budgets, better calibre, and independence from the government" (cited in BBC World Service Trust, 2009: 44).

Chapter ten
Conclusion

10.0 Introduction

This final chapter has a two-fold purpose:

1. To sketch out the main findings of the study, and
2. To outline some of the problems, which future research needs to address, in light of the findings of this study.

10.1 Summary of findings

As explained in the Introduction, this dissertation examined current reception analysis and media theories to determine if extant literature in the field is relevant to the experience of the Arab audience focusing on the Jordanian audiences as an illustrative case study. I've posed several research questions in order to determine what these audiences think the media's role should be, and how they, through their usage of satellite news television, define themselves politically and socially.

I've attempted to place this thesis within the framework of media studies and reception analysis theory; in so doing, I have explored these concepts' usefulness as well as their limitations. In Chapter One, I outlined a critique of mass audience theories, arguing that the inadequacies inherent in analyses of Arab audience studies may be due to a western-centric focus.

My study aims to take a new look at the usage of audience theories, combining several concepts from 'western' audience theories focusing on media psychology as an overall theoretical framework. I also proposed to carry out empirical research, focusing on Jordanian audiences drawing on a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods.

I argued that Media Psychology contributed to the study of audiences' analyses beginning with the early studies in the USA in the early 30s, inspired by Behaviourism, through to the recent scholarship which centres on audiences' cognitive processing of media programming. My overview, in Chapter One, presents two views on the effects of media consumption, namely the view that focuses on the power of media versus that which focuses on the power of audiences.

Chapter Two aimed to review relevant literature and previous studies, particularly within Arab media scholarship. I argued that news media, according to Arab scholars and commentators, plays a vital role on the lives of Arab audiences. While it can provide knowledge about regional events, it is also seen to enforce the pan-Arab identity among Arab audiences. I also argued that Arab scholarship has been inspired by the trends in Anglo American scholarship rather than seeking to develop an Arabo-Islamic media theories.

Although Media Psychology as a field was not adequately developed as an independent discipline in Arab universities, there were several sporadic analyses that addressed some of the concepts in this discipline, particularly the effect of media on audiences' attitudes. In my discussion, I argued that there are two important themes in Arab studies, namely the impact of mass media, particularly broadcasting, on influencing Arab public opinion and the impact of imported programmes on Arab youths.

Then, in Chapter Three, I presented an overview of the Jordanian state and society in order to contextualize this present study. I sought to highlight the fact that more than half of the Jordanian population is Palestinian, which has impacted on the official Jordanian-Israeli relations and media discourses. In addition, Jordan hosts several minorities such as Circassians and Armenians and Kurds, and recently thousands of Iraqis have settled in Jordan fleeing the war in Iraq.

As for my review of the Jordanian media, I showed that the state controls broadcasting media, which is the same situation in many other Arab countries. However, since the mid-1990s, Arab audiences, including Jordanians, have had access to hundreds of satellite channels, scores of which are news channels such as Al Jazeera.

As a basis for my empirical study, I have conducted 40 in-depth interviews using a pre-designed instrument that addresses a variety of variables: social/economic/religious background. I also asked my informants about the issues of trust, media credibility, self education, the role of news, and their personal interpretation of news.

The interviews focused on the following themes:
- News consumption:
- Political views derived from watching news
- Views related to the news institutions

I used a mix of quantitative and qualitative tools including questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The quantitative part was based on questionnaires distributed to 180 Jordanians, the majority of whom are aged 22-44, who were asked to account for the pattern of watching local, pan-Arab and western television channels.

The quantitative data presented in Chapter Five and Six centres on audiences' favourite channels and news programmes. I also integrated part of the qualitative data in these chapters to elaborate on the reasons justifying these trends in news consumption.
I argued that the audiences' preference to follow news and current affairs programmes is because they see in such programming an important source of knowledge not only about their local politics but about regional and international affairs. The significance of this source of information has increased remarkably with the advent of satellite technology.

In general, the Jordanian audiences seem to favour television over print press as a source of information, and they favoured channels such as Al Jazeera. Getting information about international (political) affairs gives this sample of audiences a sense of empowerment which, I argue, could compensate for the lack of genuine opportunities for political participation in Jordan.

I also argue that, unlike western studies which claim the prevalence of entertainment programmes and the decline of news, my study shows the opposite trend in the Arab region, where viewers are more interested in politics as a topic for social conversation.

In Chapter Six, I show that the younger audiences are, more likely to watch foreign satellite television programmes. I also show that the rate of watching foreign news channels increased with the educational attainment. As for gender variations, I showed that both male and female respondents prefer watching Arab satellite channels as the main source of news.

In Chapter Seven, I discuss the Jordanian audience's views of the issue of ownership of satellite channels and whether this issue contributes to steering the public opinion in Jordan. I discussed different ownership models, focusing on the political economy approach, comparing and contrasting different typologies of Arab media. I argued that the Jordanian audiences are aware of the role of ownership on the news content but they tend to bracket this issue in order to stress their power to distinguish between information and propaganda. I also discussed the audiences' views on the emotional language used in satellite news stations such as the use of words like "martyr". I argued that several informants see such words as part of the "factuality" and objectivity of audiences. This view is shared by the few journalists I interviewed, who also claim that they would not refrain from using such emotional words in order not to lose their audiences.

