

حرية الإعلام في العالم العربي: دراسة نقدية

Freedom of media in the arab World:

A CritiCAI Study

**Thesis Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in
partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of
the Degree of**

Doctor of Phil osoPhy

By

Mohd Mushtaq

In Consultation with

Prof. A. Basheer Ahmad



**Centre of Arabic and African Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi, 110067, India**

2018



مركز الدراسات العربية والإفريقية
Centre of Arabic and African Studies
School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110 067
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय, नई दिल्ली - 110067
Tel. : +91-11 26704253, Fax : 91-11-26742525

DECLARATION

25th May 2018

I declare that the thesis entitled "*Freedom of Media in the Arab World: A Critical Study*" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy* of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university


Mohd Mushraq

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation


Supervisor

Prof. A Basheer Ahmad

CAAS/SLL&CS/JNU
Centre of Arabic & African Studies
SLL & CS
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067


Chairperson

Prof. A Basheer Ahmad

CAAS/SLL&CS/JNU

Chairperson
Centre of Arabic and African Studies
SLL&CS, Annex Building
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

Acknowledgement

The writing of this thesis has been one of the most significant academic challenges I have ever had to face. Without the support, patience and guidance of my supervisor Prof. A. Basheer Ahmad Jamali, this study would not have seen the light of the day. I owe a debt of gratitude to him for his scholarly guidance and valuable suggestion that he offered to me from time to time. In fact, words fail to articulate my feelings for a teacher of such a high stature with unique blending of scholarship and humanism.

I am also indebted to all my teachers in Centre of Arabic and African Studies JNU who always stimulated me to penetrate deep into the subject for rational understanding of the issue. I am grateful to the administrative staff of our centre for extending me every possible assistance whenever required.

I cannot but express appreciation and thankfulness from my innermost to my respected Maa, as my all successes are the result of her prayers and well wishes. Words fail to express my profound sense of gratitude to my sources of inspiration, my dear brothers who never let me feel the absence of my father and always stood by me at tough times and my whole family who is always an inspiration for me to achieve something.

I would also like to express my innermost appreciation and thankfulness to my respected Poonam ma'm, Principal of my college Prof. F. R. Beigh and all of my colleagues, teaching and non teaching staff from Govt. Degree College Baramulla for extending me every possible assistance.

Special thank go to my friends Rukmani Joshi and Deepak Kashyap who spend their most valuable time for proof reading this research and also encouraged and guided me throughout the writing stage of this thesis.

Lastly and most importantly I would like to express my warm thanks to my friends, Md. Hussain, Imran Iraquee Ruknuddin, Tirthankar, Arshid Salam, Altaf Ul Rehman and Shaista for extending their support in all possible way while accomplishing this research work.

I am grateful to scores of my friends and well wishers for accomplishing this research work

Above all, I owe it all to Almighty Allah for granting me the wisdom, health and strength to undertake this research task and enabling me to its completion.

Thank you

Mohd Mushtaq

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1-6
CHAPTER- I	
Emergence and Development of media in the Arab world and its Social and Political role in the Society	
Introduction	8
1.2 Meaning and Emergence of Mass Media	8
1.3 Means of Mass Media	9
1.4 The Books	9
1.5 Newspapers	10
1.6 Radio and Television	10
1.7 Internet and Smartphone	11
1.8 Mass Media and Society	12
1.9 Mass Media in the Arab World	13
1.10 The Arab World	13-14
1.11 Mass Media in the Arab World	15
1.12 Introduction	15
1.13 Evolution of Mass Media in the Arab World	15-17
1.14 Press in the Arab World	17-20
1.15 Challenges to Press in the Arab World	20
1.16 Types of Print Media in the Arab World	20
1.17 Mobilization press	21
1.18 Loyalist Press	21
1.19 Diverse Press	21
1.20 Transitional press	21-22
1.21 Offshore Arab Press	22
1.22 Non- Arabic Press in Arab World	22-23
1.23 Radio in the Arab World	21-25
1.24 Role of Radio in Mobilizing the People	25
1.25 TV Broadcasting in the Arab World	26
1.26 Formative Phase- 1954 to 1976	26- 27
1.27 National Expansion phase- 1976-1990	28-29
1.28 Globalization Phase- 1990 onwards	29
1.29 Major Media Houses in the Arab World	29

1.30 Aljazeera Media Network	30-33
1.31 Aljazeera Channels	33
1.32 Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC)	34
1.33 Al-Arabiya	34
1.34 Role of Media in Arab Society: Historical Perspective	35
1.35 The Beginning	35-37
1.36 The Transnational Media	37-38
1.37 Privatization, Globalization	38-40
1.38 Films in Arab Society	40
1.38 Changing Media Roles in the Arab World	40-41
1.39 Role of Cyber Media in shaping the public opinion	41-42
1.40 Social media and Arab Uprising	42-43
Conclusion	43-44

CHAPTER-II:

Globalization, Privatization and Arab Media

2.1 Globalization: An Introduction	46-48
2.2 Globalization in Historical Perspective	48-49
2.3 Globalization in Modern Era	50-51
2.4 Technology and Globalization	51-52
2.5 Globalization, the latest brand of Colonialism?	52-53
2.6 Media Globalization and the Globalization of Media	53-55
2.7 Internet and media Globalization	55-56
2.8 Social Media, Mass Media and Globalization	56-58
2.9 Arab Media and Globalization	58-60
2.10 Trends of Privatization in the Arab World Media	60-61
2.11 Privatization of media in the Arab World: the Case of Satellite Revolution	61-64
2.12 Arab Media after 1990	64-65
2.13 Thinking in the sense of globalization	65-66
2.14 Arab Media: Bridge between East and West	66-67
2.15 Conclusion	67-69

CHAPTER- III

Arabic media, Arab Governments and the Society

3.1 Role of Media in Arab Society	71-73
3.2 New Media and Arab Society	73-75
3.3 Media and governments: impacting each other	75-80
3.4 The Modernist Republics Media system	80-86
3.5 Censorship as government policy to silence the media	86-88
3.6 New Media in Arab: Breaking the barriers	89-91
3.7 Media and religion in the Arab society	91-92
3.8 Sectarianism and Arab Media	92-94
3.9 Media and Arab Youth	95-97
3.10 Conclusion	97-98

CHAPTER- IV

Arabic Media in the Post Arab Spring Period

4.1 Arab Spring: An Introduction	100-101
4.2 Beginning of Arab Spring	101-103
4.3 The journey to the Arab Spring	103-105
4.4 Role of Media in Arab Spring	105-106
4.5 Role of state media	107
4.6 Role of Private and International media	108
4.7 New Media in the Arab Spring	108-112
4.8 Arab media after Arab Spring	112-113
4.9 Transnational media Post Arab Spring	113-116
4.10 The Role of National Media	117-120
4.11 The Role of Social Media after the Arab Spring	120-121
4.12 Conclusion	121-122

CHAPTER- V

Comparison of Arab Media with International Media Houses

5.1 Introduction	124
5.2 Major Foreign Media Houses in the Arab World	125-129
5.3 Arab World News Discourse by BBC, CNN and Aljazeera	129-130
5.3 Coverage of ‘Arab Spring’ by Aljazeera and Fox News	130-133
5.4 Coverage of ISIL on CNN and Aljazeera	133-135
5.5 Coverage of Syrian Conflict by Iranian Media and Al-Arabiya TV Channel	136-138
5.6 Coverage of Syrian Conflict by Aljazeera and BBC	138-140
5.7 Coverage of Arab Issues by <i>Al-Arabiya</i> and <i>Al-Hurra</i>	140-146
5.8 Coverage of Arab Issues by Al-Arabiya and Alhurra	146-148
Syrian Media: The Counter Propaganda	148-149
5.9 Coverage of Arab World by Russian Media	149-151
5.10 Conclusion	151-152
CONCLUSION	153-156
Bibliography	157-164

INTRODUCTION

Mass media has become so significant in the human lives today that it is impossible to remain unaffected from this entity. From TV channels to newspapers, cinema, internet and the social media, we are living in age that is shaped by media. Media is influencing and moulding our culture to such an extent that sociologist has dubbed it as ‘mediated culture’ where media is creating and reshaping it. From individual to the society, everyone is bombarded constantly with the varieties of messages and information from TV, Radio, magazines and internet to name a few. These messages and information, not only promotes the products, it also mould and direct the mood, attitudes and sense of the people. The media saturation has not been there always as it is today. In 1960s or 1970s the picture was different where only public TV channels and a few newspapers or magazines existed, but with the development and advancement of informational technology, the media has progressed and transformed the world.

Mass media emerged in the Arab World during the colonial rule when most of the region was occupied by Western or European countries during 1950s. With the establishment of powers in the Arab countries, colonial powers establish large bureaucracies, launched communication system that encouraged the development of media in the region. To communicate with its bureaucrats and officials, and also to propagate their message to the public, these powers started newspapers, radio, telephone and later Television that proved to be a precursor to the development of mass media in the region. When freedom struggle started in the region, the local people took the help from information technology and the mass media to spread their messages to the people. Print media and especially pan-Arab radio station from Egypt ‘The Voice of Arab’ played a significant role in mobilizing the people against foreign rulers and subsequently led to the freedom of Arab homeland.

Since the independence of most of the Arab countries, the main role of media has been to protect the Arab dictatorial regime and to preserve the Arab culture and unity. During this phase, the regimes used media as their mouthpiece to propagate the message of regimes to the people. Freedom of media was non-existent during this

phase. Only government was entitled to start a radio station or TV channel, and the editorial policy was decided by the information ministries. Media remained highly censored during this phase. Private newspapers were launched during this phase, but they were not independent to publish news without the consent of government agencies.

After 1990, media landscape of the region started changing with the introduction of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG). Arab regimes opened their market for foreign investment that attracted foreign media in the region. The introduction of satellite channels was the revolutionary step that transformed the region. In 1996, Qatar started Aljazeera satellite channel that opened a new phase in the media of the region. With its bold and independent coverage, it redefined the meaning of media in the Arab World and also encouraged other media houses to report truth to the audiences. When Aljazeera started exposing the monarchies, they tried to silence it by banning its reporters, taking off air the channel and complaining to the Qatar regime to control it. But when they failed in these strategies, they thought of countering it and started their satellite channels. That started a new competition in this field with launch of hundreds of channels by governments as well as private media houses. Many countries started their media cities Dubai Media City, Jordan Media City and Egyptian Media Production City that attract international and national media. During the first decade of 21st century, many foreign and regional media houses established their satellite channels in the Arab region, most importantly *Al-Arabiya* by MBC (Middle-East Broadcasting Corporation) group of Saudi Arabia, *Al-Hurra* by Middle East Broadcasting Network of the government of USA and *Al-Manar* by Hezbollah etc. These channels contributed enormously in generating an environment of free debate and discussion on issues concerning the Arab people. Despite being different perception, aims and objectives, satellite channels presented a different image of Arab World. Aljazeera launched its English channel in 2006 that was first channel in English language from the Middle East. Besides opening the region to the world, it also ended the hegemony of Western and European media in international news.

From Arab spring to civil war in Syria, Yemen and Libya and the so called Islamic State, the Arab region is struck in conflicts today and going through a transitional phase. To fulfil their political, strategic and economic interests, many

countries have launched their Arabic channels to influence the Arab people. Every channel and media house is presenting a different picture of the region as per their policies.

This research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the media of the region from beginning to this time. Besides discussing the development of different Medias in the region like Radio, print media, TV channels and new media, the research will also look into the political, sociological, economic and strategic role of media in the Arab World. The main objectives of this research are as follows:

- ∞ To provide a critical and holistic overview of the development of media in the Arab world
- ∞ To examine the impact of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) on Arab media
- ∞ To examine the role of media in Arab society, governments and vice versa and to assess the freedom of media in the region
- ∞ To analyse the role of different Medias in Arab Spring and other conflicts of the region
- ∞ To examine and compare the Arab and foreign media and its impact on cultural political and social lives of the people

After the incident of 9/11 the global media focus increased on the Arab World. That incident also brought in centre the policies of USA in Arab World. Considering that, America thought of improving and refining its image in the region. Media was the main weapon to achieve this goal that USA started using afterwards. Coverage of war in Afghanistan and late the war in Iraq by Aljazeera has severely dented the image of US in the region. To defend its policies it launched its own channel named *Al-Hurra* in 2004. The mission of the channel was to win the Arab people and promote democracy and freedom in the Arab World. After almost 18 years of its launch, the channel has almost failed to achieve its objective. But after that started war of international satellite channels in the region that has created a positive atmosphere by encouraging the free and democratic debate in the region. This also encouraged the regional media including government channels to follow the practice and keep relevant to the audiences. The emergence of internet and subsequently the social media played greatest role in the Arab society. The Arab Spring of 2010-11

was the result of this freedom of speech promoted by satellite channels and used by common people through internet and social media that toppled the dictators.

Structure of the Research

This study has been divided into five chapters which discuss the emergence and development of mass media in the region, role of media in Arab society, freedom of media and the comparison of Arab media with foreign media, thematically. The overview of chapters and the issues discussed are given below:

Chapter 1 discusses the historical perspective of media in the Arab world, the development of press, television, internet and social media and its constructive role in the independence of Arab countries and aftermath. The development of Television in the Arab World has been discussed phase wise. Special focus has been given to the media after 1990s when liberalization and privatization started in the Arab World that changed the media landscape of the region. Satellite channels like Aljazeera, Al-Arabia were launched in this period that redefined and transformed the regional media making it a global power. Special attention is given to satellite channels that were very instrumental in opening the region to the world and encouraging the free and democratic debate in the region. The introduction of internet and especially the social media has transformed and revolutionized the region and has impacted the mainstream media to a great extent. This has been used both for the negative and positive purposes in the region since its beginning. Both the aspects of this media have been discussed in the chapter with special focus on Arab Spring and aftermath.

Chapter II deals with the origin and development of globalization in the world and specifically in the Arab World. In the context of Arab world, the globalization can be seen in very positive aspects, as opening of market led to the industrialization and commercialization of media industries in the region that proved to be a positive step in the direction of freedom of media. Since 1990s, the emergence of international and transnational satellite channels is the result of globalization and liberalization. On the cultural level, there might be reservation that how the western culture impacted the culture of the region that is not seen positively by Arab scholars. But on economic level it opened the Arab to the world and changed the concept of region in the world. In the race of development and modernization, Arab regimes launched satellite

channels, invited foreign media channels and introduced internet in the region that helped in the democratization of region. In this chapter the issues of globalization and privatization of Arab media and its impact on the lives of common people of the region is discussed. It is view of the researcher that the Arabic Spring and other turmoil in the region are the direct or indirect outcome of globalization process that started after 1990 in the Arab world. The technological and cultural changes in the global media has resulted in changing of media strategies of the region in terms of policy changes, media technology and the content and genre development.

Chapter III deals with the historical role media in the Arab society from beginning of the mass media till the Arab Spring and afterwards. Media has played a very constructive role in the Arab World in educating and informing the people. The chapter also discusses the role of media as watchdog, and how it succeeded or failed in performing its duty due to its orientation towards the interests of ruling regimes instead of general masses. The chapter also shed light on the role of governments in controlling, censoring and taming the media and using it to advance their political interests. The system of media remained almost same in all over the Arab region till 1990s when liberalization and privatization started in the region. After that media also started playing greater role as it got freedom to report to some extent. Beside satellite channels and Radio, internet also played great role in the process of transforming the region politically, educating the people about their rights and providing an accessible resource of information to common people. In this process, youths were the main inspiration behind the recent upheavals in the Arab region assisted by new and social media. The role of youths and social media is discussed in detail in this chapter. Religion plays a great role in the Arab society as majority of population is Muslim. That is also divided into many sects. Religion also impacts the media and gets impacted by media as well, therefore, the role of region in regional media and vice versa is discussed in the chapter.

Chapter- IV begins with an introduction of Arab Spring that started from Tunisia in December 2010 with the self immolation of an unemployed youth. The journey of Arab spring to different countries is tracked with special focus on the role of state, private, social and foreign Medias in these uprising. The uprising that was

started as spring soon plunged into Arab winter when civil wars and conflicts started in the region. The media that has played very positive role in the beginning of ‘Arab spring’ also played negative role in the ‘Arab winter’ that impacted the social fabric of Arab society. The most dangerous role was played by satellite channels and social media in post Arab Spring Arab world. After the failure of Arab Spring, Western and European countries started intervening in the region to advance their political interests. They also started their media houses in the region as a strategy to influence the people. The role of these international and transnational media houses is asses in this chapter. The chapter also delves into the politics of different countries being played in the region to understand the role f regional and foreign media.

Chapter- V surveys the foreign media houses working in the region with special focus on influential channels like BBC, CNN, Russia Today and DW etc. Despite the launch of abundance of foreign channels in Arabic, local channels like Aljazeera and *Al-Arabiya* are still preferred by the audiences for the regional role. This chapter analyses the role of regional and foreign media by comparing the coverage of different issues by different channels. The main issues that were covered by all the regional and foreign media houses were Arab Spring, civil war in Syria, Libya and Yemen and the Islamic extremist groups like Al-Qaeda and Islamic State. The researcher has compared the coverage of different media houses on same issue to spot the difference. The result was that most of the media houses covered the issue according the policies of its owner country. Instead of reporting with honesty and objectivity, the media channels started a propaganda game, distorting the truth. For example the Syrian conflict was covered by Aljazeera, Russia Today, BBC and CNN, but there was a great difference in their coverage. This chapter assesses the role and impact of regional, transnational and international media on the people and politics of the Arab World.

While researching on the said topic, it me be concluded that the media is relatively free in the region. The nature of regional media is very diverse from being owned by state, semi-state companies, private and international. Every type of media is working on their own lines and all have their own editorial policy. One thing that is common to all is the censorship imposed by state and sometimes self-censorship. But despite all odds, the future of media of the region seems bright and satisfactory.

CHAPTER I

**Emergence and development of media in the Arab world and its
social and political role in the society**

Introduction

In contemporary era, the mass media is waiting to bombard every walk of citizens' lives in every waking hour. One cannot think of a moment when one has spent time without the mass media. From the moment one wakes up until the time one goes to sleep, media is there to help one in sharing information, keep one updated and entertained. Indeed, the mass media has gained great significance in our culture and society. As the thrust area of this study is Arab world, this chapter will look closer into emergence and changing role of mass media in this particular region. To start with, this chapter will first discuss the meaning and evolution of mass media in general and then will focus on the Arab World.

Meaning and Emergence of Mass Media

Mass Media, in general, is a combination of two nouns, 'mass' and 'media'. It is a term used for the phrase 'influential and widely diffused means of communication'¹. 'Mass' conveys the notion of quantity, quantity in bulk whereas, 'media', according to Oxford Dictionary, comes from the Latin language which means plural of medium². Medium is something lying in the middle or intermediate position- an agent or an object through which purpose is accomplished. Nowadays the 'media' are the means by which information or knowledge is diffused. So, 'mass media' is an expression which is used to define the medium through which information is disseminated among large group of people. With the advancement of technology and communication process, the word 'mass media' has become synonym to the means of mass communication such as radio, television, newspapers, internet etc. In addition to this, many types such as Electronic Media, Print Media, and Social Media etc could be taken for granted its parts.

Mass media helps not only in connecting people but also bringing the world closer, if not together. It has been evolving since the ancient times when kings encouraged and helped their writers and poets to write books and dramas about the realities of societies which help the kings to govern their kingdoms. Writers also used to write epics and stories in praise of kings and were rewarded for that. The power of

¹Pierre Sorlin (1994), Mass Media: Key Ideas, London: Routledge Publications.

² (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/media#media>)

mass media has been known to the world from the early times. It has thrown away powerful dynasties and created new empires.

Mass media has helped in creating social awareness and has given people an easy way to raise their voice against injustice. The print media has played an important part in the historical events such as American war of independence, French revolution, India's war of independence and Islamic renaissance. From the ancient times till today media is continuously playing a pivotal role in changing the history, politics and societies of the world. In 21st century, more than the battle fields, wars are being fought in the news rooms and cyber space. Media has the power to reshape the history and make a new world. Next section will describe the various means of mass media which has evolved till date

MEANS OF MASS MEDIA

The Books

In the early times when the people learned to speak, soon they invented the alphabets and started to invent new ways of communication through alphabets. The invention of alphabets was the revolutionary step. It was unimaginable at that time that one day the alphabets will transform the world of language. History of alphabets goes back to 2nd millennium BCE when the consonantal system of writing was used in Levant in Semitic language ³

After the invention of alphabets, people started writing and the time came when the books were being written. Perhaps, the first book was written in China titled 'Diamond Sutra' in 868 A.D. gradually the literacy spread all over the world and the people started writing books. But due to lack of printing technology, the reach of books was very limited and limited number of people could acquire that.

The printing press was invented in Roman Empire when in 1400 A.D., Johannes Gutenberg, a German goldsmith, invented the printing press of movable type in Europe. In 1453 A.D., he printed the first book Holy Bible, which was named as "Gutenberg Bible" as it was printed in his press. From there the printing press

³ Writing System: A linguistic Introduction by Geoffrey Sampson

spread all over Europe and then, across the world gradually. Afterward the printing presses were started in many countries all over the world and millions of books were being printed every year⁴.

Newspapers

After the invention and the spread of the printing press, for some centuries only books were printed and circulated in the world. But the emergence of newspaper was a historical moment in the history of mass communication. In the early 17th century, the governments started circulating their official bulletins. The first printed newspaper was "The Relation"⁵, in the year 1690 by Benjamin Harris in Boston. By the end of 1900, the newspapers spread all over the world. In the beginning the newspapers were periodical like fortnightly and weekly but gradually when the printing technology was further developed, the process of daily newspapers printing was initiated. During the 19th century most of the third world countries were the colonies of the European powers. The Europeans started the newspapers in here only to communicate directly with indigenous people. Soon the indigenous people started printing their own newspapers that helped them to connect and communicate with their own people⁶.

Radio and Television

The invention of Radio and Television revolutionized the communication system throughout the world. When Guglielmo Marconi was trying to invent the radio, nobody would have thought that one day his invention will bring the world so closer making it as the global village where information will be disseminated across the world in seconds.

In year 1894, he succeeded and the radio was invented. Radio works on the principle of transmission of electromagnetic waves. As the transmission of radio programs began, it became a prominent source of entertainment for the public. Radio

⁴(Massachusetts Academy of Mathematics and Science, (2010). INVENTIONS THAT CHANGED THE HISTORY, (An electronic book on the history of technology)(page no 3)

⁵Mitchell Stephens, History of Newspapers, From:
<https://www.nyu.edu/classes/stephens/Collier's%20page.htm>

⁶<http://www.historicpages.com/nprhist.htm> (A Brief History of Newspapers by Phil Barber)

became the cheap source of conveying information and also helped the people and the rulers to communicate with each other.

It is said that “human desires have no limits”. After radio, a need was felt that dissemination of verbal message only is not sufficient. Information should be communicated in pictorial format and television was invented. The first television was invented by John Logie Baird in the year 1925 and the first television transmission was done in the year 1927 by Philo Farnsworth.⁷ In the beginning the television was in “black & white” form. Steadily with the advancement of technology the colour television was invented. In the year 1932, the first full colour film "Flower and trees" was produced by Walt Disney⁸.

From 1950 onwards the “Television Revolution” started in the world and soon the television spread all over the world. In the beginning, television was not the household asset; it used to be a luxury and only few people could have that. In the developing countries, it was used by the governments to educate the people. But with the passage of time, television became the household item.

Though Mass media became technologically dependent in this form but it progressed like anything in the world. Primarily, it was the small documentaries, fictional stories which used to be telecasted but the introduction of telecasting exact information about the society called “NEWS” via television transformed the news system in the world drastically.

Internet and Smartphone

Internet evolved in the second half of the twentieth century. In the beginning it was used by government and media houses only and later it became a public commodity. Internet brought the change and revolution in the information and communication systems that was unimaginable for centuries and which converted the world into, a global village’ in real sense. Internet has been providing us with latest and useful information and instant connectivity. For example, the e-mail technology

⁷ <https://www.nyu.edu/classes/stephens/History%20of%20Television%20page.htm> (History of Television)

⁸ Robertson, Patrick (2011). Robertson's Book of Firsts. London: Bloomsbury. Retrieved 24 May 2017.

was developed during the 1970s. After the development of e-mail technology Tim Berners-Lee came up with the idea of WWW (World Wide Web) in the year 1990. Later Instant message services were introduced in the year 2001⁹.

While the journey of internet is still under progression, another tool of faster and better communication is introduced, i.e., Smartphone. The introduction of smart phones has brought a major change in the lives of people. People do not have to wait for hours to get the information. The portability of this device is it's another advantage. Smart phones have specific features such as touch screen, GPS, web browsers, Wi-Fi connectivity, high speed internet with 3G, 4G and many more applications which have increased the comfort and convenience for the users.

To sum up, one can say that till recent years, the concept of mass media was just about newspapers, television and radio, but the new technology has changed its conception significantly. In this era of advanced technology, media has become the super power which is affecting every walk of our life, from both the perspectives- positive and negative. Our forefathers would have never thought that the media will become so advance that it will change everything in the life of human beings. Today the media is changing its face every moment and nobody can predict what will be the face of media tomorrow and how far it will go to affect the society and the lives of the people.

Mass Media and Society

We live in a society which depends mostly on technology for news, information, education and entertainment. The mass media is a great factor that influences the opinions and viewpoints of the people, especially the younger generation. Everything that happens in any part of the world or with any part of human society, affects the whole society. Any incident that occurs in any part of the world makes its influence on the people in every corner of the world, thus, the mass media has made the world a global village and the people are connected with each other. Globalization has impacted the whole human society and the media is the main actor that helps in promoting the globalization.

⁹<http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/~media/Files/NMeM/PDF/Collections/NewMedia/ABriefHistoryOfTheInternet.ash> (A Brief History of the Internet)

Media like Television, books, Radio and internet help in shaping the beliefs of what social life, religion, culture, or politics should be in the minds of the people, sometimes at unrealistic standards.

The mass media is affecting the lives of people and the whole society both positively and negatively. It is the media that is spreading the westernization in the whole world in the name of modernization. The mass media is affecting the society politically and socially. The concept of superiority and inferiority of the cultures is the creation of media. Media depicts the culture of powerful countries like US and European countries as superior while the culture of poor countries like African nations and other tribal people is depicted as inferior. It is perhaps the effect of mass media that is driving the people to adopt the western culture blindly, considering it the modern culture and most civilized culture.

The mass media is changing the opinion and thinking of people about their civilizations and helping create a new civilization that is not limited to any region, religion, class, creed or country.

MASS MEDIA IN THE ARAB WORLD

The Arab World

The Arab world (العالم العربي), Arab Homeland(الوطن العربي) or the Arab Nation are the names given to all the Arabic speaking countries. In modern political term it is also called West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region. All the Arabic speaking countries under the “League of Arab Nations” is called the Arab world. The Arab world comprises of 22 states and territories of the Arab League from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Arabian Sea in the east, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean in the southeast. Arab World has combined population of around 422 million people, with over half of the population under 25 years of age.

In the middle ages the Arab world comprised of empires and caliphate. After the downfall of Ottoman Empire, the Arab world was colonized by many European and Western Countries. In 19th Century started the struggle of freedom all over the

Arab region. The struggle for the freedom of homeland was a common cause of all the countries and therefore that cause united the countries under the banner of Arab nationalism or Arabism. The slogan of Arab nationalism was given by Gamal Abden Nasir that was echoed across the region and ultimately after the freedom, the Arab League was established and hereafter the region was named as Arab World.

Following countries are included in the Arab World: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.¹⁰



Map of the Arab World that comprises 22 countries

¹⁰<http://www.arableagueonline.org/hello-world/#more-1>

MASS MEDIA IN THE ARAB WORLD

Introduction

Mass Media industry in the Arab World is one of the biggest industries in the world. There hundreds of TV channels and thousands of newspapers are in circulation in this region. With the modernization and expansion of the oil wealth in the region and especially in the Gulf countries, media is one of the most emerging industries. Major business houses of the region and the world are investing in the media industries of the region.

Newspapers Like “*Al Sharq Al Awsat*” (الشرق الأوسط), *Al-Quds*, (القدس), *Al-Ahram* (الاهرام) and *Al Riyadh* (الرياض), are published from the Arab region with multiple editions. These newspapers are considered the primary source of the news from Arab World. Besides newspapers, there are hundreds of TV channels in the region and some of the TV channels are considered the most successful channels of the region as well as the world. The Arab World has channel like Aljazeera Media Network, which is one of the biggest media houses in the world, which has its channels in Arabic, English, Serb and Turkey languages. *Al-Arabiya*, *Al-Manar* and Nile TV etc are other leading news satellite TV channels in the region.

Evolution of Mass Media in the Arab World

The history of media in the Arab world goes back to 1797 when Napoleon invaded the Egypt. With that invasion, the Christian Machineries entered into the Arab region and started preaching Christianity to the Arab people and this contributed to the spread of mass media in the region. The main objective behind the development of mass media in the region was both political as well as religious. The mass media kept growing with new technologies and exposure of local people with western and European countries. It evolved further in this region in the early 19th century, when the Arabs got independence from the colonial rule.

In the Abbasid period, Arabs were one of the most civilized communities in the world. When the Europe was reeling under the dark ages, the Arabs have become famous in the world for their knowledge of science, geography, philosophy and other

branches of education. When Genghis Khan invaded Baghdad, he looted all the wealth of the Arabs including the invaluable books on philosophy, science, medical, geography and media and put them in the river Tigris. It was one of the greatest losses of knowledge in the history of human kind. It is said that the water of the river became red when libraries of books were drowned in it .

After the downfall of Abbasid, the Muslims and the Arabs could not overcome this tragedy. No memorable work has been done by Arabs in the field of knowledge building during the Ottoman Empire. After the downfall of the Muslims, the Europe started its ascendancy. They translated the work of Muslim scientists in their languages; opened universities for modern education. Soon Europe became one of the powerful and educated regions in the world. They started conquering the Arabs, occupying many region of the Arab World like Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain, Libya and Morocco in early 19th century. By the time, the Arabs realized the impact of imperialism; they witnessed the advancement of these powers in the field of technology and sciences.

Mass Media flourished in this region during colonial rule only. The colonial powers started with the printing of few newspapers for correspondent with their officials. The Arabs realized the significance and power of the print media and started publishing their own newspapers in the region to counter the colonial powers. Newspapers played an instrumental role in struggle against the imperialist powers.

After getting independence in the mid twentieth century, Arab countries started developing their own media houses like ‘Voice of the Arabs’ radio and ‘Nile TV’ by Egyptian government under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser. As the absolute power was in the hands of dictators of the region, they did not allow the private media to keep their grip strong. Instead Arab dictators started TV channels and Newspapers under the control of government agencies and therefore, these TV channels and newspapers became the mouthpiece of the ruling regimes to spread their policies and agendas in the region.

The last decade of 20th century is known as the era of privatization in the Arab World. Private media houses were started in some countries and these private media houses changed the whole concept and perception of media in the region. As Arab

countries were full of wealth and resources, they started investing in this industry and soon the industry became one of the leading industries in the region. The *Aljazeera* channel was launched in 1996 in Qatar, which forced other countries to think in this regard. To counter and to compete with the Aljazeera and to also advance their agendas and policies, many countries started their independent TV channels. They also opened the media spaces for foreign media companies by opening the “Media Cities” in their countries. Dubai Media City, Egypt Media City and Jordan Media City were established to attract the global media houses towards this region.

To take a look into the development of mass media and its changing roles in different times in this region, this section will take a historical review of the development of different kinds of media like Print, Electronic, and Cyber Media etc.

Press in the Arab World

According to Noha Mellor, the first Arabic newspaper started in the Arab world was “*Tambih*” (تنبيه). It started publishing from Egypt in 1800¹¹. It was started with the order of Napoleon Bonaparte to spread the message of government for the bureaucrats and ruling elites. Its editor was Ismael Al Khashab. But according to some scholars, this newspaper was only planned to publish but could not be started due to some unknown reasons. After that “*Journal al Iraq*” appeared in 1816 from Baghdad but was closed shortly. Likewise “*Mubbassir*” (مبصر) was started from Algeria in 1847.

All the above mentioned newspapers were not regular, and due to unknown reasons they could not survive for a long time.

First regularly published Arabic newspaper was “*Alwaqa e al misriyya*” (الوقائع المصرية). It was published by Mohammad Ali Pasha in 1828. The language of this newspaper was both Arabic and Turkish.

The development of newspapers in the Arab region remained very slow after the independents. The main reason behind the stagnant development is considered the rigid and harsh laws imposed on the newspapers by the ruling monarchs. In

¹¹ Mellor, N. (2011). Arab media: Globalization and emerging media industries. Polity.

comparison to the Gulf region or Egypt, laws were somewhat relaxed in the North African countries like Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. The first newspaper in Morocco was a Spanish paper named “*Africa Liberal*” published in 1920.¹² The newspapers publication witnessed proliferation in Morocco on a large extent between 1820 and 1912. According to Mustapha Lahlali (2011) by 1912 over 50 newspapers were published in French and Spanish by European settlers. The main purpose of these newspapers was to spread the European propaganda and to promote Spanish and French Languages¹³. The first Arabic language newspaper launched in Morocco was “*Al-Alam*” that was published by the Moroccan nationalist party “Isteqlal party” at the time of World War II. This party also started a French language paper named “*L, Opinion*”. Both of these papers earned the trust of people and were considered not only trusted but also respected papers. Since the freedom of Morocco, many political parties have started their own papers in contemporary times as well and many large circulated papers are published by political parties. Post 1990s Morocco press has gathered the momentum and now there are a large number of papers published by the different sections of society like religious, liberal, right wing, left wing and private businessmen. “*Al muharrir*” and “*Al Bayan*” are the most trusted and independent newspapers in Morocco today.

The Press in Algeria was predominantly French oriented and it was used to spread the propaganda of French colonial powers among the people of country. In addition to French, some local newspapers in Arabic were also published there. “*Al Haq*” was the first newspaper published by Muslims in Algeria. This paper was aimed to highlight the brutalities, suppression and high handedness of colonial power and spread the awareness among the people against the repressive policies of government. The paper was banned later due to its open criticism of the colonial government.