In general, I argued that audiences seem mistrustful of the use of pan-Arab channels and their ideologies and yet they are avid consumers of such channels. One reason, I argue here, is the low quality of what they see as censored news in Jordan. Another reason is that Arab audiences now feel that they have the option to compare and contrast between local versus regional (pan-Arab) news diets. However, audiences emphasise their ability to see through bias and partiality.

In Chapter Eight, I discussed this ability or power to discern propaganda, and I argue that they would like to see the power of analysing news lying in their own hands as audiences, not in the hands of news professionals and media owners. Thus, in spite of their scepticism of news content, they search for diverse arguments in an attempt to engage in and reason such arguments. I also argued that public opinion studies tend to ignore people's power in interpreting the news, and only empirical studies, like the present study, can reveal such power.

10.2 Future research

Future studies could continue this discussion by addressing different angles and/or focusing on specific audience segments, such as youths under 30 years old, who constitute the majority in the Arab region. Studies among Arab youths could also consider the power of young audiences in consuming traditional media, such as broadcasting, as well as social media such as Facebook and Twitter as sources of news.

Other studies could also focus on the role of gender in interpreting the news; although I have attempted to provide such a view (in Chapter Six), there is need for more focused analyses on Arab women's interaction with the news whether consumed online or offline. Future research could compare and contrast between audiences' perception of different genres, such as news versus social talk shows.

Furthermore, in the course of analysing the impact of globalization on news media, it is imperative to draw upon the role of journalists and the media institution in

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communicating the global media messages to their audiences. Mellor (2011b) provides a useful start in analysing the role of journalists based on Bourdieu's (1984; 1990) theory of power within the field of journalism. More studies are needed to analyse the role of journalists (in local versus satellite channels) as part of a dynamic and fast changing field. In general, there is a great need for fieldwork and ethnographic analyses among media professionals and audiences alike in order to document the process of news production, the conception of the role of the media professionals or institutions and the perception of the final output. Such analyses should ideally be based on comparative analyses that combine fieldworks in at least two countries in order to be able to generalize the findings and also to document local changes in audiences' interpretation of pan-Arab news.

Finally, the above analysis showed that Jordanian audiences and journalists alike were in favour of using emotional terminology in the news, such as the word 'martyr'. Future studies could analyse the importance of emotionality not only in the words used in the news but also in the accompanying images. For instance, McGrail (1992) argued that audiences' understanding of dramatic stories tended to decrease with their exposure to dramatic images and scenes. Thus, edited bulletins where such scenes were removed resulted in the audiences' recalling of the information in the stories thereby reducing the news complexity. This is an important topic in Arab media, which operates in a conflict-stricken region with continuous exposure to emotional language and images. It might be interesting to explore whether Arab audiences' understanding of news and recalling information is indeed depending on the degree of emotionality in text and/or images.

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Template of questionnaires in Arabic and English

C I T Y City University
London

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. It is for a Ph.D. that I am undertaking at City University London. Be assured that any information supplied is anonymous and confidential.

1. Where do you live? (Please state city/town/village) ....

2. What is your age category? Please tick

( ) 22-26   ( ) 26-30   ( ) 30-35   ( ) 35-45   ( ) 45-55   ( ) 55-70

3. Gender: Male ( )   Female ( )

4. Do you consider that you can read and write fluently?
Yes ( )   No ( )

5. Education
At what stage did you leave school/college?
( ) Elementary school
( ) High school
( ) College
( ) University

6. Please estimate, in any given day, how many hours do you watch TV:.............................
( ) Attentively/with close concentration............
( ) Passively, in the back ground ....
( ) Some attention, but not consistent ....

7. What time of the day do you watch your favourite programmes
( ) Morning (7—9)
( ) Early day (10—12)
( ) Afternoon (1 —4)
( ) Evening (5—7)
( ) Night (8—11)

(   ) Late night (11—3 am)

8. Do you watch foreign channels through Satellite? Yes ( ) No ( ).---- Please estimate how many hours do you watch the foreign channels (   )

9. Do you watch the local channels? (   ) Yes ( ) No.---- Please estimate how many hours do you watch the local channels (   )

10. Do you watch the Arab satellite channels? ( ) Yes ( ) No.---- Please estimate how many hours do you watch the Arab satellite channels (   )

11. What programmes do you like to watch most on satellite television?
Please put numbers between brackets, so that number one would be your most favourite program

(   )   News and current affairs
(   )   Talk shows and debates
(   )   Entertainment (music, films)
(   )   Sports
(   )   religious programmes
(   )   Documentary / Education
(   )   Other specify.....................................

12. What is your primary and Secondary source of information, please select one please use 1 for primary and 2 for secondary

(   ) Satellite TV
(   ) Local TV
(   ) Radio
(   ) News Paper
(   ) Internet
(   ) Word of mouth
(   ) Other.....................

13. What is your main source of NEWS though television, please rate them 1,2, or 3

(   ) Local channels
(   ) Foreign channels
(   ) Arabic Satellites channels

14. When you watch the news or current affair programmes, do you watch it mostly:

(   ) alone

(   ) with the family

(   ) with other group, like friends

15. When you watch news, do you watch it at:

(   ) home

(   ) outside the home

16. If you watch news on Satellite Television, what type of news do you look for?

(   ) Local news

(   ) Regional

(   ) international

(   ) All of the above

(   ) I am only curious to what going on in general

17. What are your favourite NEWS Arab Satellite channels? Please name them so that number one would be your most favourite channel

1.. 2..

3... 4 ....

18. How often do you watch the news per-day

(   ) once   (   ) Twice   (   ) Three times   (   ) Four times   Other ....

19. What are your favourite current affair programmes on Arab Satellite channel? Please name them so that number one would be your most favourite channel

1... 2..

3... 4 ....

20. How often do you watch current affair programmes:

(   )............   (   ) Every day   (   ) Random

21. How would you most identify yourself? Please list in order of priority 1, 2, 3...Using 1 is what you feel strongest

Human (   ) Arabic (   ) Muslim (   ) Christian (   ) Jordanian/Palestinian (
)   Other (   )..........................

Do you have any further comments on your TV viewing habits for news and current affair programmes.

....

....

فى جامعة سيتى لندن . نحرص على الحفاظ على سرية المعلومات   شكرا لإتمامكم هذا الاستبيان. هذا مشروع رسالة دكتوراه المعطاة.

1- في أي مدينه تسكن ....

2--الرجاء اختيار فئة العمر

(   ) 22-26   (   ) 26- 30   (   ) 30-35   (   ) 35- 45   (   ) 45-55   (   )55-70

3- الجنس   ذكر(   )   أنثى (   )

4- هل تعد نفسك قارئ وكاتب اللغة العربية نعم (   ) لا (   )

5-   إلى أي مرحله من التعليم وصلت

(   ) المرحلة الابتدائية
(   ) المرحلة الثانوية
(   ) كليات مجتمع أو مهنية
(   ) المرحلة الجامعية

6-   الرجاء ذكر كيف يتم مشاهدة التلفاز وكم ساعة يشاهد يوميا ....

(   ) بتركيز كامل
(   ) بدون تركيز بوجود التلفاز بالخلفية
(   ) بعض التركيز ليس دائما

7- ما هي الأوقات التي تشاهد بها برامجك المفضلة

(   ) 9-7صباحا
(   ) 12-10قبل الظهر
(   ) 4-1بعد الظهيرة
(   ) 7-5 مساء

8-11 ليلا ( )

3-11 آخر الليل ( )

8- هل تشاهد الفضائيات الأجنبيه ( ) نعم ( ) لا---- الرجاء تقدير عدد الساعات التي تشاهد فيها الفضائيات الأجنبيه ( )

9- هل تشاهد التلفاز المحلي ( ) نعم ( ) لا--- ( ) المحلي الرجاء تقدير عدد الساعات التي تشاهد فيها التلفاز

10- هل تشاهد الفضائيات العربية ( ) نعم ( ) لا--- (-) الرجاء تقدير عدد الساعات التي تشاهد فيها الفضائيات العربية ( )

11-ما هي نوعية البرامج التي تشاهدها على الفضائيات

( ) برامج إخبارية
( ) برامج كلامية ومناظرات
( ) برامج ترفيهه (أفلام، مسلسلات،أغاني)
( ) برامج رياضية
( ) برامج دينية
( ) وثائقيه / تعليمية
( ) غيرها...

12-ما هو مصدرك الرئيسي للمعلومات الإخبارية واختيار لمصدر الثاني. الرجاء إدراج الأرقام حسب الأهمية حيث 1تعتبر الأهم وهكذا...........

( ) الفضائيات
( ) التلفزيون المحلي
( ) الراديو
( ) الجرائد
( ) أنترنت
( ) أخبار مسموعة عن طريق الأصدقاء أو الناس
( ) غيرها...

13- ما هو مصدرك الرئيسي للمعلومات الإخبارية من المحطات التلفزيونية

( ) الفضائيات الأجنبيه
( ) التلفاز المحلي
( ) فضائية عربية

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14- عندما تشاهد البرامج الإخبارية ، التحاورية والتحليلية هل تشاهدها

( ) لوحدي

( ) مع أفراد العائلة

( ) مع أصدقاء أو مجموعات أخرى

15- عندما تشاهد البرامج الإخبارية ، التحاورية والتحليلية هل تشاهدها

( ) في البيت

( ) خارج البيت

16- إذا كان مصدرك الرئيسي للمعلومات الإخبارية من الفضائيات ،فما هي نوع المعلومات التي تستقطبها

( ) الأخبار المحلية

( ) الأخبار العربية

( ) الأخبار العالمية

( ) كل ما ذكر

( ) حب الاستطلاع والمعلومات العامة

17- ما هي القنوات الإخبارية المفضلة لديك الرجاء أدراجهم حسب الأهمية

1.......................................2..