A review of the development of the Algerian press indicates its rapid development after the World War II. The main reason behind this growth was the nationalist movements that were against foreign occupation. Most of the newspapers started in Post-War Algeria were weekly like “*La Republique Algerienne*” “*El Bacair*”, and “*El Moujahid*”. These weeklies were banned by the regime due to their

¹² Lahlali, E. M. (2011). Contemporary Arab broadcast media. Edinburgh University Press.

¹³ Lahlali, E. M. (2011). Contemporary Arab broadcast media. Edinburgh University Press.

critical stand against the colonial power. After the independence, there was proliferation of newspapers both in French and Arabic representing different point of views. But when parliament declared Algeria as one party state, all the newspapers were nationalized and the press was put under strict control of government. Today Algeria has a wide range of press including dailies and weekly like “*El Khabar*”, “*El Massa*”, “*Essabah*” etc.

Unlike the Morocco and Algeria, free press was allowed in Tunisia by the colonial power. Most of the newspapers were in French and were aimed to spread the agenda of government. But the press was under government and nationalist press was not allowed to flourish in the country. After the independence, the press supported the government in its agenda. If we compare the Tunisian press with the press of other Arab countries, it lacks the diversity and modernity. There is not presence of foreign press in Tunisia. Among the popular newspapers in Tunisia today are *Al Sabah*, *Alhorria*, *Maghrebine* etc. Most the papers in Tunisia are published in French or Arabic.

First newspaper that was started from Lebanon was “*Hadikat al Akhbar*” in 1867 and the foremost newspaper that was started to give the real news to the people in Egypt was “*Wadi Al Nil*” (وادي النيل) in 1867.

All these above-mentioned newspapers were started by colonial powers to show the indigenious people, their advancement in the field of technology as well as to communicate with the masses directly.

From the beginning of Arab press, Egypt and Lebanon have been leading centres of print media in the Arab world. They continued to hold the leading position in the print journalism in 21st century also as till now the most popular newspapers of the region are published from these two countries.

“*Al- ahram*” (الاهرام) was first published from Egypt in 1875; it is still the leading newspaper with its Arabic as well as English edition. The daily circulation of its Arabic edition is more than seven hundred thousand copies.

Though the advent of print media in Gulf countries was bit late but steadily it was developed into a big industry. The Gulf countries expanded their print media by hiring the experts of this field from other Arab countries like Lebanon and Egypt. They invested lots of money in newspaper industry, making it one of the most successful industries of the region. Even today the Gulf countries have the most successful and financially sound newspapers industry in the Arab world. Saudi Arabia has oldest newspaper tradition in the Gulf. Its leading newspapers are “*Al-Bilad*”, (البلاد) “*Almadina*” (المدينة) and “*Ukaz*” (عكاظ), *Al Sharq Al Awsat*” (الشرق الأوسط), and *Al Riyadh* (الرياض).

Challenges to Press in the Arab World

Although there are many factors which are creating hindrances in producing a trusted and quality press in the Arab world, but one of the biggest challenges that the media is facing in the region, since its inception, is censorship. The rigid and harsh media laws of the region do not allow the media houses to function freely. A minor criticism of ruling class can put any journalist behind the bars and can ban the newspaper. In every Arab nation, it is a challenge for the journalists to do their duty as many journalists are imprisoned in every Arab state for presenting their own views about the policies of governments.

The low literacy rate is another obstacle in the development of print media in the Arab world but this situation is gradually fading away because of increasing literacy rate in the Arab countries.

Another obstacle is the finance. This is faced especially by the independent press, if they try to publish critical view of the state. The state deprives them from the advertisements which are the prime sources of financing press. The pro- regimes newspapers have lost their credibility in the eyes of the readers.

Types of Print Media in the Arab World

Considering the varieties of press in the region the press can be divided into the following categories:

Mobilization Press

Mobilization press is under strict control of the governments. These newspapers never question the policies of the governments and never publish any news critical of government. These newspapers follow the official policy of the government and are true organ of the state policies. This press is a mobilizing tool in the hands of regimes to popularize their official policies. This type of press expects active editorial support for its policies. This type of print media is found in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, Libya and Iraq (during Saddam's regime). As the fall of Saddam government has changed the face of Iraqi media, private and independent newspapers have emerged for the first time in decades. After the Fall of Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has seen some freedom and first time news media was criticising the government policies. But after the coup, the Egyptian press has fallen in this category and any criticism of Sisi government is not tolerated.

Loyalist Press

Most of the newspapers are privately owned but they are loyal to the regimes. They do not criticise the top leadership of the governments, but complained about bureaucracy and lower government offices to pretend to be a free media. This type of press is found in Gulf monarchies like Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirate and Palestine.

Diverse Press

Diverse press represents a considerate diversity in content, style and political orientation. All papers are privately owned but, they are reasonably critical of their governments and their policies. This type of press is found in Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen and Kuwait, (but any type of criticism of Emir is not tolerated in Kuwait and Morocco).

Transitional Press

Transitional press is undergoing constant changes in recent years in the Arab world. Some papers are privately owned, some are government owned and some by

political parties. Freedom of expression exists in these papers but, the economic pressure restricts their freedom. This type of press is found in Egypt, Algeria, Jordan and Tunisia.

Offshore Arab Press

There are some leading newspapers which are published from outside of Arab world, especially from London. In 1970s when civil war broke out in Lebanon, many eminent journalists fled to European and Western countries. There they started publishing newspapers and magazines. These newspapers were more trusted and credible in comparison to papers published inside Arab world. After advancement of technology, it became easy to edit from London, Paris and USA and publish the same from Arab countries. The publishing houses started by these are now major publishing houses of the Arab and have been purchased by Saudi Royal Family under “Saudi Research and Marketing Group” chaired by Saudi Prince Faisal bin Salman al Saud. The company is producing dailies such as “*Al Sharq Al Awsat*” (الشرق الأوسط) and a weekly magazine “*Al Mujallah*” (المجلة) in Arabic and English since 1977. Another publishing house started by Lebanese journalists name ‘*Al-Hayat* (الحيات) is now owned by another Saudi prince Khaled bin Sultan, the former deputy minister of defence and a member of House of Saud, who produces daily’s like “*Al Hayat* and *Al-Hayat TV*. This paper is also published from Lebanon and is one of the leading newspapers of this region. A third daily published from London and also from Jerusalem is “*Al Quds*” that is owned by Abu Zalaf Family of Palestine. This newspaper mainly focuses on Palestinian issues. “*Al Arab*” (العرب) is also a popular Arabic newspaper that was established in London in 1977. The paper is published by Arab World Foundation for Press and Publication in London and circulated in many Arab countries.

Non- Arabic Press in Arab World

There is also a large population of English and French speaking people in the Arab world. Especially in the Gulf region, there are lacs of people from Indian sub-continent like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. These people speak many languages like Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Malyalam and Nepali. To communicate and update these non-Arabic people with the government policies many newspapers in

different languages like Hindi, Urdu, English Bengali, Malyalam and French are also published. “*Arab News*”, “*Gulf Times*”, “*Khaleej Times*”, “*Oman Times*” and “*Saudi Gazette*” are some of the popular English newspapers of the Gulf region.

There is a large population of French and Spanish speaking people in North African Arab countries like Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. These countries have some important newspapers published in the French language like “*Actualites Maroc*” “*Au Fait Maroc*” “*Libération*” etc. There are also newspapers published in Spanish, Italian, and many other languages. The circulation of these newspapers is very limited due to inadequate readers.

Radio in the Arab World

Radio broadcasting began in the Arab world in 1920s. Egypt was the first country in the region that started the radio broadcasting in 1920 under the European rule. The Radio was started by the government to spread its ideology among the Egyptians. In 1934 the government gave the exclusive right to Marconi Company to broadcast radio in the Egypt. But in 1947, the Egyptian government nationalized the Radio service and declared its monopoly over the radio broadcasting.

When Egypt achieved its independence from the European power under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser, radio became a tool in the hands of Egyptian government to spread its ideology in the Arab World. On 4th July, 1953 the Radio Cairo broadcast its first program “*Voice of the Arabs*”. The program aired anti colonial messages and encouraged other Arab countries to stand against the colonial powers. Later on “*The Voice of the Arab*” became a major Radio station of the Arab world and played a great role in spreading the ideology of Arab Nationalism across the region.

Describing the impact of the “*Voice of the Arab*” on other Arab nations Mustapha Lahlali says:

“Voice of the Arabs” successfully contributed to overthrow of the Imam of Yemen in September 1962. Before that in 1958, it mobilized the Arab nationalist

groups who staged a coup d'état to force Nuri to flee Baghdad only to be captured and killed afterwards.¹⁴”

The “Voice of the Arab” played a significant role in creating anti feelings towards the ruling Saudi Family among the Saudis. To counter the impact of this radio, the Saudi Royal family started its own radio station called “Voice of Islam”. The “Voice of Islam” was not able to make any impact on the Arab society as it has limited listeners. Most of the programs on the Voice of Islam were based on *Holy Quran, the Hadith of Prophet* (P.U.B.H) and the teachings of Islam. The ‘Voice of Islam’ was not able to make an impact because it was religious in nature whereas, the programs broadcasted by ‘Voice of the Arab’ were revolutionary in nature. Therefore, it was able to appeal the people of Arab world as every country wanted to attain independence from the colonial powers.

The ‘Voice of the Arab’ was the most trusted Radio station of the Arab world till 1967. It lost its credibility in 1967 during Arab Israel War when it was revealed that this station has misinformed the public about what was happening in the war between Israel and the Arab countries. The Arab forces were being defeated by the Israeli forces and the radio was giving opposite news and was exaggerating the situation in the favour of Arab forces.

Despite that it remained the most popular radio station of the Arab world according to William A Rugh. He states:

“By the 1970 Egypt Radio had fourteen different broadcast services, staffed by more than 4,500 employees with a total air time 120 hour per week¹⁵”

In Algeria radio broadcasting started in 1925 and in Tunisia in 1935, whereas in the Gulf countries, radio developed very late. In Saudi Arabia, Radio broadcast started in 1948, Bahrain in 1955. In Qatar, United Arab Emirate and Oman, it started only after 1975. In the beginning these countries could not expand their radio services, but slowly they developed it and started broadcasting in many languages besides Arabic.

¹⁴Lahlali, Mustapha (2013) Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Edinburgh, Edinburg University Press.

¹⁵<http://www.answers.com/topic/radio-and-television-arab-countries>

In contemporary Arab world, every country has its own radio broadcasting service and they are investing a huge sum of money on it. Radio stations in all the countries of the Arab world are managed by governments. With the various technological advancements radio was losing its popularity in the region, but the emergence of FM radio has changed the situation and now there are many popular FM radio stations. Most of the FM Radio stations are privately governed but these channels are not allowed to broadcast any political messages on their channels. Most of the programs on all the stations are based on Arabic music and few on western music. These stations are very popular among young generations due to their programs and style of presentations.

If we talk about the international radios in Arabic, there are many Arabic service radio stations run by many countries. Arabic service of BBC is one of the most popular radio stations in the region. It is the most trusted radio station of the region. India also has the Arabic service under the “All India Radio”. All India radio’s Arabic Service broadcasts news bulletins every day. But it is not very popular in the Arab world. Radio China, Radio Germany, Radio Tehran, Voice of America and Radio Al Sawa are the other radio services which broadcast their programs in Arabic language.

Role of Radio in Mobilizing the People

Radio was the most important instrument of information and communication when the idea of Arab Nationalism was being nurtured in the imagination of Arab public. The idea of “One Community” (أمة واحدة) was spread all over the region by “Voice of the Arab” Radio station from Egypt. Gamal Abdel Nasser is considered the father of the Arab Nationalism and he was well aware that without an effective communication system, it is not possible to mobilize the public on one agenda. He started “Voice of the Arabs” that spread the Nasserism in the Arab World and people got the sense of belonging the one Qaumiyya (Nation) and Ummah (Community). According to El Mustapha Lahlali:

“It aired anti-colonial and anti-imperialism programs. It broadcasted the Egypt Government’s ideology for 18 hours each day¹⁶”.

He further says:

“Voice of the Arabs” was successful in mobilizing and rallying the Arab public to support the idea that Arabs are one entity and one nation¹⁷”

Another Radio station that played a major role in this cause was “Voice of the Islam” by Saudi Arabia. Though this Radio Station was started to counter the “Voice of the Arab,” yet, it did not get the popularity like Radio Egypt, but still it was very instrumental in mobilizing the people towards Islam and Arabism.

TV Broadcasting in the Arab World

Today, Arab world has many TV channels and some of the international TV channels are based in the Arab region like *Al Jazeera*, *Al Arabiya* etc. But, to discuss the current scenario of Television in the region, it is pertinent to go back to history and understand how TV developed in the region over the times.

First TV broadcast was started in the Arab World in 1954 in Morocco by the French with the aim to serve the French communities in Morocco and Algeria. After Morocco, the TV was launched in Iraq and Lebanon. In Kuwait, the TV started in 1961 under the Ministry of Information. In Sudan TV started in 1961, in Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Yemen it was started in 1975. To understand the development and evolution of television in the region it can be divided in following three phases:

1. Formative Phase -1954 to 1976;
2. National Expansion Phase – 1976 to 1990;
3. Globalization Phase – 1990 onwards.

Formative Phase- 1954 to 1976

¹⁶Lahlali, Mustapha (2013) Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Edinburgh, Edinburg University Press.

¹⁷Lahlali, Mustapha (2013) Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Edinburgh, Edinburg University Press.

This phase starts from the advent of television in the Arab World in 1950s and goes till 1976 when Satellite Television makes the inroads in the region. This was very crucial time for the whole Arab world. The people were challenging the colonial rule in the region and the colonial powers were trying to keep the status quo to keep the hold on this strategically important region. New people movements were starting against the ruling classes and colonial powers. It was very difficult time for Arab monarchies also, as the aspirations of the Arab Nationalism were gripping the people's imaginations. The Arabs were trying to overcome the legacy of Ottoman Empire. At such a juncture, the audio-visual media played a significant role in the Arab world.

In the beginning the colonial powers used Television to propagate their agendas and influence the people as they did in North Africa. When some Arab countries got independence, they used the same weapon against the ruling colonial powers. The Television, like radio, played a great role in unifying the Arab people on the agenda of Arab Nationalism. According to Noha Mellor:

“Television was used as an effective tool of national reconciliation and symbol of cultural identity¹⁸”

In this period, the Arab regimes used the television as a tool of political mobilization. The governments mobilized the people behind the regimes to keep the country united and stable. In the beginning, the Television was more popularized in the African Arab countries like Egypt, Algeria and Morocco and its role in the Gulf countries was very minimal.

After the flow of oil wealth, the Gulf countries started establishing a very modern and technologically advanced TV system in their countries. They hired the human resources from western and other Arab countries by giving a huge sum of salaries. The television became the status symbol for the Arab countries and they started competing with each other in this field. The Television remained completely in the hands of regimes in all this period and the governments used it as a tool for their “national development” agenda.

¹⁸ Noha Mellor, Arab Media - page 94

National Expansion phase- 1976-1990

This phase was the decisive phase in the history of Arab Television as it laid the future stone of TV in the Arab world.

During this phase “Arab State Broadcasting Union” was established in 1969 under the “League of the Arab States”. Its Headquarter of this organization is in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia. Most of the Arab States joined the Union. Initially, Saudi Arabia did not join it but later joined. “Arab Satellite Communication Organization” (ARABSAT) was established in 1976. ARABSAT was established to promote the educational and cultural needs of the Arab World. The Headquarter of this organization is in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It has launched five Satellites till now which are ushering the needs of all the Arab Nations. These Satellites was used to carry the signal to the remote areas of the region to promote the educational policies of the governments and also to aware the people about the government policies.

In this period the Arab States used the Television effectively to promote their national agenda. Advanced, technical parts of the Television were purchased from Britain, France and other western countries to modernize the face of Arab Television communication system by every Arab state, especially the Gulf.

Egypt produced the TV Serial and Dramas and these Dramas and serials were reproduced across the Arab region by state Televisions. The Egypt got the title “Hollywood of the Arab World” at this time. In this period the TV organisation were not independent as they were under the tight rule of regimes. They were dependant on their states for the financial help. The head of the TV services were appointed by the national leaders. According to Noha Mellor:

“TV became mere a propaganda machine in the hands of ruling elite¹⁹,”

Besides other programming the news bulletins were started in this period. In these news bulletins the agendas of the governments were broadcasted. The presenter do not had the freedom to broadcast according to their will. There were strict

¹⁹(Arab Media, page 97)

copyright rules for the TV channels and every program had to be censored by the government authority before it is broadcasted on TV. So, in terms of the media freedom, this period was one of the difficult periods of the Arab world.

Globalization Phase- 1990 onwards

This period is a historic phase in the Arab Television History. Though the Satellite television was introduced in Arab World before 1990, but was under developed in comparison with Western and European TV channels. The main factor behind this underdevelopment was the tight control of the regimes on media.

The manner in which coverage of first Gulf War was done by CNN in 1991 was unprecedented for the Arabs. The Arabs were surprised to see the live coverage of the war.