3.......................................4..

18- كم مرة تشاهد الأخبار يوميا

( ) مرة

( ) مرتين

( ) ثلاث مرات

( ) أكثر من أربع مرات

(.....................................)

19- ما هي البرامج التحاورية والتحليلية المفضلة لديك

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1.............................2.............................

3.............................4.............................

20- كم مرة تشاهده البرامج التحاورية والتحليلية عادة خلال الأسبوع

( ) ....

كل يوم ( )

بدون تحديد الوقت ( )

21--ماذا تعتبر نفسك؟الرجاء إدراج الأرقام حسب الأهمية حيث 1تعتبر الأهم وهكذا...........

إنسان ( )

عربي ( )

مسلم ( )

مصري ( )

........( )

هل لديك أي معلومات إضافية على طريقة مشاهدتك الأخبار و البرامج التحليلية ، أو التحاورية

....

....

Appendix 2

List of interviews

Name	Gender	Age	Nationality	Occupation	Location In Jordan
Abel Raheem	Male	66	Jordanian	Ret teacher	Zarqa
Abu Mousa	Male	75	Jordanian	Ret teacher	East Amman
Adel	Male	48	Jordanian	Civil Engineer	Irbid
Ayyad	Male	43	Jordanian	Tourist Guide	East Amman
Hussain	Male	39	Jordanian	Graphic designer	East Amman
Ibraheem Salem	male	25	Jordanian	Student	West Amman
Ibraheem Alloush	Male	46	Jordanian	Professor /Political Activist	West Amman
Kifayah	Female	36	Jordanian	Travel Agent	West Amman
Mikhlid	Male	35	Jordanian	Lawyer	Karak
Rasha	Female	26	Jordanian	PR Executive	West Amman
Rasha Lana	Female	33	Jordanian	Entrepunour	West Amman
Salah	Male	67	Jordanian	Ret Accountant	Zarqa
Salem	Male	25	Jordanian	Doctor	West Amman
Talalaat	Male	36	Jordanian	Musician	Salt
Ali	Male	52	Jordanian	Taxi Driver	Irbid
Nabeel	Male	51	Jordanian	Taxi Driver	Zarqa
Um Mohamed	Female	61	Jordanian	House wife	West Amman
Yazan	Male	37	Jordanian	Salesman Telcom	Sahab
Zeid	Male	39	Jordanian	Journalist	West Amman
Zeinoun	Male	25	Jordanian	Artist	West Amman
Emad	Male	44	Jordanian	Barber	West Amman
Sami	Male	48	Jordanian	Business Man	West Amman
Basma	Female	29	Jordanian	Airline Hostist	West Amman
Rania	Female	27	Jordanian	Nurse	Zarqa
Gazi	Male	31	Jordanian	Accountan	East Amman
Mahmoud	Male	58	Jordanian	farmer	Ghour
Bader	Male	61	Jordanian	farmer	East Amman
Maysoun	Female	43	Jordanian	Unemployed	East Amman
Jihad	Female	48	Jordanian	House wife	Sahab
Haifa	Female	53	Jordanian	House wife	East Amman
Abu-Hilal	Male	66	Jordanian	Ret-Army	East Amman
Jamal	Male	34	Jordanian	Government Employee	East Amman

Haya	Female	33	Jordanian	Unemployed	Irbid
Rabeaa	Male	24	Jordanian	Students	Karak
Saleeh	Male	26	Jordanian	unemployed	zarqa
Qurashi	Male	44	Jordanian	Farmer	ghour
Bassam	Male	32	Jordanian	shop keeper	Zarqa
Rajaa	Female	20	Jordanian	student	Karak
Donia	Female	42	Jordanian	Teacher	Irbid
Amal	Female	31	Jordanian	Secretary	East Amman

MOHAMED A KARIM
EMAIL: KARIM1968@GMAIL.COM

Participant Information Sheet

A.   About this project

Title of Project: <u>Jordanian audiences and satellite news media</u>

The aim of my research is to understand how Jordanian audiences give different meaning to news and current affairs, bearing in mind differences among them such as age, gender, and attitudes.

This research will contribute to the recent academic debate on Arab audiences and the impact of news channels on their attitudes.

B. Your Participation in the Research Project

Why you have been asked?

The project is based on the following data sources:
1) Interviews: with up to 40 participants
2) Questionnaires (handled with the help of the Jordanian Statistics Bureau)

You have been asked as audience and consumer of satellite news channels.

What happens if you want to change your mind?

If you decide to join the study you can change your mind and stop at any time. I will completely respect your decision. There are absolutely no penalties for stopping.

What would happen if you join the study?

If you agree to join the study, I will need to carry out an interview with you for around 1 hour where you will be asked specific questions about your news consumption.

Are there any risks?

I do not think there are any significant risks due to the study. If you did feel that there was any stress involved you can stop at any time.

What happens to the questionnaire and interview results?

I will collect the data including surveys and interviews to use as a basis for my analysis. I intend to use quotes from the interviews after translating them into English. All interviewees will be anonymised to protect their identities.

Are there any benefits from taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part.
However, I hope that my research will be of interest to academic researches, media institutions, television stations, journalists working in television industries, media students in the UK and Middle East.

How I protect your privacy

All the information I get from you is strictly confidential. I will not use any identifiers and will keep your identity anonymous.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS SHEET TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Contact Details:

Mohamed A Karim
Email: karim1968@gmail.com

b) Info paragraph to be added at the top of all audience questionnaires

You are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire as part of my PhD project at City University London. The project examines the relationship between the news consumption and audiences' interpretation of this news.

Your help is deeply appreciated in filling in this questionnaire and I can assure you that the information provided by you will be used solely for the purpose of this research and will not be shared with other parties. Your identity will be protected and you are not required to reveal your name or address or any other personal identifier.

Mohamed A Karim
Email: karim1968@gmail.com

c) CONSENT FORM

Title of the project: Jordanian audiences and satellite news channels

Mohamed A Karim
Email: karim1968@gmail.com

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

Please tick box

Yes   No

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded

6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
Mohamed A Karim
Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

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Appendix 4
Quantitative data – all tables

Table 1: the size and distribution of the sample on the study community

region	Territory	Frequency	percent
Amman	Middle	84	46.7%
Salt	Middle	15	8.3%
TAfilah	South	9	5.0%
Ghour Al-Hadeetha	South	6	3.3%
Aqaba	South	9	5.0%
Karak	South	30	16.7%
Irbid	North	18	10.0%
Al-Qutranih	South	3	1.7%
Madaba	Middle	15	8.3%
Total		180	100.0%

Table 2: distribution of the study sample due to the age

Age(year)	Frequency	percent
22-26	33	18.3
26-30	9	5.0
30-35	21	11.7
35-45	51	28.3
45-55	27	15.0
55-70	39	21.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 3: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the gender

gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	129	71.7
Female	51	28.3
Total	180	100.0

Table 4: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the educational level

the educational level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	21	11.7
Basic	48	26.7
College	21	11.7
University	90	50.0
Total	180	100.0

Table 5: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the mastery extent of reading and writing of Arabic

The mastery extent of reading and writing of Arabic	Frequency	Percent
He/she masters reading and writing	165	91.7
He/she does not master reading and writing	15	8.3
Total	180	100.0

Table 6: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the involvement extent of watching T.V

The involvement extent of watching T.V	Frequency	Percent
Fully involved	84	46.7
Partly involved	87	48.3
Uninvolved	9	5.0
Total	180	100.0

Table 7: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the comment on T.V. channels

Comment	Frequency	Percent
No comment	162	90.0
Many Arabic and foreign channels	3	3.4
News discrepancy and unreliability	3	1.7
Al Jazeera Channel owns what other do not own	3	1.7
New invalidity and news according on home countries	3	1.7
Knowing what is going on the Arabic world is a must	3	1.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 8: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the hours of daily watch

The hours No. of watching T.V	Frequency	Percent
1-2	39	21.7%
3-4	108	43.3%
5-6	51	28.3%
7	3	1.7%
11-12	6	3.4%
15	3	1.7%
Total	180	100.0%
The mean	4.17	

Table 9: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the times of daily watch

The time of the watch	Frequency	Percent
Afternoon	3	1.7
Evening	36	20.0
At night	84	46.7
Night end	27	15.0
No time limited	30	16.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 10: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the sources of watching the news

	Frequency	Percent
Satellites	117	65.0
Local TV	27	15.0
Newspaper	15	8.3
Audible news	9	5.0
Other resources	12	6.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 11: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the secondary sources of news

The resource	Frequency	Percent
No resources	18	10.0
Satellites	42	23.3
Local TV	18	10.0
Newspaper	48	26.7
Audible news	24	20.0
Other resources/ internet	18	10.0
Total	180	100.0

Table 12: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the main sources of news information by type of source

	Frequency	Percent
Foreign satellites channels	15	8.3
The local T.V.	18	10.0
Arabic satellites channels	132	73.4
others	15	8.3
Total	180	100

Table 13: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the extent of watching the foreign TV

The extent of watching	Frequency	Percent
Watch regularly	111	61.7
Does not watch regularly	69	38.3
Total	180	100.0

Table 14: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the name of the satellite channels watched

Satellite channel name	Frequency	Percent
CNN	24	21.6%
BBC	27	24.3%
ONE TV	6	5.4%
LBC	3	2.7%
MBC	3	2.7%
MBC2	3	2.7%
SKY NEWS	3	2.7%
XXX	42	37.8%
Total	111	100.0%

Table 15: the relative distribution of the study sample due to name of the 2nd foreign station