This live coverage amazed the people of Arab World and they planned to enter in this venture. Meanwhile first private TV channel “Middle East Broadcasting Centre” (MBC) was launched in 1991 in London and later moved its headquarter to Dubai in 2002. MBC was first broadcaster to provide a satellite based free to air 24 hour television network across the Arab World. After that channel, every country thought about it and started private channels in their countries. After that there started the competition in this sector among the Arab countries. Specially Gulf countries took lead in this field and started channels one after another. Meanwhile, considering the region as the future news market, international media houses and western governments also started their channels in the region. The main media houses that started their Arabic service include BBC London, DW Germany, Russia TV, France 24, CCTV China and *Al Hurra* USA.

MAJOR MEDIA HOUSES IN THE ARAB WORLD

Here are some of the prominent media houses started by Arab countries to cater the need of the people of the region

Aljazeera Media Network

Aljazeera Satellite channel that was launched by the Emir of Qatar in 1996 has attracted international fame and popularity for its frank style, its coverage of global issues with special focus on common and downtrodden people. It has proved its slogan “The voice of the voiceless” true.

From the beginning, it has been appreciated by the people for its bold coverage of the news with different perspective and becoming the first editorially independent news channel in the Middle East. When it unearthed the sins of Arab monarchies and criticized them for their track record in violating human rights, it was valued by western countries. But, when it covered the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and showed the human rights violations committed on civilians by USA forces, it was severely criticized by western countries and even its offices were bombed in Kabul and Baghdad, killing its two journalists. The same TV channel that was praised by western powers was criticized by the same powers after the Afghanistan war.

When it was launched, some analysts were suspicious for its success and had predicted that it will be short lived. But, the *Aljazeera* has proved all these prediction wrong. Today, *Aljazeera* is one of the biggest media houses in the world with its multiple channels in different languages. The network currently has a total of 82 bureaus around the world that are shared between the network's channels and operations. It has the second largest amount of bureaus of any media company in the world after the BBC.

The Beginning

The 1991 Gulf War coverage by CNN has stunned the Arabs as it was surprising for them to watch the live coverage of the war on their TV sets sitting in their living rooms. After the war, the Arabs also started thinking in this regard.

BBC Arabic service was working with the support of Saudi Arabia and as only news channel in Arabic language. This service also went off air on 21st April 1996, after two years in service, when the BBC's partners, Orbit Communications Corporation (owned by King Fahd's cousin, Prince Khaled) pulled off its support due

to broadcasting of an episode of Panorama which was critical of the Saudi Arabian government, by the BBC.

Aljazeera (The Island) Satellite Channel was launched in Doha, Qatar on 1st November 1996 as soon as Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani came to power in 1995 and the BBC Arabic services closed down. The BBC's failure to establish an independent news channel in the region prompted Emir of Qatar to fill the gap in this market. It was also a golden opportunity that many experienced journalists, producers and correspondents who were working for BBC were available in the region. The Emir of Qatar recognized this opportunity and thought to launch an independent news channel that will be different from other channels in the region which were under government influence. The launch was made possible with the help of US \$500 million from the Emir of Qatar.

Describing the vision behind the launch of Aljazeera, former Director General of Aljazeera Wadah Khanfar says:

“The vision mainly was to introduce to the Arab World free reporting that is distant from propaganda and at the same time to give the Arab World the opportunity to express opinion. This is why our motive is to give all the opinions”²⁰

Aljazeera's first program was aired on 1st November 1996. In the beginning it started broadcasting its programs for 6 hours in a day which was increased to 12 hours by the end of 1997. Aljazeera gained the international fame during its Operation Desert Fox of Iraq in 1998, as it was only news network with reporters in Iraq. The footages of the war were made available to the international media outlets and the logo of Aljazeera got the popularity internationally.

On 1st January 1999, Aljazeera expanded its schedule to 24 hours daily with its transmission in Middle East, North Africa and Europe. In less than a year time, it provided employment to more than 500 people. It opened its bureaus in more than a dozen sites in the world including European Union, Russia and in some African countries. The budget of Aljazeera was estimated at \$25 million at that time. Overwhelmed with the success of the channel, Aljazeera says:

²⁰Aljazeera: A Middle Eastern Infant Terrible Goes Global, Published by: INSEAD, The Business School for the World. Page no 3

“The station quickly becomes a phenomenon in the Arab world by offering its audiences freedom of thought, independence and room for debate, in a region where the media are often tightly controlled and censored.”²¹”

As the popularity of Aljazeera grew, it was not possible for western media to ignore it, The New York Times columnist John F. Burns writes on July 4, 1999:

“In millions of homes and offices across the Arab world, television sets are regularly tuned these days to Al-Jazeera, a hard-hitting Arabic-language news channel that explores issues long suppressed by the region's rulers, including the lack of democracy, the persecution of political dissidents and the repression of women.”²²”

He further says:

“In Algiers's Casbah, in Cairo's slums, in the suburbs of Damascus, even in the desert tents of Bedouins with satellite dishes, the channel has become a way of life. In its 30 months on air, it has drawn viewers in droves from the mind-numbing fare offered by the region's state-run networks, whose news coverage often amounts to little more than a reverential chronicle of government affairs.”

Aljazeera got such popularity that in the countries where the channel was banned, the videos of its programs like interview of Osama Bin Laden were being sold illegally in black market. The interview with Osama Bin Laden gave Arab audiences the first opportunity to hear him speak uncensored. Assessing the popularity of Aljazeera, Professor Dale Eickelman, says:

“What Aljazeera shows is that people across the Arab world want open discussion of the issues that affect their lives, and that new communications technologies make it impossible for governments to stop them....’The days have gone when Arab governments can control what their people know, and what they think’²³.”

Scared with the coverage of Aljazeera, the Arab regimes started criticizing it and banning it from their countries dubbing it as “*dangerous*” for stability of their regimes. As Saudi Government spokesman said it as “*the suspicious channel,*” and its programming as “*poisonous.*”

²¹<http://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2006/11/2008410115625813175.html>

²²<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/04/world/arab-tv-gets-a-new-slant-newscasts-without-censorship.html>

²³<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/04/world/arab-tv-gets-a-new-slant-newscasts-without-censorship.html>

Analyzing the functioning of Aljazeera Magdalena Wojcieszak says:

“Qatar’s Al-Jazeera Satellite channel gave a very definite impression of breaking the mould.’ It approached its democratizing mission by instigating debates on controversial topics and revealing the misdeeds and malfeasances of various Arab heads of states. The channel has targeted corruption within monarchical regimes, scrutinized abuses within national militaries, served as a forum for various national opposition movements and as a voice of dissent for minority groups in the region. Al-Jazeera has ‘invariably stepped on many toes, which are particularly sensitive in authoritarian political cultures where anyone in authority rarely has his toes stepped upon’²⁴”.

But among the ordinary people of the region, Aljazeera became a voice to raise their issues. The programs on Aljazeera dealt such topics that were considered taboo in the region, like prevalence of torture in Arab jails, the killing and "disappearing" of political opponents in many countries like Algeria and the rights of women and minorities in the region.

When Aljazeera started criticizing the regimes of the region, the rulers complained to the Emir of Qatar and asked him to control Aljazeera. But, the Emir never budged on the pressure and always said Aljazeera is an independent channel and the Government has no control on its editorial policy. As he said once:

"It's caused no end of problems, but all the same I think of it as a kind of oxygen, invigorating our thinking. I tell my children, if you want to know the issues of real importance in the Arab world, watch Al Jazeera"²⁵.

Aljazeera Channels

After the success of this Arabic channel and creating a lot of controversies in the media world, Aljazeera started launching many channels under “Qatar Media Network” that was later renamed as “Aljazeera Media Network.” The Channels include “Aljazeera Arabic, Aljazeera English, Aljazeera Balkans, Aljazeera America (was closed after a year) Aljazeera Turkish, Sports channels and Children channels.

²⁴Al Jazeera: A Challenge to the Traditional Framing Research, Published by Sage Publication 2005 page no 121

²⁵<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/04/world/arab-tv-gets-a-new-slant-newscasts-without-censorship.html?src=pm&pagewanted=2>

Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC)

The Middle East Broadcasting Centre brand name as MBC is one of the biggest media house of the world own by Saudi prince *Waleed Bin Ibrahim Al Ibrahim*. MBC is first free to Air private broadcasting company in the Arab World. The channel was launched in 1991 in London and was shifted to Dubai, UAE in 2002. MBC has multiple channels from entertainment, business, and sports to the News. *Al Arabiya* News channel s also owned by the MBC.

Al-Arabiya

Al-Arabiya was launched in 2003 to counter the Qatar based news channel Aljazeera. The channel is based in Dubai Media City. This is a 24 hours Arabic Satellite Channel, but beside Arabic it also provides the news in English, Persian and Urdu.

Like Aljazeera, *Al Arabiya* also airs verities of programs and shows like sports, business and current affair. This is the most popular Arabic news channel in the Arab World after Aljazeera. The channel is often criticized for its pro Saudi agenda. After the re election in 2009, president of US Barack Obama gave it first formal interview to this channel.

In the Arab Spring and after that *Al Arabiya* has remained soft on the Saudi and its policies in Middle East.

Al-Hurra (الحررة) a satellite channel was launched by USA on February 14, 2004. It was launched to provide “objective, accurate and relevant news and information” to its audiences. The channel was launched by USA to spread “democracy” in the Arab World. But it is considered by scholars that in reality it is a USA Government Propaganda channel to promote the US policies in the region and to safeguard its interest. Interestingly it was also launched to counter the *Aljazeera*’s “Negative coverage of USA” in the Middle East. It is one of the most unpopular TV channel in the region with only one percent audiences among the Arabic TV channels.

Al-Manar (قناة المنار) TV channel was launched by Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shia militant group to spread its ideology in the region in 1999. It is also one of the popular Arabic satellite channels in the Middle East broadcasted from Beirut. After that New TV channel was launched in 2001 in Lebanon, and the BBC was launched again in 2008.

Besides these Arabic channels, there are lots of Private TV channels in all over the Arab world and some of the channels are very popular internationally.

Other countries are also taking interest in the Arabic channels due to strategic importance of the region and are launching their own channels in Arabic language. Some of these channels are France 24 (فرانس 24), Russia Today (روسيا اليوم) and CCTV Arabic Service of China.

Role of Media in Arab Society: The Historical Perspective

Media in the Arab countries have evolved over the years from a mouthpiece of ruling monarchies to the tool of change and democracy. From the so called Arab spring of 2010-11, it can be understood how media has changed and played a positive role in changing the thinking pattern and evolving the information system in the region. To better understand the role of media in the Arab region in changing the social and political conditions of Arab masses. In the following section the role of media in the society, politics and culture of Arab world will be analyzed.

The Beginning

Media evolved in the Arab world under the colonial powers and the main reason behind the evolution of media was to continue occupying the Arab region using different tools. Media was also a tool in the hands of colonial powers as the Arab people were unaware of it. But, when the same tool came in the hands of Arabs, they used it to get freedom from these same powers. The most effective use of media was done by Egyptian people in mobilizing the public opinion against the imperial forces and after the freedom; it was used to mobilize the Arab masses under the banner of Arab Nationalism or Arabism. Both Radio and television started after 1950 in the Arab world. The first indigenous radio that started its transmission in the region

was “Radio Cairo” that was started from Egypt by Gamal Abdel Nasser. On 4th July 1953, Radio Cairo started its first program “Voice of the Arabs” in which it aired anti-colonial message and later on this program become so popular that the name of the radio station was changed from the “Radio Cairo” to “The Voice of the Arabs”.²⁶ First Television was started in Morocco in 1954 and later on it was introduced in the whole Arab region. But from the beginning, Egypt kept its monopoly on the media in the region whether it is radio, television or print media till 1990s. But the most affective station that changed the destiny of many Arab regimes, dictator and also the masses was “Voice of Arabs” radio. It become so popular in the region that Arab dictators became afraid of its popularity and started counter attack to it by launching their own radio stations. The main factors behind the popularity of radio were that it was cheap and therefore was affordable for all people whether they are rich or poor. Most of the people were illiterate at time so the print media was not so popular. Describing the impact of “The Voice of Arabs Mustapha Lahlali writes:

*“Voice of the Arabs successfully contributed to the overthrow of the Imam of Yemen in September 1962. Before that in 1958, it mobilized the Arab nationalist groups who staged a coup d’état to force Noori to flee Baghdad only to be captured and killed afterwards. The impact of the Voice of the Arabs on the Arab streets could not be ignored by most of the Arab regimes, notably King Saud of Saudi Arabia. He and his family were under close scrutiny and constant attack from the Voice of the Arabs in its programme “Enemies of God”.*²⁷

Radio was the most important instrument of information and communication when the idea of Arab Nationalism was being nurtured in the imagination of Arab public. The idea of “One Community” (أمة واحدة) was spread all over the region by “Voice of the Arab” Radio station from Egypt. Gamal Abdel Nasser is considered the father of the Arab Nationalism and he was well aware that without an effective communication system, it is not possible to mobilize the public on one agenda. He started “Voice of the Arabs” that spread the Nasserism in the Arab World and people got the sense of belonging the one *Qaumiyya* (Nation) and *Ummah* (Community). According to El Mustapha Lahlali:

²⁶ Mustapha Lahlali, Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Page 13.

²⁷ Mustapha Lahlali, Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Page 14.

“It aired anti-colonial and anti-imperialism programs. It broadcasted the Egypt Government’s ideology for 18 hours each day²⁸”.

He further says:

“Voice of the Arabs” was successful in mobilizing and rallying the Arab public to support the idea that Arabs are one entity and one nation²⁹”

It was this power of media that led all the Arab regimes to start their own radio stations and television to counter the opposition voices. But, the media in the region remained under strict control of governments and nothing was shown or telecasted without censorship. In the garb of national unity and culture, the authoritarian regimes of the region kept stifling the opposition voices that lacked these types of communication means.

The media remained under the strict control of Arab regimes till 1980s and therefore this period may be called as stagnant as there has not been much development in the field of media in the region. Almost all the countries started their TV channels and radio stations but these stations remained under the control of government agencies and mere a tool of propaganda. In the war between Israel and Arabs, Voice of the Arab was the main radio station that continued informing the masses about the latest development in the war. But when Arab forces lost to Israel it came to light that this station was exaggerating the happening in the favour of Arabs and therefore this station also lost its credibility. Till 1980, the media remained only the mouthpiece of the governments.

The Transnational Media

In 1980s the phase of satellite channels started in the Arab world and this proved to be a turning point in the history of mass media in the Arab world. Arab regimes had no control on the content and broadcast of satellite channels and these channels were easily available across the region from Middle East to North Africa. The introduction of these channels made irrelevant the state owned channels and people converted to these channels for latest information. Besides that, it also unified

²⁸ *Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Page 13.*

²⁹ *Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Page 13.*

the Arabs on the main causes like Palestine issue. As before that, the flow of information was controlled by the regimes and they were shown filtered news. Transnational channels also created the platform for discussing and debating the issues that were considered taboo in the conservative Arab society like sex, democracy, human rights etc. The result was that Arab people become aware of the situation and they no longer were listening passive news broadcasted by the state owned television channels. They were not accepting the information without authentication. These new platforms provided the Arab masses to express their opinion regarding the issues of importance like Palestine, human right etc. Describing the circumstances Mustapha Lahlali writes:

*“Transnational broadcast news coverage about the Middle East conflict has a tremendous appeal to Arab audiences since unlike print, it favours movement over stillness, simplification over complexity, specificity over abstraction and the present over the past or the future”.*³⁰

These transnational channels started utilising new technology in their programs and that has a great impact on the Arab audiences. It changed the way the Arab public approaches the television channels. The coverage of Arab-Israel conflict and other burning issues of the region gave impetus to these channels and they fully exploited the void available in the news media of the region. Transnational media was the tool that changed the public opinion, formed the public opinion and managed the public opinion effectively. It also contributed to strengthening and mobilising the Arab masses to a shared purpose. It changed the way the information is disseminated and the way it is accepted and engaged by the public. This led to the stiff competition among the state owned television channels and to remain relevant they also started changing their strategy, introducing new methods in their programs to attract the lost audiences. This was a historic change in the media sphere of the region since independence and introduction of television. Arab regimes also started thinking to change their strategy to cope with new realities. They started investing in media, modernizing them and creating a new image in this field. This led to introduction of many new channels.

Privatization, Globalization

³⁰ Mustapha Lahlali, Contemporary Arab Broadcast media, page 31.

In 1990s a new phase started in the history of media in the region and that was of globalization and privatization. In this period, the Arab regimes opened to the world and its realities. They started thinking of their image as modern, developed countries. Media was the first and effective platform in this regard. They started heavily investing in the media industry and started their own channels like MBC “Middle East Broadcasting Channel” and Aljazeera etc. The 1991 gulf war was covered live by US based CNN and that was a new experience for the Arabs. First time Arab people were watching the live coverage of a war sitting in their drying rooms. That shaken the Arab public opinion and opened them to a new phase in media. In 90s the world also started focussing in the region and world media houses also started opening their Arabic Channels. BBC was the first media house that started its channel in Arabic language that was later closed in 1995.

In 1995 Aljazeera was launched from Qatar and it was a turning point in the history of media in the region. It was started by the Emir of Qatar with the investment of 500 million dollar. It heralded a new dawn in the TV broadcast that led to the war of media in the region. MBC and Aljazeera also ended the hegemony of Egypt in the pan Arab media that was started by “the Voice of the Arabs” in 1953 from Cairo. The success of Aljazeera encouraged other world player to invest in the region therefore many countries started their Arabic channels that included CNN USA, *Al Hurra* USA, Sky New UK, Russia TV, France 24, CCTV China, DW Germany etc.

To counter Aljazeera, MBC (owned by a Saudi Prince) also started its news channel “*Al Arabiya*” and that become one of most popular Arabic news channels of the Arab world.

These channels impacted the culture, society and the politics of the Arab world to a great extent. Apart from providing a platform to the people to air their voices it also strengthened the bound between the people of the region. This provided the platform to the people of Arabs from Middle East to Africa to come together for the common causes. These channels done, that Gamal Abdel Nasser’s “Voice of the Arabs” could not do. It unified the Arabs on one Language, one Umma and one cause. These channels brought pan Arab consciousness. This was a new phenomenon in the media of the Arab world and analysing this phenomenon Mustapha Lahlali says:

“Transnational Arab television has brought to Arab living rooms debates and discussion about topics that are of common interest to a larger Arabic public, and no longer confined to individual Arab countries. The channels have also contributed to disseminating Arab music and other cultural activities.... Aljazeera’s ‘Crossfire’ programme attracts viewers from across the Arab world... Programme such as this has contributed to raising awareness of Arab issues among the Arab public.”³¹

Films in the Arab Society

The film production was started in the Arab World in 1960s from Egypt. Films produced in the Egypt were watched and liked all over the Arab region. As the lifestyle, culture and the economic and political situation of people was ~~same~~ similar in every Arab country, so they found the sense of commonality in these films. Films like “Jamila the Algerian” became the mobilizing point for the Arabs against the foreign rule on their country. This film is the story of an Algerian girl who loves her homeland and joined the patriotic movement of the country to liberate it from French rule. “*Assafir Fil Emarah*” (The Embassy in the Building) is another movie made in 1967, after the defeat of the Arabs in the hands of Israel. It is the story of an Egyptian boy who returns from the Gulf state after earning the money for his family and found that the Israeli Embassy has occupied the space in his building. He is very disturbed due to this as many impositions were imposed by it in the name of security. He led a large protest against Israel policies against Palestine and overnight he became the hero in the Arab World. Movies like these were made in the Egypt and were watched all over the Arab region. These movies mobilized the Arab as one nation and the Idea of Arab Nationalism was strengthened with such films.

TV Serials and Dramas also played a great role in uniting the Arabs. Most of the Serials were produced in Egypt and then were re-telecasted in other countries. Egyptian Films and the Serials got such popularity that the Egypt was named as “The Hollywood of the Arab World”.

Changing Media Roles in the Arab World

The role of media is changing at very fast pace in the Arab region. The role played by media in the last couple of years especially during the ~~in~~ “Arab Spring”

³¹ Mustapha Lahlai, Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media, Page 33

shows how media has become an instrumental factor in the political, social and economic life of the region. Media, in the region, is no more the mouthpiece of the ruling elites; rather it has become the voice of the people. The media houses owned by state are also forced to change its style of coverage and to give importance to the people's causes to remain relevant in the eyes of the people. According to Noha Mellor:

“Governments owned media now have to fight to win their audiences who have been attracted by growing private and semi-private media outlets”.

The Internet has also affected the media in a great way as it is giving competition to the other means of media. The people are no more dependent on the Arab media as they can get the news from any international channel easily through internet. To keep their audiences with them, Arab media is forced to provide them accurate news. The social media is also a great factor which is not only changing the media behavior in the region but, also playing a great role in changing the politics and society of the region. The launch of 24/7 news channels has also increased the quality of news in the region.

Role of Cyber Media in shaping the public opinion

The internet came in the Arab world in 1990s. Most of the traditional media in the Arab World is under the state control and the freedom of expression was very difficult in the region. But the advent of the internet in the region has changed the whole scenario and the people are expressing their views freely. The Cyber Media has provided a platform to the people and especially the youngsters to express their views.

In the beginning, the internet was promoted by the governments to modernize their countries. But, slowly it was used as tool by the people against the same regimes. To counter this challenge, the regimes tried to curtail the freedom of internet and banned certain sites which were critical of them. But, the modern technology and expertise of the young people in the cyberspaces made it unsuccessful. The people started their own blogs and website to express their views and the western media started popularizing it.

The beginning of the Social Media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube has changed everything in the region. The young generation of the region and those who got education in the western countries started not only comparing their regimes with the western democracies, but also started writing against autocratic regimes of the Arab world. These views were so strong that it became impossible for the states to stop or control it.

The Social and cyber media has played a great role in the Arab uprising in 2010 and it was decisive force in toppling the powers from Tunisia to Yemen. In the post “Arab Spring,” Arab world also the social and cyber media is playing important role in the process of democratization of the region.

Many analysts described the Arab spring as a sudden phenomenon that gripped the Arab world immediately after the self immolation of Mohammad Bouzazi in Tunisia. But, if we analyse the role of media in the Arab societies deeply we understand that this was not a sudden revolution. The seeds of this revolution were sown by the “Voice of the Arabs” in 1953. The media has been shaking the Arab public conscience and shaping their opinion over the years. The Arab Israel conflict is the seed of resentment in the Arab people against their governments, but strict surveillance and brutal control did not allow the people to express their anger. From 1990 onwards the satellite channels has been shaping the public opinion and the internet played the most important role in the Arab society. Younger generation explored the new opportunities through internet and the free flow of information had given them an instrument to analyse the sins of their authoritarian regime and compare them with the world’s democracies.

Social media and Arab Uprising

The Arab Uprising was also called “Facebook Revolution” or the “Twitter Revolution” as the message of the immolation of a street vendor was spread all over the world in a very short time with the help of Social Media only.

The Time Magazine says about Facebook while giving the Person of the Year title to its founder Mark Zuckerberg:

"Facebook is now the third largest country on earth and surely has more information about its citizens than any government does and Zuckerberg, a Harvard dropout, is its T-shirt-wearing head of state"³²."

The posts on Facebook and tweets were used as the leading force to mobilize the people, especially young generation of streets and in spreading revolution all over the world. The regimes tried their best to stop it by banning internet and social networking sites, but they could not succeed in it.

The people succeeded in sharing and spreading uncensored information in the region that helped in mobilizing the likeminded people on one platform. The social networking not only helped the Arabs gaining the power to overthrow the dictators and despots, but also helped to the world to know the real happening on the Arab streets. Social networking broke the psychological barrier between the youth of different countries and helped them to unite on one platform to fight for a common cause.

Conclusion

To conclude one can say that media is one of the most powerful tool that human beings have invented as it has marked its impact on every aspect of human life. Since time immemorial people used to communicate via different means and languages but with the advancement of media from print to cyber, the reach of people towards it each other has become unimaginable. From simple diffusion of knowledge to the creation of nationalism, mass media has played a significant, if not constructive role, all over the world. But, it required a special mention in case of Arab World as in Arab World fight was not only against the colonial forces but also with the autocratic ruling regimes also.

Media has played an instrumental role not only in mobilizing Arab people but also in the process of democratization of the region. Like every society of the world, Arab society is impacted by the media and media has direct impact their thoughts, opinion and consciousness. From the Nasserism of Egypt to the Arab uprising of 2010 everything was the impact of media. With the introduction of internet and social

³² http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-lam/social-media-middle-east-protests-_b_1881827.html

media, the people got a new affordable and effective tool in their hands and that is being used against the authoritarian regimes. The same tool is being used by the governments against the people and as a propaganda tool as well but they are failing miserably despite their efforts and spending lot of money.

CHAPTER-II

Globalization, Privatization and Arabic Media

Globalization: An Introduction

The term *globalization* is derived from the “globalize” which refers to the emergence of international network of economic systems. Globalization is one of the most used words in the world today. Before we discuss the globalization of media, we need to define and understand what the term globalization mean. According to the Cambridge Dictionary ‘*the increase of trade around the world by large companies producing and trading goods in many different countries*’³³ is called globalization. Therefore we understood that globalization is the free movements of goods, services and people across the worlds in a seamless manner. Mustapha Lahlali has defined the globalization as:

“A world without a nation state, or without a nation and without a state. It is a world of corporations and networks; a world of subjects or ‘doers’ those in control, and objects of consumption imposed on them, be it the consumption of food, drinks, canned products, images, data, movement and even silence. Cyberspace has become the new nation... it is space which is made by the communication networks to encompass economics, politics and culture”.³⁴

Swedish journalist Thomas Larsson in his book ‘*The Race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalization*’ define globalization as:

“Globalization is the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer, it pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world”.³⁵

It is understood mostly that globalization deals with the economy, although it is partially true but it is very vast term that covers all walks of life including culture. There are many aspects of globalization and one of the aspects which have gain prominence in last decade is the media sector that includes films, music, news media, satellite TV channels, cyber media etc. Media is one of the most useful and effective entity that is unifying the people across the world. We observe that during the events like Foot Ball World Cup, Olympic Games or Cricket World Cup, people sitting from the world capitals to the remote areas watch every single move in the sport fields so closely that it seems like the world has been converted into a small global village.

³³ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/globalization>

³⁴ El Mustapha Lahlali, Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media- page 51

³⁵ Larsson Thomas (2001) The race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalization, Page- 9

During these matches the world appears unified beyond cultural, national and linguistic diversity. A good example of this is the coverage of conflicts by the world media that is watched all over the world.

According to Mustapha Lahlali, both western and Eastern scholars agree on the fact that the globalization means “commodification of culture” and that will lead to the loss and damage of the authentic fabric. That is the reason; many scholars have called the globalization as threat to the existence of the smaller cultures, ethnicity and nativity.

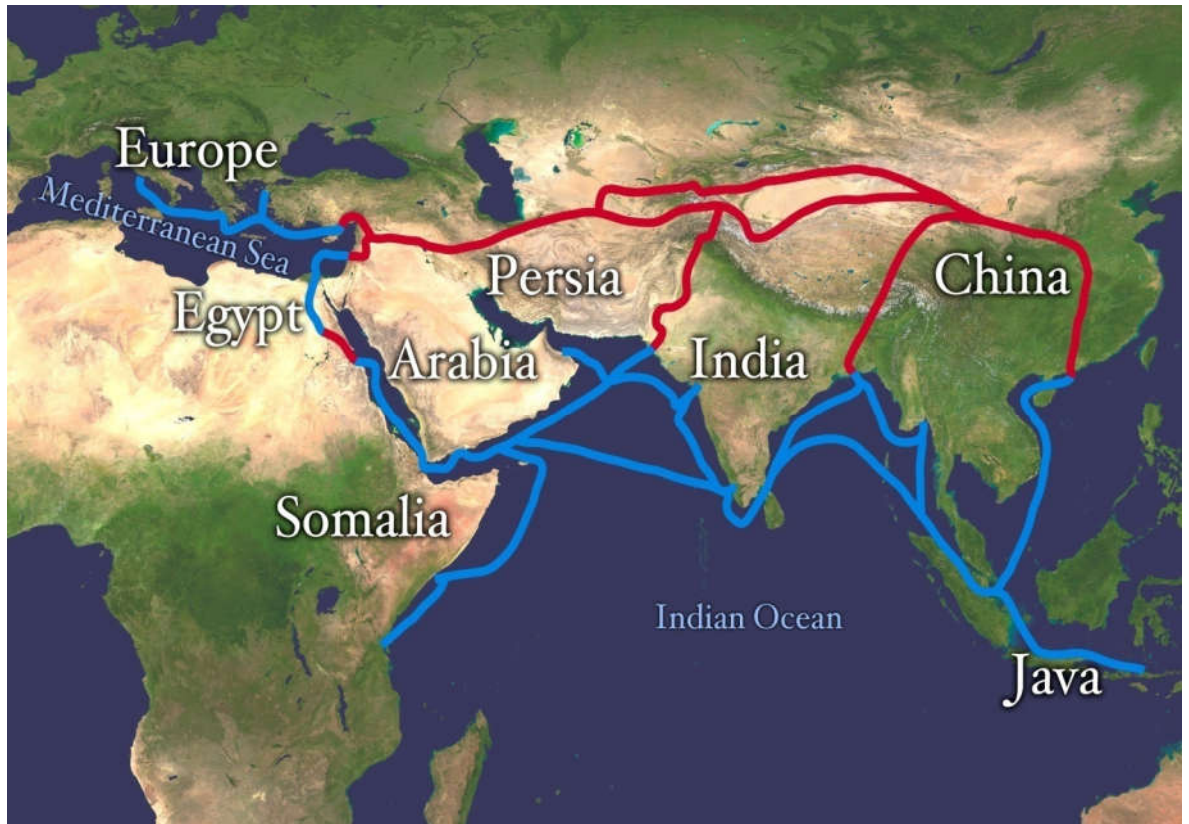
Terhi Rantanen in his book ‘*The Media and the Globalization*’ writes:

*“Globalization refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society”.*³⁶

Today the globalization has taken the world in its grip and nobody from the developed countries to the developing has left untouched from its impact. It is a revolution that has swept the world in one form or other and despite opposition from some quarters of society it was succeeded in revolutionizing the world. The origin of the globalization can be traced back to the ancient times. The example of that time is the trade links between different countries and the civilizations like Sumerian and Indus civilizations. After that there are instances of trade between many countries like India, Greece, Egypt, Roman Empire and the Han Empire. The trade routes like Silk rout are the result of trade, and it can be dubbed as ‘globalization ‘on its rise. These ancient trade routes led to the development of historic relation between the empires, dynasties and the countries. Through these routes people and goods travelled to many parts of the world. Some people started living in distant countries and established their relationship with local people. These types of examples are found in almost all the countries in the world. In the medieval Islamic period this practice of migration and trade increased many fold. Many Muslims travelled in different parts of the world and brought with them a new faith, culture and civilization. This was a fine example of globalization that led to establish a new culture and connected the world with faith and culture. People around the world started following Islam but the centre of Islam was in Arab, Muslims were praying five times a day in the direction of holy city Mecca where the *Qibla* of Islam is situated. They started travelling to the Mecca once

³⁶RantanenTerhi, *Media and Globalization*, (2005) SAGE Publication, London

in a year for the pilgrimage (Hajj) and that was a fine example of globalization. Muslims gathered from all over the world in Mecca, established links among each other and exchanged different cultures and civilization.



(Main Routs of the Silk Road)

After that many powerful countries occupied other weaker countries making them their colonies. That led to the competition among the developed and industrialized countries itself. They started competing each other in advance technologies and so that they could colonize other weak countries. In that way traffic of people from developed countries to the under-developed countries and vice versa increased. People to people relations increased around the world that resulted in making the world closer to everyone.

Globalization in Historical Perspective

The globalization is often associated with modern time and is considered that this recent phenomenon started with the modern technology. Globalization can be studied in historical perspective by using historical record that goes back to the

centuries and that can give a holistic understanding of globalization. The historical foundation of globalization was laid down in 325 BC when Chandragupta Maurya converted to Buddhism and united the religious power of the world. He expanded trade, economy, and powerful armies for the first time. Alexandra the Great also invaded many parts of the world and expended his power on global level. These examples are the early instances of ancient globalization. Down the history lane, after the Chandragupta Maurya, Buddhism spread across the regions, countries and emerged as one of the biggest religion of the world. Islam was born in the 6th century and within a century it expended across the continent and countries. Arab Muslims travelled from Arab to India in South Asia, Morocco in the Africa and Spain in the west. The spread of Islam across the globe is finest example of globalization of that time. In that era itself, trade, commerce and business routes open across the world that connected the world in one thread. After that the rise of Genghis Khan, creation of Ottoman Empire, expansion of slave trade, revolution in France and America, colonization of many parts of the world by Great Britain are some of the example of historical background of the globalization. Post decolonization world adopted the globalization more easily than before due to technological advance and the means of communication. The invention of radio, printing press, newspapers, television, aero plane and other transport means helped the globalization to grip the world. With the invention of computer, telephone, mobile and finally internet globalization got a new definition that converted the world into a 'global village' in real sense. The information travelled across the globe in seconds, any political or social issue in the one corner of the world impacts the whole world in seconds. The recent of example of this type of globalization is the uprising in the Arab world in 2010. As the unrest started in Tunisia, within days it spread across the Arab world forcing dictatorial regimes to hear the demands of then people. The impact of same was felt across the world as well when people started protesting against the policies of their governments. In every country the protesting sites were named as 'Tehrir Squire' after the name of Tahrir Squire Field in Egypt where historical uprising against the government of Hosni Mubarak was organized.

Globalization in Modern Era

Globalization as understood in modern sense came into existence after the World War Two. When the world was destroyed by the war and world leaders realized that it is time to make peace with each other. They proposed to modernize their countries and, they started establishing trade links with countries breaking down the artificial borders created during the World War. After the World II, many countries like India, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Indonesia etc. got independence and they established their own economic system. They started establishing trade relation with countries around the world.