The name of the channel	Frequency	Percent
CNN	18	20.0%
BBC	45	33.3%
MBC2	18	13.3%
Super Movies	9	6.7%
MBC4	18	13.3%
DW	9	6.7%
TV5	9	6.7%
Total	126	100.0%

Table 16: the relative distribution of the study sample due to name of the 3rd foreign satellite channel watched

The name of the channel	Frequency	Percent
MBC	9	14.3%
MBC2	9	14.3%
ANIMALS PLANTS	9	14.3%
EURONEWS	9	14.3%
FOX	9	14.3%
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	9	14.3%

MSNBC	9	14.3%
Total	63	100.0%

Table 17: **the relative distribution of the study sample due to** the name of the 4th foreign channels watched

The name of the cannels	Frequency	Percent
CNN	18	33.3%
BBC	9	16.7%
DW	9	16.7%
CBS	18	33.3%
Total	54	100.0%

Table 18: **the relative distribution of the study sample due to** the daily average number of hours spent watching foreign news channels

Hours NO.	Frequency	Percent
1	48	47.1%
2	36	35.3%
3	9	8.8%
5	6	5.9%
6	3	2.9%
Total	102	100.0%
MEAN	1.91	

Table 19: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the quality of programmes watched by subjects

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	99	55.0%
Speech debates	75	41.7%
Religion	60	33.3%
amusement	60	33.3%
Sports	24	13.3%
others	51	28.3%

• Subjects can choose more than one program

Table 20: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the extent of watching the local TV channels

The extent	Frequency	Percent
Watch	153	85.0
Never watch	27	15.0
Total	180	100.0

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Table 21: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the type of programmes watched

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	90	50.0%
Speech debates	69	38.3%
Religion	51	28.3%
amusement	51	28.3%
Sports	12	6.7%
others	45	25.0%

• subjects can choose more than one programme

Table 22: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the number of hours when watching the local channels daily

Watching hours NO.	Frequency	Percent
1-2	105	72.9%
3-4	27	18.8%
5-6	6	4.2%
> 6	6	4.2%
Total	144	100.0%

Table 23: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the type of news of local sources of news.

News type	Frequency	Percent
Local news	21	14.9%
Arab news	21	14.9%
world news	18	12.8%
All of the mentioned	21	44.7%
Curiosity	18	12.8%
Total	141	100.0%

Table 24: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the way of watching news programmes

The way of watching	Frequency	Percent
Alone	81	45.0
With family	66	53.3
With friends	3	1.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 25: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the place of watching news programmes

Place	Frequency	Percent
At home	171	96.6%
Outside home	6	3.4%

	Frequency	Percent
Total	177	100.0%

Table 26: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the extent of watching the Arab satellite channels

	Frequency	Percent
Watch	162	91.5%
Never watch	15	8.5%
Total	177	100.0%

Table 27: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the type of programmes watched on Arab satellite channels

Programme type*	Frequency	Percent
News	135	75.0%
Speech debates	111	61.7%
Religion	93	51.7%
amusement	102	56.7%
Sports	51	28.3%
others	57	31.7%

• subjects can choose more than one programme

Table 28: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the extent of watching the foreign satellite channels

	Frequency	Percent
Watch	57	36.5%
Never watch	99	63.5%
Total	156	100.0%

Table 29: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the type of programmes watched on the foreign satellite channels

Type*	Frequency	Percent
Local news	9	5.0
Arab news	39	21.7
world news	18	10.0
All of the mentioned	90	50.0
Curiosity	24	13.3
Total	180	100.0

• subjects can choose more than one program

Table 30: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the selection of the channel :

Channel name	Frequency	Percent
Al Jazeera	138	76.7

Local Jordanian channels	18	10.0
Al-Arabiyah	9	5.0
MBC	6	3.3
Al-Aqsa	3	1.7
Al-Hura	3	1.7
MBC	3	1.7
Total	180	100.0

Table 31: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the second channel in obtaining information, including news

The channel	Frequency	Percent
Al-Arabiyah	84	54.9%
MBC	21	13.7%
Local Jordanian channels	12	7.8%
Al-Manar	12	7.8%
Al Jazeera	9	5.9%
Iqra	3	2.0%
Abu-Dubai	3	2.0%
Al-Ikhbariyah	3	2.0%
Al-Aqsa	3	2.0%
Al-Saah	3	2.0%
Total	153	100.0%

Table 32: the relative distribution of the study sample due to times of watching the channels daily

Times No.	Frequency	Percent
Once	48	29.6%
Twice	57	35.2%
Thrice	24	14.8%
Four times	33	20.4%
Total	162	100.0%

Table 33: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the name of the programme watched .