The establishment of United Nations Organization (UNO) in 1945 was a milestone in the history of modern world that connected the world under its banner. Many organizations under the banner of UNO were established to work around the world like UNESCO, UNICEF etc. These organizations established their offices in many countries around the world. Another mile stone in this direction was World Trade Organization in 1994-95 that revolutionized the process of globalization by promoting free trade, abolishing the double taxation, decreasing of transport cost and blend of culture and tradition across the globe.

In the 2st century, the nature of the world has changed drastically. Network of economy, technology and politics has gripped the whole world making local as global and global as local. This emerging trend is weakening the historical claim over nation, state, sovereignty, culture, ethnicity and identity. Today the free flow of multilateral corporation and economic waves originating in the one corner of the world are engulfing the whole globe. Facebook, Twitter, faxes, email and other means of communication are spreading information across the globe instantaneously. On the international foray, gains of one country are proving to be the loss of another and vice versa whether the countries are poor or rich. New information technology like internet and social media has ended the difference between the poor and rich. Rapid democratization of new resources and information technology are turning out to be the greatest liberating force for the poor and rich alike. Transactions, travel, transportation that used to take months or week are being done in minutes and seconds. Despite being a disruptive power, globalization has also emerged as an empowering force. The new trend has forced governments, corporations and

institutions to change their strategy to cope with the modern trend and that change is helping to work globalization better.

Besides being a liberating force, globalization has also created great concerns for the coming time and one of the greatest concerns is the environment change. Nations across the world are competing with each other in the race of development, ignoring the environmental concerns. In this mad race of development, global warming has become a threat to the whole world that is even threatening the existence of world. The blame game between the developing and the developed countries is letting down the people affected by the environmental change. In that sense, globalization is both a negative and positive agent of change.³⁷ It is responsibility of the world leaders as well as the common people of the world to change their strategy of ‘development’ to save the world and prevent the environmental degradation.

Technology and Globalization

Thomas Friedman has said “*Globalization is not a choice. Basically 80% of it is driven by technology*”³⁸. If we consider this statement of Friedman in the context of current global environment, we believe that more than 80% of it is driven by the technology. Technology has become so important in our life that it has become almost impossible to spend a day without that. From mobile to radio and television or internet, all has become part of our daily life. As is said ‘need is the mother of invention’ the need kept arising people kept inventing to cope with the trend and time. From invention of train, aero plane and, buses and taxis to the mobile, television and internet, all technologies have played a great role in the process of globalization. The technology led revolution started after the industrialization in the western and European countries in 19th century. The invention of telephone, television and radio was a step towards the globalization and these were the founding stone of this revolution. It was the time when many poor countries were colonized by the western powers and from Asia to Africa; most of the countries were the colonies of British, Italy, USA or France. With the imperialism, these countries brought the new and

³⁷Nyambati R. Aori, GLOBALISATION AND THE 21ST CENTURY WORLD,

<http://blogs.bu.edu/sbutcher/files/2011/02/Aori-globalisation-and-the-environment.pdf>

³⁸ Marshall Bricklin “ Thomas L. Friedman’s view of globalization”

<http://www.bricklin.com/albums/fpawlf2000/friedman.htm>

advanced technologies in these countries like telecommunication, TV, Radio, newspapers etc. These technologies were brought by the colonial powers for their own benefits. But gradually when the colonized people become aware of these technologies, the same technologies were used against the imperialist power to get freedom. Gradually the means of globalization kept changing and new and modern technologies gave positive impetus to this process.

Information technology was one of the most influential and revolutionary instruments that helped the poor countries to educate and make aware their countrymen about the evil of colonialism that laid the seeds of discontent among the people against the colonial powers. After the World War II till 1990 was the historic period for the colonized as well as colonial powers. World changed in these 50 years that has not changed in 2000 years before that. In this period many countries around the world got the freedom and established their sovereignty on their homeland. That was the struggle of indigenous people led by new technology that bear the fruits of freedom in this period. Till 1990 most of the countries got freedom, ended the cold war between USA and Soviet Union and with that also ended the era of Non-Alignment'.

From 1990 onward started a new era in the history of mankind. The period after 1990 is dubbed as the era of neo-liberalism, neo-colonialism and privatization. In this period, started the economic liberalization from the Western and European countries that engrossed the world. This liberalization was imitated by the developing and poor countries and the developed countries again started ruling the world indirectly through advanced technology and media.

Globalization- Is it the latest brand of Colonialism?

In the modern theory, globalization is divided into two categories: globalization from above and globalization from below. The dominant category of globalization is the globalization from above (GFA) and that is the main force also that is changing the world today. It is alleged by the third world countries that globalization is being imposed on them by developed countries to spread their culture, ideas and business in poorer countries and that is again making them subject of powerful states. They are being exploited and their indigenous culture, tradition and

economies are being snatched. Many scholars have dubbed the globalization as a form of colonialism.³⁹ Historically, great powers have always used poor and developed countries for their own interest. Before the World War they used to colonize the poor countries, but now the time has changed and it is no more possible to colonize them by military power. To continue their tradition of colonizing they have invented new things to do that. They are colonizing the poor countries in the name of democracy, importing new ideas, imposing their economic system etc. Considering these all aspect, globalization is also considered as a new form of colonization.

Media Globalization and the Globalization of Media

The mass media today is seen as playing a key role in spreading globalization and multiple flow of information between the countries. The news that used to take months, weeks and hours to reach around the world is reaching in the matter of seconds. With the privatization and globalization, new business model took shape in the world and that was the business of media. The profession that was considered a mission was converted into business. Many top businessmen and governments started media houses and it became one of the most profitable industries in the world. This model of started initially in the developed countries that was imitated by in the other countries as well. In the beginning, the films an serials produced in the western countries was reproduced in the third world countries dubbing it into regional languages. Besides being a business model, it also helped in spreading the western culture, tradition and lifestyle in the poor countries. But gradually, poor countries established their own media industries and started producing serials, movies and operas based on their own culture and tradition. The growth of this industry remained slow till the process of privatization started in these countries and rich businessmen started investing in this sector. The advertisement is the main source of income for the media industry, with the increase in the revenue, the industry attracted investment. Many multi-national companies (MNCs) started investing in this field and started earning profit.

³⁹Anonymous,, 2011, Globalization is a form of Colonialism, Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/287753>

With the expansion of and reach of international media houses, emerged the theory of media imperialism. International news agencies like AP, UPI, AFP and Reuters played a great role in the expansion of international and cross national media. Most of the powerful media was based in the western nations and it was being exported to the developing countries, therefore it was considered that with the media, western values are also being exported into the third world. But despite severe criticism of these agencies, almost whole media of the third world was dependent on these. It was alleged that these agencies are not covering the issues of third world countries and instead of they concentrate on western countries.

Even the ownership of media was also in the hands of few elites and it was pointed out by critics that it is threatening the free speech, diversity and hindering the real competition. The media from 1990 took a new turn. Before that sending message to the audiences was the main aim of media, but after that, media converted into an industry and the main purpose of that industry was to earn money. Before that communication space used to be the space of struggle against the ruling elite and highlighting injustice against the weaker section of society, but after that it becomes the space for income and commercialization.

In the beginning of the commercialization of media, most of the media industries were American and they started operating across the world. From news media, films, sports to the television serials, all were exported by USA and was consumed by the world audiences. Due to the influence and control of America, it was dubbed as Americanization of the world. The products used in the Hollywood movies were popularized across the world. The lifestyle of USA as shown in the media was adopted by the youngsters in all over the world. The American culture was so popular that it got very strong response and opposition from the third world countries. The USA is also considered the model of commercial media in the Europe. Being superpower of the world, it had the privilege to disseminate its culture and products all over the world and that privilege was well exploited by America. Despite opposition from many countries, NGOs and indigenous people, America was successful in colonizing the world through media and culture. Today when many other countries are competing with the USA in media industry and even some third world countries have established their big media empires, but they have failed to end the craze of American style, culture and language in the youngsters. After 2000's

many media organizations from Japan, Germany, Australia, Britain and some other countries gave a tough time to the American media houses, but they could not completely overcome that. Still some global American media symbols like CNN, Hollywood films and TV serials rule the hearts and minds of the people.

Internet and media Globalization

At the end of 20th century came the most powerful ever instrument of the world and that was internet. With the invention of internet, people got most powerful key in their hand and that was internet. Without technology, globalization would not have expanded and take the shape that is today. Internet is the most powerful technology that gave globalization energy booster to spread. Internet has revolutionized the information technology that is essential in connecting the world and making it the 'global village' in real sense. It has changed the way how people work, extended the global knowledge base and have provided immense ways to bring people, countries and even continent closer. Internet has ended the concept of space. People can make friends; do business, and make cultural bounds around the world sitting on one place. World Wide Web has broken down the communication barriers in a way that was unimaginable to earlier generations. From news service to the social network, whole world is a click away. Internet is also a weapon in the hands of third world countries and the people to fight for them, and make them felt around the world. Internet is the main driving force behind the globalization. It is lowering the cultural and economic barriers in communication between the countries and individual people around the world. Internet has changed the work of media and the way it operates. It has made very easy as well as very difficult for mass media like newspapers, television and radio to operate. Before the age of internet, people used to believe on mass media and nobody was there to ask the authenticity of the news. Media had become the tool of propaganda by rich and powerful. News that pleased the elites was fed to the people around the clock via television and people were forced to believe that. But the internet has made it difficult for the mainstream media to spread propaganda in the name of news. Internet has provided to the public an alternate to the mainstream media. Lakhs of websites are available online to verify the news stories published or broadcast by mainstream media and that has made very difficult for media to maintain their credibility. Getting news and publishing has

become so easy that anyone who can read or write can get it ad publish in seconds. The media industry has become so competitive that traditional media houses are struggling to cope with this sudden change. All the media houses whether television, newspapers or radio have launched their online portals and they try their best to keep it update minutes by minutes. From social activists, religious leaders to the common people, all have started their own websites or blogs and they are competing with the mainstream media. Many new startup news portals without any capital investment or resources are giving a tough time to the powerful media houses. After the internet, fake news has emerged a greatest epidemic in the market of news media. But on the other hand many dedicated sites are bringing out fake news in the public and making it difficult to operate this business.

Social Media, Mass Media and Globalization

21st century is bringing with it new surprises every day. One of the most striking surprises of this century is the social media. The current connection of globalization is created by social media. People around the world are connecting with each other and are making bridges between the civilizations with this medium. Social media is brilliant tool that can be used by those who have access to it. It is accessed globally and it is also very cheap medium. From the beginning, it has been used to bring change. It has toppled the dictators in many part of the world and has emerged a really revolutionary invention of our times. Social media is a dominant form of activism. In the beginning many people have apprehensions about the revolution created through social media, but it has proved time and again that it has revolutionized the world in real sense. From the ‘Arab Spring’ of 2010-11 to the Brexit and the Trump and Indian election, it has brought the change in the world. It is spreading information rapidly to broad audiences across the world. Social media has emerged the change maker without borders. The huge network created by the social media creates ample opportunities as well as setbacks. Network is worldwide and it supposed to be accessed by everyone equally in the world. But unfortunately that is not the case. In many countries there is hindrance imposed upon citizen, the sites are censored to keep people away from much information. Social media websites like Facebook, Twitter are regularly blocked in many countries in the name of law and

order. But despite all the obstacles created by security agencies, young generation is defying all gag orders and using social media for the sake of freedom of expression.

With the advent of social media, it has created opportunities and challenges for the mainstream media. In the wake of social media revolution, many media houses have created effective strategy and are very much successful in attracting more audiences. One of the fine examples of that is the ‘Arab Spring’ of 2010-11. In December 2010 anti regime protest started from Tunisia, nobody has imagined that this small protest of tech-savvy youngsters will change the course of history not in Tunisia only but all over the Arab world. When an unemployed youth set himself on fire after humiliation in the hands of government officer, some youths planned a protest against this incident. They posted the message for the same on Facebook and on the day of protest thousands of people were on the streets decrying the atrocities of government on people. That protest surprised the Tunisian government and other Arab monarchs. Within a week such type of protests spread all over the Arab world forcing many monarchs out of throne and forcing others to make changes and reforms in the government. Most of the media houses were not prepared to cover such type of revolution except *Aljazeera*. Qatar based *Aljazeera* network tapped the resources in hand, deployed correspondence and reporters across the Arab capitals and most importantly adopted an effective social media strategy. The channel aired the concerns of common people shared on social media, gave updated information to the audiences and surprised the world with its coverage. That was the reason that the Arab Revolution was called as *Aljazeera* moment by scholars⁴⁰. Taking the cue from that spectacular event, other media organizations also started following the footstep and adopted their social media strategies.

Getting news has become very easy today. From political leaders, sportspersons, celebrities, social activists to the common people, all are using social media. They post everything on their social handle. But that is the information, everyone can get. To verify and authenticate the news shared on social media is the real challenge for mainstream media. Many media houses today are losing their credibility by publishing/ broadcasting unverified news picked up from social media.

⁴⁰Chatham House: *Aljazeera and the Arab Spring*, Wada Khanfar (2003-11)

Therefore there is urgent need for all media houses to adopt their social media strategy.

Arab Media and Globalization

Globalization is considered a western phenomenon that was adopted willingly or unwillingly by third world countries very late. With the information technology revolution in the developed countries, its impact was felt all over the world. The development of countries was seen on the basis of technological advancement. Following the footsteps of Western countries, developing and poor countries also adopted the technology and invested heavily in this field. The western countries also promoted their technological business in other countries that was taken positively by these countries. In such a situation, western media was the main force behind the promotion of western information technology around the world. In 21st century, countries those are advanced in information technology are considered developed and developing.

Considering the case of Arab region, in these countries information technology came very late. After the independence of these countries, the governments thought in this regard and established relations with western and European countries. Although mass media came in the region with the colonial powers, but it remained underdeveloped due to lack of technical resources and the policies of governments.

Muslim countries and especially Arab countries have been very hesitant in accepting change whether technological or political. When Europe and USA was developing new technologies and new inventions were being done, Arab countries were in slumber. With the industrial development came the greed in the western powers and they started colonizing poor countries. The main purpose of colonization was to get the wealth and invest in the western markets. After 15th century many European and western nations started invasion on poor countries and by the end of 19th century, most of the countries were colonized. Like other countries of south Asia and Latin America, most of the Arab region was also colonized. From 16th century onwards, Arab world remained under the Ottoman Empire of Turkey. At the end of 19th century it has lost most of its region in the Middle East and North Africa. In

North Africa, Egypt and Sudan became British colony from 1882 and 1899 respectively. Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco were colonized by France in 1881, 1830 and 1912 respectively. Libya was colonized by Italy in 1911. In the Middle East, Syria was colonized by France in 1918, Iraq by Britain in 1920, Jordan by Britain in 1918, Palestine by British in 1918 and Lebanon by France in 1918. Other Gulf countries like Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, except Saudi Arabia also has remained the British colonies⁴¹.

At the time of colonization, whole region was underdeveloped and unaware of modern technologies. The ruling elites were enjoying power without caring about the people and the modern technology. They might have been aware of external threats but were not prepared to defend or face the Western and European powers. With the colonization, these world powers brought with them new and modern technologies. Arab population was not aware of those technologies and was surprised to see that. With other technologies, European also brought with them printing press so that they could spread their propaganda in the region. They employed many Arabs in these presses where Arabs learned to publish. In the meanwhile many Arab intellectuals, writers and activists travelled to the western and European countries where they benefited from the advance technology. After returning back to Arab, these intellectuals started their own newspapers using advance technology. The same technology that was used to colonize the region was being used against the colonial powers. When people got awareness, they started demanding freedom over their homeland. Nationalist movements started all over the Arab world and these movements were empowered by new and advanced technologies. In the wake of these movements, Arab states got freedom one by one. Colonial powers left the region, but they left behind their legacy of modernization and technological advances. After freedom from foreign powers, reign of government came in the hands of some elites who started ruling by hook or crook. They established their monarchies from North Africa to the Middle East, consolidated complete power in their hands, suppressed people and never allowed any dissent. They started TV channels, newspapers and Radio stations to promote their own power and spread propaganda among the people.

⁴¹Janet Abu-Lughod, History of Colonization in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA): Precursor to cold war conflict. <https://coldwarstudies.com/2013/01/11/history-of-colonization-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-mena-precursor-to-cold-war-conflict/>

All the media means became the mouthpiece of monarchs. That status quo continued till 1990s.

Trends of Privatization in the Arab World Media

Privatization started in the western countries much before the Arab and other eastern countries. As an economic system, privatization emerged as biggest trend of the modern times and was promoted mostly by America and United Kingdom. In 1970s this trend emerged a great economic issue on non-Western or non-European countries. Most of the countries around the world considered privatization as the biggest priority in their national economic agenda. According to the World Bank around 270 billion dollars were raised worldwide during the period of 1988 to 1993⁴².