Programme name	Frequency	Percent
The contrary direction	54	37.5%
Face to face	18	12.5%
Behind the news	12	8.3%
The speech is ours	9	6.3%
Happens today	6	4.2%
Pulpit of Al Jazeera	6	4.2%
60 minutes	6	4.2%

Good morning	3	2.1%
Your weight is gold	3	2.1%
Al Jazeera corresponds	3	2.1%
What life does	3	2.1%
The soft speech	3	2.1%
Against the direction	3	2.1%
Policy	3	2.1%
The life is a word	3	2.1%
An open dialogue	3	2.1%
The Arab dialogue	3	2.1%
Opera	3	2.1%
Total	144	100.0%

Table 34: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the interactive programme coming second in terms of the extent of watching

Programme name	Frequency	Percent
The opposite direction	18	14.6%
On the beloved's steps	12	9.8%
Altogether life is made	9	7.3%
With Haikal	9	7.3%
Panorama	9	7.3%
Face to face	6	4.9%
Speech is ours	6	4.9%
Against the direction	6	4.9%
With Al-Wakeel	6	4.9%
A witness on the age	6	4.9%
Policy	3	2.4%
The pulpit of Al Jazeera	3	2.4%
Happens today	3	2.4%
Issuers of the hour	3	2.4%
In the forbidden	3	2.4%
Renew your life	3	2.4%
Without control	3	2.4%
The evening of ten	3	2.4%
The Nabawi Medicine	3	2.4%
The Shariah and life	3	2.4%
The opinion and the other	3	2.4%
The step	3	2.4%
Total	123	100.0%

Table 35: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the interactive programme coming third in terms of the extent of watching

Programme name	Frequency	Percent

The opposite direction	9	13.6%
Beyond the news	6	9.1%
The Arab dialogue	6	9.1%
A witness on the age	6	9.1%
Khalid Amr	6	9.1%
More than one opinion	6	9.1%
Face to face	3	4.5%
60mintues	3	4.5%
The soft speech	3	4.5%
Against the direction	3	4.5%
An open dialogue	3	4.5%
The pulpit of Al Jazeera	3	4.5%
In the forbidden	3	4.5%
on the beloved's steps	3	4.5%
The Shariah and life	3	4.5%
Total	66	100.0%

Table 36: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the interactive programme coming fourth in terms of the extent of watching:

Programme name	Frequency	Percent
Beyond the news	6	20.0%
60 minutes	3	10.0%
Against the direction	3	10.0%
The pulpit of Al Jazeera	3	10.0%
Happens today	3	10.0%
In the forbidden	3	10.0%
Panorama	3	10.0%
Sharaih and life	3	10.0%
The opinion and the other	3	10.0%
Total	30	100.0%

Table 37: the relative distribution of the study sample due to the extent of watching the interactive programmes

The extent of watching	Frequency	Percent
Daily	36	20.7%
Not limited	138	79.3%
Total	174	100.0%

Table 38: the relative distribution for the times of watching the channels due to the gender

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Afternoon	0	0.0%	3	5.9%	3	1.7%
Evening	30	23.3%	6	11.8%	36	20.0%
At night	72	55.8%	12	23.5%	84	46.7%
Midnight	24	18.6%	3	5.9%	27	15.0%
No specific time	3	2.3%	27	52.9%	30	16.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square = 26.097		α≤0.001				

Table 39: the relative distribution according to the type of main methods of communication the both genders are prone to

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
The main news source	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Satellite channels	99	76.7%	18	35.3%	117	65.0%
The local TV	9	7.0%	18	35.3%	27	15.0%
Newspaper	6	4.7%	9	17.6%	15	8.3%
Audible news	6	4.7%	3	5.9%	9	5.0%
Other resources	9	7.0%	3	5.9%	12	6.7%
	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=12.261		α=0.016				

Table 40: the relative distribution according to the type of the secondary methods of communication

	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
The secondary resource of news	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
The satellite channels	21	18.9%	21	41.2%	42	25.9%
The local TV	15	13.5%	3	5.9%	18	11.1%
Radio	9	8.1%	3	5.9%	12	7.4%
Newspaper	33	29.7%	15	29.4%	48	29.6%
Audible news	24	21.6%	0	0.0%	24	14.8%
Other resources, including internet	9	8.1%	9	17.6%	18	11.1%

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	111	100.0%	51	100.0%	162	100.0%
Total						

Pearson Chi-Square=7.544 α= 0.183

Table 41:   the relative distribution according to the main resource of the TV channels

Channels	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Foreign satellite channels	15	12.2%	0	0.0%	15	8.6%
Local TV	15	12.2%	12	23.5%	27	15.5%
Arabic satellite channels	93	75.6%	39	76.5%	132	75.9%
Total	123	100.0%	51	100.0%	174	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=3.069   α= 0.216

Table 42:   the relative distribution according to whether the subjects watch the foreign satellite channels or not , distributed due the gender
Total

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	84	65.1%	27	52.9%	111	61.7%
no	45	34.9%	24	47.1%	69	38.3%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=0.764   α= 0.382

Table 43: Independent Samples Test for the difference between the extent of watching information programmes due to the gender .

	t-test for Equality of Means						
						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Watching hours No	-1.866	52	0.068	-1.38792-	0.74376	-2.880	0.10455
How many times do you watch the analytical and argumentative programmes during the	0.338	56	0.737	0.04017	0.1188	-.19781	0.27816