Privatization is defined in economy as the process of transferring ownership of public sector companies to the private owners⁴³. Privatization in the Arab world started in the late 1980s and especially in the 1990s. Within years privatization emerged as the biggest government economic policy across the Arab world. From 1990s onwards many factor including Gulf War led to the economic downfall of the Arab countries especially the Gulf region countries. To cope with this problem, they started the process of privatization. Most of the public sector companies were under performing and were becoming burden on the government. At the same time, private companies were performing tremendously better. Therefore Arab regimes felt the need of drastic reforms including privatization of public sector companies. Governments of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) realized that taxation is not working; price of oil was falling due to internal conflict and the Gulf War and felt the need to change the archaic system. To stimulate their stock markets, and achieve their development goals, they sold many public sector industries and enterprises to private companies. Beside that they also sold shares of public enterprises, launched joint ventures with foreign companies. The GCC countries opened their market for foreign countries for direct investment. Within years private investment increased 40% in the

⁴²Biswa N. Bhattacharyay, TRENDS IN PRIVATISATION IN THE ARAB WORLD AND ITS PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS, *Savings and Development (Journal)* Vol. 20, No. 1 (1996), pp. 5-32 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/25830564?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

⁴³Biswa N. Bhattacharyay, TRENDS IN PRIVATISATION IN THE ARAB WORLD AND ITS PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS, *Savings and Development (Journal)* Vol. 20, No. 1 (1996), pp. 5-32 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/25830564?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

Arab countries. In 1994 \$ 520 million was invested in Oman only and also Oman is the first in the GCC countries which allowed foreigners to own 100% share in industrial projects⁴⁴. Other Gulf countries like Bahrain also privatized state owned trading, farming, oil, aluminum and construction companies. Bahrain also converted Radio and television into independent corporations to make it as profitable industry. Saudi Arabia had mobilized \$ 2,715 million by 1992 through offering public sector companies share to private economic player. Likewise other Arab countries took great interest in the privatization process by selling dozens of public sector companies and opening regional market to the foreign companies. With the privatization of other industries, media industry was also privatized in this phase. Considering the sensitivity of industry, the regimes remained hesitant to privatize. Media was used by the regimes as a mouthpiece of regime to promote their personal agenda. Arab monarchs were scared that if privatized, it will be difficult to control it. But considering the importance of this industry, many Arab countries started their own satellite channels with the state of art technology like Qatar. Following the footstep, other countries also started satellite channels. But they remained under strict control of regimes. From appointing the editors, top broadcasting any information, governments put strict control on them. But despite restrictions and censorship, media thrived in this period in the region. One of the factors behind the development of regional media was the competition with foreign media houses like BBC. The regional media player Aljazeera was also a factor behind the development of private and somewhat independent media in the region.

Privatization of media in the Arab World: the Case of Satellite Revolution

With the trends of Privatization of different industries in the Arab world, came the trend of media privatization. In October 1994 the Lebanese parliament passed the law named 'Audiovisual Media Law' and closed most of the station that have emerged in the country in the war from 1975-1990 and regulated the rest of media functioning in the country. The law was implemented from 1996 and revoked the monopoly of state broadcasting in the country. That law made the Lebanon first

⁴⁴Biswa N. Bhattacharyay, TRENDS IN PRIVATISATION IN THE ARAB WORLD AND ITS PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS, Savings and Development (Journal) Vol. 20, No. 1 (1996), pp. 5-32 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/25830564?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

country in the Arab region to privatize the radio and television media and authorized the private companies to invest in this emerging industry. After the passing of this law, Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) launched its satellite television channel becoming the first private satellite channel in the Arab region that was partly owned and influenced by the then Prime Minister of Lebanon Rafiq al-Hariri. Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International was also launched in 1996 that is considered the first private international channel established in the Arab world and it was viewed in countries neighboring Lebanon⁴⁵. At that time the satellite technology was not much advanced, therefore many satellite channels launched by other Arab countries were not working properly. With the launch of Nile Sat 101 and 102 in 1998 and 2000 respectively and with existing Arab Sat system, the satellite technology got advanced in the Arab region. Before 1990 the control of media was in the hands of Arab regimes, but with the privatization of media, the regimes were scared of becoming media out of control of state, so states also started investing in the satellite television. By the end of 2000, every Arab country had at least one satellite television and some countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia had more than one⁴⁶. Egypt established its media city named 'Media Production City' in 1989 creating a hub for media production in the whole Arab region. The production city was used by many big media houses like Aljazeera to shoot and produce the programs without any censorship. The satellite revolution in the region kept growing and more channels by state and private players were launched over the time. According to Asia-Pacific Broadcast Union⁴⁷, currently nearly 1300 satellite TV channels are in the Arab region out of which only 29 are public owned and 729 are owned by private companies. According to the report total 758 organizations in the region broadcast or re-broadcast the satellite channels covering news, movies, nature, children, and music etc. Most of these channels are seen across the world and are very popular like movie channels or MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Corporation) *Al-Arabiya*, *Al-Manar* and *Aljazeera Media Network*.

⁴⁵Rinnawi, K. (2006). *Instant nationalism: McArabism, Al-Jazeera, and transnational media in the Arab world*. University Press of America. P. 38

⁴⁶Rinnawi, K. (2006). *Instant nationalism: McArabism, Al-Jazeera, and transnational media in the Arab world*. University Press of America. P. 40

⁴⁷ Asia-pacific broadcasting Union, Nearly 1300 Satellite Channels in the Arab World, http://www.abu.org.my/Latest_News-@-Nearly_1300_satellite_TV_channels_in_the_Arab_world.aspx (Accessed on 20th January 2018)

After 2000 a new wave of media privatization and investment started in the region. After the launch of Aljazeera, BBC and other international media companies in the Arab world, Arab countries also took great interest in this industry and started launching new TV channels and privatizing the public sector media companies. When the great media player like Aljazeera and BBC entered into the market and started reporting and exposing the ills, corruption of the ruling elites, it became difficult for the regimes to defend. In the beginning, they used power tactics of banning the channels, de-boarding the journalist and threatening the media houses. But they could not stop these media houses with these old tactics. Therefore, they also thought to defend themselves with the same resources and launched media houses.

The introduction of internet and blogs made it more difficult for the regimes to defend their deeds. Arab audiences started ignoring state media and instead preferred independent channels like Aljazeera and BBC. In the wake of these changes, no option was left for the governments' except changing their policies. To compete with independent media, Arab governments started reforming their media industries and even some countries also allowed private companies to operate in the field of media with restriction. In such a situation, many private media houses were launched. Then started the fierce competition between the countries in the field of media and to compete with each other they started investing in this industry. After the 9/11 incident, the interest of international community grew in the region. That incident also made the Arab world one of the most fertile region for the news media and many foreign countries also started their Arabic channels in the region like Russia TV, CNN, Sky News, CCTV, France 24 and DW etc.

Entertainment media is also one of the biggest industries in the Arab region. Post-independence, Arab countries don't had much resources to produce their own films or serials. To fill that gap, 80% of serials and movies were imported from Hollywood, translated and dubbed in Arabic language and then released in Egypt. These movies and serials were consumed across the Arab region. Gradually Egypt established its own production house. When the process of privatization started in the region, entertainment media was one of the sectors that attracted great investment. With the privatization came prosperity in the region and with that increased the audiences of TV in the region. To cater the demand of public, new serials, movies and soap opera were produced in the Arab entertainment market.

With the privatization of media, media also played a great role in the process of privatization. The private media of the region was owned by big industrialists who had interests in other businesses also. To influence the governments they started their media houses to advance their other profitable aspirations.

Arab Media after 1990

On 2nd August 1990 started the 1st Gulf War codenamed as ‘Operation Desert Shield’. The war was launched by United States of America and its allies against Iraq. That war changed the course of history in the Arab region. That was the first war that was being aired live by CNN and Arabs viewed it sitting in their drying rooms. That moment was unprecedented for the Arabs that they have never imagined. In 1990s Arab regimes started opening their doors for the Multi-National Companies (MNCs) and attracting many western and European companies. Arabs have already discovered the oil wealth and were attracting laborers and professionals from across the world. These steps opened new flood gates of liberalization, globalization and privatization. November 1st 1996 was the historic day for the whole Arab world when Qatar started *Aljazeera* channel. This channel changed the thinking of world about the Arab region. Funded by the royal family of Qatar, *Aljazeera* Arabic started operating from the tiny Gulf state Qatar and within years it made it felt across the world. Despite opposition from USA and many gulf countries including Saudi Arabia, the channel did not change its editorial policy and continuously remained critical of the regional and world powers. From airing the videos of Osama Bin Laden, war of Afghanistan to the exemplary coverage of Iraq war of 2003, it proved its objectivity. Two of its journalists were also killed in Afghanistan and Iraq in the line of duty, it was intimidated, threatened to be bombed, but regime continued supporting the free journalism. *Aljazeera* encouraged many other countries also to start their media houses and following its foot step Saudi Arabia started *Al-Arabiya* in 2003, USA launched *Al-Hurra* in 2004. After that many countries like Britain, Russia, France, Germany, China and Iran started news channels in Arabic dedicated for the coverage of Arab World issues for Arab people.

Aljazeera launched its English language channel in 2006 and that was the first English Language news channel in the Middle East⁴⁸. From the beginning, it maintained objective and people centric journalism. With the launch of *Aljazeera* ended the hegemony of western and European English media. In a short time it created a niche for itself in the history of independent journalism. Today most of the Arab countries are investing in the media industry and are launching channels in Arabic, English and other languages. Many international media houses are also investing in the media of region considering its potential in the future.

Thinking in the sense of globalization

Arab media has gone through drastic change after 1990s as a direct result of globalization and privatization. The concept of globalization presented by some scholars is changing now. Most of the scholars have dubbed the globalization as Americanization or westernization. No doubt that western countries and especially USA has promoted its culture, value and lifestyle through media and that is the main reason behind Americanization. But for the last one decade at least the concept and theory of globalization is changing fast. Some scholars have called that theory as ‘counter-flow of culture’⁴⁹. A political and social change in the Arab region for the last two decades has impacted the way media is served or consumed in the region. From the Gulf war of 1991 to the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, so called Arab Spring of 2010-11 and the current conflicts in the region, all have impacted the media of the region. Political issues of the region have also impacted pattern of media consumption. One of the most discussed and talked about issue of the Arab world in the not only the Arab region, but on global level is the issue of Palestine. The Israel-Palestine issue divides and unites the media of the region equally. It was assumed that the main source of information is western media and CNN has proved that in the first Gulf war in 1991. But the assumption has been changed by the *Aljazeera* multiple times. After the 9/11, *Aljazeera* was only channel in the world which had access to the Osama Bin Laden tapes. Tapes aired by *Aljazeera* were broadcasted across the world

⁴⁸Philip Seib, *New Media and the New Middle East* (2007), Page no 45, The Palgrave Macmillan

⁴⁹Noha Mellor, *Arab Media, Globalization and Emerging Media Industries*, (2013) Page 18, Polity; 1 edition

by western media like CNN and BBC. The logo of Aljazeera was the first sign of ‘counter flow’ of the globalization. In the Afghanistan war of 2001 and the Iraq war of 2003, Aljazeera was the main source of news for the world media. In the war of Afghanistan, only media house that had its correspondence in Afghanistan was Aljazeera. Regional conflicts boosted the regional media and gradually they emerged as the main source of news from the region.

If we think on the Arab region level, there are 22 countries where Arabic is official language, Arabic is one of the most spoken language in the world. Besides being language of the United Nations, it is also language of many organizations like African Union and Arab League. Therefore a channel that broadcasts its content in Arabic language is covering the whole Arab region. These factors give much booster to the idea of globalization to the Arab media. Although there are many dialects of Arabic, but the news of Arab media is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) that is understood across the region.

Arab Media: Bridge between East and West

After the issue of 9/11, Arab region gained great attention of the western scholars and western governments. Most of the alleged masterminds behind the attack on World Trade Centre were from this region. Scholars across the world started searching the causes behind this type of mindset. America and other western countries threatened their allies in the Arab world to control this type of actors. It was alleged that religious fundamentalism is on rise in the region and there is urgent need to reform the system. Western countries wanted to put in place western style of democracy in the region. They started targeting the regimes and monarchs who were against the interests of western countries and started promoting those who were pro-western. Sensing the internal and external danger to their rule, many Arab countries started supporting western policies in the region and those not supported were threatened and then bombed like Iraq and Afghanistan. When other Arab regimes saw the fate of Saddam Husain and Taliban, they started supporting western coalition blindly. They allowed the establishment of bases to the American forces gave their land to attack other countries and opened their doors for the western investment in the region. One of the investments was in the sector of media. Arab countries also allowed western media houses to operate in the region. To spread their influence in

the region, most of the countries and media houses started their Arabic Language services. Russia TV, France 24, CCTV of China, BBC Arabic, Al Hurra TV of America, and DW of Germany were some of the media houses started their Arabic service after the 9/11. Arab regimes also started modernization process and to make their image as modern state on international level, started their own satellite channels. Before 9/11 Aljazeera Arabic was the only serious media player in the region who was giving tough time to the Arab regimes in defending their national and foreign policies. IN the beginning they tried to silence *Aljazeera* by intimidation threats and gag but they failed in it miserably. They also thought of competing with *Aljazeera* by counter narrative and started their own media houses. Saudi Arabia started its channel *Al-Arabiya* in 2003 from Dubai. Following the footsteps, other countries also started launching TV channels, Radio stations and also invited private investors in this field. In that process of explosion of media houses both western and Arab media houses mingled in the region. Majority of journalists in the western Arabic media houses were also hired from the Arab countries who carried with them their values. Therefore here started the plural culture of media that bridged the gap between the western and Arab countries. Arab became the melting pot of western and eastern cultures. The young generation of the Arab world studied in the western and European universities and returned home to change the status quo in their home countries. Internet and new technology gave them means to work for the modernization; they started blogs, social media pages, and online portals to expose the ills in their countries. Arab regimes have not imagined that the internet and modern technologies which they were promoting will create difficulty for them. These blogs, social media pages and posts of individual were made viral by regional media like Aljazeera and international media which resulted forcing the regimes to change their strategy and promote reforms in domestic policies. The new information revolution is ending the gap between south and north or west or east and creating a true global society without nation, state or sovereignty.

Conclusion

Globalization is a phenomenon that has been there since ancient time with different forms. But that phenomenon took a new shape with the development of new technology, media and the liberalization and privatization of economy. The main

force behind the spread of globalization has been the developed countries due to their advancement in technology and the privatization. After the second half of 20th century, developing countries also started privatization their economies and established trade relations with western and European countries. That step led to connecting the world and making it a global village.

From the beginning, media has been the main force in promoting the globalization, liberalization and privatization. Western media houses like BBC, Voice of America, CNN and the news agencies like AP and Reuters established their brand across the world. These media houses emerged as inspiration for the media agencies across the globe. In the name of news, these media houses helped in spreading the western culture, lifestyle and products in developing countries. But with the development of regional media houses in poor countries, the hegemony of western media houses ended.

Globalization led to the developing of media and vice versa as well. On the one side media was spreading the global culture in the world and at the same time, globalization as helped in developing the media in the world. In the Arab world, the privatization started in 1980s. With the privatization and liberalization, industrialization started in the Arab region that led to the development of private sector as well. Arab countries, especially the Gulf countries used the oil wealth wisely that boomed their economy. Besides other industries, media industries also emerged in the region and many countries as well as private business houses started investing in this industry. If we talk about the global media houses, Aljazeera was the first step in this direction that was launched in 1996 with the help of Qatari Royal family. Following the foot step, many other countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Lebanon also invested in this industry. From establishing media cities to launching the news and entertainment channels, these countries started competing with each other. Within two decades, media industry emerged as one of the biggest industry in the Arab World. Satellite TVs attracted the biggest investment from then governments as well as private business houses. After the 9/11, Arab world attracted the attention of international media houses and state media companies of many states launched their Arabic services. Aljazeera also started its English Channel in 2006, that was 1st English news channel based in the Arab world.

Today there are hundreds of media houses in the Arab world broadcasting news, entertainment programs. Many channels are dedicated to the programs of sports, kids and women. These channels are available across the world on cable, satellite and online. If we see closely, Arab media is really a global media that is changing the course of history in the region and impacting the regimes and the society alike.

CHAPTER- III

Arabic media, Arab Governments and the Society

Role of media in Arab Society

It is perceived in Western and European countries that Arab media is just a mouthpiece of ruling monarchs and is dancing on their tunes. It might be true partially, but not entirely. If analyzed deeply, we come to know that Arab media is playing a great role in changing and developing the Arab society. Social change is the norm of every society and for that media is the harbinger of change that educates, inform and transform the people. In the post independent Arab World, education and media has played the most vital role in transforming the region and bringing it into the modern world. Despite difficulties, censorship, lack of resources and lack of professional capabilities, media of the region has created a niche for itself from the beginning that won the faith of the people. After 1990s the advent of more than 200 satellite television channels, immense growth of print media in many countries of the region, introduction of internet and new technology coupled with the aspirations of young generation, media has created a new public sphere in the Arab world. Despite being a close, conservative and fundamental society, Arab channels like *Aljazeera*, Egyptian serials (*musalsal*) started discussing taboo topics like sex, rape, democracy, women rights and human rights etc. many analysts from across the world are fascinated with the success of satellite television and the way it is impacting the Arab society. University of Cambridge in collaboration with *Aljazeera* has conducted a research in 2016, in Tunisia, Morocco and Turkey on ‘*Media in political transition*’ in the post Arab spring. The research find out that satellite television attracts highest audience in comparison to new media, radio or newspapers⁵⁰. This type of trend is found across the Arab World as most of the people are dependent on satellite television for news and views. The availability of international channels like BBC, CNN, and Russia TV etc. has created a tough competition for the regional players like *Aljazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and *Al-Manar*. Due to fear of losing TRP, these regional channels are coming up with new ideas, new programs and new issues to remain relevant to the people. That competition is proving to be very healthy and beneficial for the people of the region and also this process is educating and transforming the society. As eminent media scholar Kai Hafez explains in his research that:

⁵⁰ Roxane Farmanfarmaian, *Media in Political Transition in the Southern Mediterranean after 2011*, <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/media-political-transition/index.html> (Accessed on 13th January 2018)

“The Old “triangle of taboos”—politics, sex and religion—expresses Arab culture is outdated in the new media age. While religion is still sensitive, hedonism is an element of many Arab programs and it has become an acceptable part of life to debate politics”⁵¹

The satellite revolution has proved that Arab media can be a ‘vanguard of democratic revolution’ in the region. The absence of democratic system and political parties is filled up by media with its diverse opinion, expressing the views of masses and raising the issues of public interest. Arab media is also influencing the behavior of Arab governments towards the issues of common people. There in the real terms, Arab media is representing the people and becoming ‘voice of the voiceless’ as *Aljazeera* calls itself.