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How many times do you watch the news daily	1.125	52	0.266	0.36842	0.32762	-.2889	1.02584

week (at top)

Table 44: averages and standard deviations for the variables of watching the media programmes distributed on the basis of the type

	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Watching hours No	Male	111	3.7297	2.36465	.38875
	Female	51	5.1176	2.89142	.70127
The number of hours watching the foreign news channels	male	90	1.6667	1.44636	.26407
The news programmes on the local TV	Male	78	1.2692	.45234	.08871
	Female	42	1.2143	.42582	.11380
The number of hours watching the local TV	Male	102	1.3235	.80606	.13824
	Female	42	1.7143	1.13873	.30434
The number of hours watching the analytical and argumentative programmes during the week	Male	123	2.8049	.40122	.06266
	Female	51	2.7647	.43724	.10605
How many time do you watch the news daily	Male	114	2.3684	1.05064	.17044
	Female	48	2.0000	1.21106	.30277

Table 45: averages and standard deviations for the type of the foreign satellite channels distributed on the basis of the gender

The type of main foreign satellite channels	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Not at all	78	60.5%	33	64.7%	111	61.7%
bbc	21	16.3%	3	5.9%	24	13.3%
cnn	18	14.0%	9	17.6%	27	15.0%
lbc	33	2.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.7%
mbc	3	2.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.7%
mbc2	3	2.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.7%
one tv	0	0.0%	6	11.8%	6	3.3%
sky news	3	2.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square=7.774		α=				

0.353

Table 46: the relative distribution due to the type of secondary foreign satellite channels based on the gender

| The type of secondary foreign satellite channels | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	% r	Count	%
Not at all	93	72.1%	42	82.4%	135	75.0%
bbc	12	9.3%	3	5.9%	15	8.3%
cnn	6	4.7%	3	5.9%	9	5.0%
dw	3	2.3%	0	.0%	3	1.7%
mbc2	6	4.7%	0	.0%	6	3.3%
mbc4	3	2.3%	3	5.9%	6	3.3%
super movies	3	2.3%	0	.0%	3	1.7%
tv5	3	2.3%	0	.0%	3	1.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=2.818 α= 0.901

Table 47: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch the news programmes based on the gender

| Do you watch the news programmes? | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	66	81.5%	33	78.6%	99	80.5%
no	15	18.5%	9	21.4%	24	19.5%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=0.050 α=0.824

Table 48: the relative distribution due to the information type received from the foreign resources based on the gender

| Information type | gender | | | | Total | |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Local news	3	4.2%	3	7.1%	6	5.3%
Arabic news	12	16.7%	3	7.1%	15	13.2%
World news	12	16.7%	3	7.1%	15	13.2%
All mentioned	36	50.0%	27	64.3%	63	55.3%
Curiosity	9	12.5%	6	14.3%	15	13.2%
Total	72	100.0%	42	100.0%	114	100.0%

Table 49: the relative distribution due to the information type received from the local resources based on the gender

Information type	Male		female		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Local news	18	19.4%	3	6.3%	21	14.9%
Arabic news	15	16.1%	6	12.5%	21	14.9%
World news	15	16.1%	3	6.3%	18	12.8%
All mentioned	36	38.7%	27	56.3%	63	44.7%
Curiosity	9	9.7%	9	18.8%	18	12.8%
Total	93	100.0%	48	100.0%	141	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=3.524   *α=0 .474*

Table 50: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch the debate programme due to gender

Do you watch the debate program	Male		Female		Total	
	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender
Yes	48	59.3%	27	64.3%	75	61.0%
no	33	40.7%	15	35.7%	48	39.0%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=.098   *α=.754*

Table 51: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch the amusement programme due to gender

Do you watch the amusement program	Male		Female		Total	
	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender
Yes	36	44.4%	24	57.1%	60	48.8%
no	45	55.6%	18	42.9%	63	51.2%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=.595   *α=.440*

Table 52: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch the sport programme due to gender

Do you watch the sport program	Male		female		Total	
	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender

Yes	18	22.2%	6	14.3%	24	19.5%
no	63	77.8%	36	85.7%	99	80.5%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=.370   α=.543

Table 53: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch the religion programme due to gender

	gender				Total	
	Male		female			
Do you watch the religion program	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender
Yes	30	37.0%	30	71.4%	60	48.8%
no	51	63.0%	12	28.6%	63	51.2%
Total	81	100.0%	42	100.0%	123	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=4.364   α=.037

Table 54: the relative distribution due to whether the subjects watch news alone or with others due to gender

	gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
When watching the news, do you watch it	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender	Count	% within gender
Alone	72	55.8%	9	17.6%	81	45.0%
With family	54	41.9%	42	82.4%	96	53.3%
With friends	3	2.3%	0	.0%	3	1.7%
Total	129	100.0%	51	100.0%	180	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square=8.085   α=.018

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