The whole region is controlled by authoritarian leaders and lacks freedom of expression or freedom of media. Criticism of king or ruling elites is not tolerated in the region. Although in recent times, the nature of some of the regimes has changed from ‘hard authoritarian’ to the ‘soft authoritarian’. Some countries like Morocco, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia and Qatar provide a degree of freedom to media to criticize the lower ring of the bureaucracy but they are not allowed to criticize the monarch of the country. In the countries where hard authoritarian exists, media is totally not allowed to criticize the government or its policies. In the countries where regional or national media is not allowed to speak; international or transnational media is playing its role and taking the governments in account. Mainstream media like television, newspaper and radio is very effective in mobilizing people and making public opinion, but it is equally very vulnerable to state interference. It has been observed multiple times that Arab regimes gagged the media; censored the news, influenced media persons by intimidation or bribing. Publication, of print media or broadcasting of TV channels is banned. The regimes have played the carrot and stick role with the media. State media has always been the mouthpiece of the ruling class and never criticized the policies of governments, but it became irreverent in the eyes of people when new transnational channels like *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* were launched. To remain in relevance, these public broadcasters also made changes in their policies and started covering the issues of people instead of covering only the functions of palaces. The introduction of electoral democracy in some countries like

⁵¹Hafez, K. (2008). The role of media in the Arab world’s transformation process. *Bound to Cooperate: Europe and the Middle East II*, 2, 321.

Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco and Iraq created new opportunities and television became the factor in formulating the public agenda. But in this exercise also, sometimes it proved to be supporting one particular group on political or religious lines.

New Media and Arab Society

In comparison with the traditional mainstream media, new media has transformed the Arab society in very short span of time. Mainstream media took decades to change the mindset of the people, influenced the regimes, created conducive atmosphere for the media to function. From print media to radio and television, all have their share in the development of Arab society and public sphere. But the introduction of new technology and especially the internet has transformed the region on unimaginable level. Most of the studies on the transformation of the Arab society via social media have failed to recognize the role of mainstream media in this process. Although mainstream media has played a great and commendable role in educating the youths of the region about the ills of governments, dictatorship, years of repression, atrocities committed on people and economic and political misdeeds of the ruling elites. These issues were the main cause that forced the younger generations to use the social media for the cause of people and democracy. The people of the region were prepared internally for 2010 revolution that surprised the world. The western scholars have presented the typical image of the people of the Arab to the world. It was assumed that Arabs are suppressed, have no rights, and even they don't have ambitions of freedom and democracy which their counterparts are enjoying in western and European countries. Even the ruling class of the region was also taking the status for granted and were enjoying the power. Most of the western scholars have dubbed the uprising of 2010-11 in many Arab countries as Facebook or Twitter revolution. These assessments are misplaced considering the role of mainstream media in the uprising. There is no doubt that Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and other new media means played a great role in the mobilization of people and managing the protests, but mainstream media made it the transnational and international issue. The channels like *Aljazeera*, CNN and other regional and international channels were the main backbone for the social media users. *Aljazeera* tapped the event very well consolidating the power of social media in the uprising and broadcasting it to the world. The new wave of new media gave opportunity to the scholars, media persons,

and international governments to interact with Arab scholars and the people alike. It allowed Arab scholars to enter into western sphere on their own terms. The rapid rise of internet and social media helped the Arab people connecting across the Arab region. Whole people of the region share same culture, language and identity, but were apart due to policies of the government. That distance was smashed by the new technologies. People started sharing their worries, happiness, suppression across the country and across the Arab region. The issues in one Arab country were the issues in other countries also; the situation through which the people of one country were going, the same fate was of the other countries. Internet, blogs and the social media like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp etc. provided a common platform to the people across the Arab world to discuss the common problems and issues. This all situation led to the explosion of the popular sentiment across the region in 2010-11 that is called ‘Arab Spring’ Arab Revolution’ or ‘Arab Uprising’⁵².

The Arab spring of 2010 was triggered by the self-immolation of a vegetable vendor in Tunisia that toppled the government of Bin Ali within days and he fled to Saudi Arabia. That encouragement led to the protests in many Arab countries like Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Morocco, Bahrain and Algeria. The subsequent protest in Egypt forced Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to step down. Fearing about their fate, many Arab regimes proposed reforms in their governments and gave more freedom to the people. But unfortunately, soon the ‘Arab Spring’ plunged into chaos and became ‘Arab Winter’ when major regional and international powers intervened in the situation. Intervention by USA, France, UAE Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other countries in Libya resulted into destruction of country and killing hundreds of people. Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi was killed, his son arrested, but the country plunged into civil war that became the breeding ground for the drug mafias and Islamic extremist forces like Islamic State and Al-Qaeda. Syria also became the battleground of differing political and religious ideologies which resulted into killing of millions of civilians, millions fled from country making it one of the greatest humanitarian catastrophes in the modern history. The New media continued playing its role in all the conflicts after the Arab uprising, but mostly it played negative role.

⁵² Marc Lynch, Political Science and the New Arab Public Sphere, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/06/12/political-science-and-the-new-arab-public-sphere/> (Accessed on 13th January 2018)

In the aftermath of Arab uprising, social media was used a weapon by regimes, individual groups and sectarian powers to advance their personnel and political interests. The medium that once united the people against the suppressing regimes got divided into many folds. The enthusiasm with which the youths have gripped the attention of the international community, faded with the same speed. With the Army coup in Egypt against elected government, civil war in Syria, Libya and Yemen, the emergence of extremist groups like Islamic State remind us the danger through which the region is going. Beside other factors, mainstream media and the new media have played its roles in plunging the region into chaos⁵³.

Media and governments: impacting each other

Media in any country of the world impacts the politics of that country and on the contrary politics of that country also play great role in the functioning of media. From years we have been reading about the western media impacting the election and deciding the political fate of the nations. Speaking in the term of Arab nations, before 1990s media has not much power to impact the politics of the country, instead politics used to decide the fate of media. In the pre privatization period, governments had complete control on media and no private media was allowed in the region. But after the privatization, introduction of private media and the penetration of transnational and international media in the region especially satellite channels, it has become very difficult for the Arab regimes to stifle the media freedom. The internal politics of the Arab countries is also unsettling the status quo and impacting the political environment of each other. Especially the coming of new media, especially social media has made it almost impossible for the regimes to control the flow of information. The Arab spring of 2010-11 has proved it right that media has the power to topple dictators, unsettle the established norms and create revolution. In such an environment Arab regimes are also forced to adopt their media strategies to cope with the new reality. It is time to seek the answer of the question like how much newspaper editors are affected by the political system in which they function, how satellite televisions are operating in the current political environment, how new media is impacting the functioning of mainstream media and the governments.

⁵³ Marc Lynch, Twitter Devolution: How Social Media is hurting the Arab Spring, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/02/07/twitter-devolutions/> (Accessed on 13th January 2018)

In a classical study of the media Siebert, Peterson and Schramm have presented four theories of the function of media⁵⁴. According to them media function in four distinct environments namely authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility and Soviet Communist. According to them:

...the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates”⁵⁵.

They have mainly studied the western media, but the Arab media is also no different from that. Media in the region also functions in the same four broad categories. Looking into the Arab world, this assumption seems useful and valid. To understand the functioning of media in the region we need to examine the political realities in the countries of the region. There are found similarities in many countries of the region in the functioning of media. Categorizing the media of the region, Mahmoud Galander⁵⁶ of the Qatar University divides the media and countries of the region in different groups. He labels the media system of the Arab world as (1) the socially focused media system, (2) the modernist monarchies media system, (3) the modernist republic media system and (4) the socially liberal media system. He further elaborates the media systems of the region by categorization of the countries with the system of media in the following table:

Categories / Features	The Socially Focused media system	The Modernist Monarchies Media System	The Modernist Republics Media system	The Socially Liberal Media System
Socio-political	Strongly Collectivist/ Social structure dictates	Mildly collectivist/ political structure is	Mildly collectivist/ political structure is less influenced	Mildly collectivist/ Political structure is

⁵⁴ Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963, chapters 1-4.

⁵⁵ Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963, P. 1

⁵⁶ Mahmoud Galander, *Towards a New Classification of Arab Media-Government relationship*, <https://userwikis.fu-berlin.de> (Accessed on 14th January 2018)

	political structure/strong tribalism.	influenced by social structure/tribalism present and dominant to some extent	and not dictated by the social structure/tribalism present but not dominant	not influenced by the social structure/tribalism is at its lowest/
Religio-cultural	Predominantly Monoreligious	Slightly multi-religious, with more emphasis on Islam	Slightly multi-religious/ Islam and other religions equally emphasized.	Multi-religious
Communication strategy	control-oriented	Mostly control oriented	Mostly control oriented	Mostly development oriented
Communication System	Active social networks of communication / Mass media supplement the networks Media regulations and available/ media self-regulation is practiced	Social networks more active in rural areas/ Modern media (mass and social media) dominant in urban centers Media regulations available/ punitive	Social networks more active in rural areas/ Modern media (mass and social media) dominant in urban centers Media regulations present/ punitive actions against media are common.	Modern media (mass and social media) are dominant/ social networks less active/ Laws exist but are used against the media less frequently.

		actions against the media are common		
Media	Face-to-face styles (Majalis/ mosques) are active, along modern social media. Classic mass media (Radio/ TV/ newspapers) are least effective.	Social (new) media dominant along classic mass media.	Social (new) media most dominant. Classic media are active, but not dominant.	Social (new) media most dominant. Classic mass media are active, but not dominant.
Content	No criticism of ruler/ low-level criticism of officials/ focus on historical heritage and culture.	No criticism of ruler/ more criticism of non-royal family officials/ focus on heritage and culture.	No criticism of ruler. Criticism of all other levels/ focus on infotainment.	Criticism for all levels of authority/ Focus on infotainment.

Galander has further categorized the countries on the basis of media system in the following table:

The Socially Focused media	The Modernist Republics Media	The Modernist Monarchies Media	The Socially Liberal Media
----------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------

system	system	System	System
Saudi Arabia	Sudan	Jordan	Egypt
UAE	Mauritania	Morocco	Tunisia
Qatar	Syria	Kuwait	Yemen
Oman	Algeria		Libya
Bahrain	Djibouti		Iraq
	Somalia		Lebanon

The first category of media ‘The Socially Focused media system’ that William Rugh called it the ‘mobilization media’ is found in the countries strictly controlled by the ruling monarchs like Saudi Arabia. In such countries there is no political parties, complete control of the country is in the hands of monarch who rules the countries through his relatives, and closest people. Media in such countries is strictly controlled and censored; editorials and reporting is done as per the policies of the governments. The regimes not only restrict media and prevent it from any independent opinion, or questioning the policies of the government, it also uses the media as a tool to advance its interests nationally and internationally. Only public sector media is allowed in such countries, and if privately owned, that is owned by the members of ruling family or its supporters. Strict code of conduct is imposed on the media; editorial policy is decided by the laws of the government. In these countries, media may criticize other countries, their policies, but is not allowed to criticize the policies of their own government. This type of media is found in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman. Countries like Egypt also has very strict laws against media and many international journalists are imprisoned in Egypt due to criticism of government. But that situation has arisen after the military coup in the country against the elected government of Mohamed Morsi. After the coup, emergency was imposed in the country and any criticism of the government was deemed as supporting the terrorism. Libya is also one of the dangerous countries for the journalists, but the reason is the absence of law and order. After killing of Muammar Gaddafi, country plunged into civil war and is ruled by two

governments each from Benghazi and Tripoli. Islamic extremism has raised its head in the country and groups like Islamic State and Al-Qaeda are having free hand. In such a situation Libya has become one of the most dangerous countries for media in the world.

The Modernist Republics Media system

This type of media is also called as the 'loyalist media'. In these countries also media is controlled by the ruling regimes, there are no political parties and the fate of the nation is in the hands of ruling monarchs who does not allow dissent. But they adopt somewhat lenient policies towards media. They exploit the media to mobilize the public for the political purposes and use the press for their own benefit. The criticism of monarchs is strictly not allowed in these countries, but mild criticism of lower ring of bureaucracy is allowed. Most of the media is nationalized, but private media is also allowed with strict laws and regulations. This type of media is found in mainly Algeria, Sudan, Somalia and Mauritania etc.

The 'modernist monarchies media system' and 'socially liberal media system' is found in some monarchies like Morocco, Kuwait Iraq etc. In monarchy media system, media is mostly controlled by the regimes, but in liberal media system is slightly different from other systems. Socially liberal media system may be considered the most responsible in terms of Arab World. This media widely reports the social and political issues and mostly concentrate on issues of people.

Censorship as government policy to silence the media

Media in the Arab World whether TV, cinema, broadcasting, print media or new media is controlled and censored by the government agencies regularly. Degree of censorship varies from state to state but it exists across the region. Some of the countries, who claim to be very modern and open to criticism like Qatar and Lebanon, also use the weapon of censorship to silence the dissenting voices. Media is considered as two edged weapon in the Arab world. On the one side Arab regimes promote and support media to look a modern and freedom loving country and on the other hand media is regulated to not criticize the policies of the governments. Arab dictators want to use media as their mouthpiece and a propaganda machine which they have been doing for decades. Media in the region is censored on two accounts,

religious and political. In the political sense, media is not allowed to criticize government or its internal or external policies and in the religious sense media is not allowed to publish or broadcast something which hurts the 'sentiments' of people on the basis of religion. Arab society is a diverse society and people from different religious denominations inhabit in the region. Majority of the people is Muslim who are divided into many sects like *Shia*, *Sunni* and *Salafi*. Criticism of any sect and its practice is not tolerated. Mainstream media is highly regulated in the whole region. In the UAE National Media Council (NMC) based in Abu Dhabi is tasked with the implementation of the media rules and regulations. The material dealing with pornography, violence, state criticism, criticism of ruling family, is banned. Although most of the media houses in UAE censor themselves according to media laws of the country, but still if any violation is found, action is initiated against the publications, broadcasters or the journalists⁵⁷. Broadcast media is the most popular form of media in the Arab world and the ruling elites are aware of media power; therefore they have launched their own media houses and media agencies as well. Government of United Arab Emirates has established 'Emirates media Inc.' and 'Dubai media Inc.'. National Media Council works under the Ministry of Information and it is also responsible to provide government news to the media.

In Egypt, Ministry of Information is tasked with the regulating and monitoring of national and international media in the country. Environment for media freedom has been very dismal in Egypt pre Arab Spring under the rule of Hosni Mubarak. Strict laws were made to control and regulate the media under his dictatorship. Most of the print media was owned by the government and even the printing centers are also owned by the state⁵⁸. In such a situation, it was impossible for the private media too to publish news that is unfavorable to the government or its agencies. After the Arab Spring when 'Justice and Peace Party' of Muslim Brotherhood established its government under the leadership of Mohamed Morsi, that time was somewhat better for the media and criticism of the government was seen in private broadcast media. On 3rd July 2013, Army chief overthrew the elected government of Mohamed Morsi, imposed emergency in the country declaring the Muslim Brotherhood as 'terrorist'

⁵⁷ Rugh, W. A. (2004) *Arab Mass Media: Newspapers, radio and television in Arab politics*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

⁵⁸ *Mediated Identities and New Journalism in the Arab World: Mapping the Arab Spring* P. 134.

organization and started an all-out war against the free speech, criticism of army or policies of government. Many journalists working with national and international media were arrested and put behind the bar for supporting ‘terrorism’. After coming in power president Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi established a new media regulator named “Supreme Council for the Administration of the Media” and this regulator was given the power to fine or suspend publications, ban broadcasters and give or revoke licenses for foreign media⁵⁹. In such an environment, it has become very difficult for the independent media to work in the country. Electronic media is highly regulated in Egypt and if TV producers break these regulations, they can be sentenced to six to twelve months of imprisonment. Egypt was ranked 161 out of 180 countries of the world in ‘Press Freedom Index’ of 2017. Since 2011, ten journalists have been killed in the country and according to ‘Reporters without Borders’ Egypt has become one of the biggest prisons of the world for journalists where scores of media professionals are imprisoned on false charges. Arresting of journalists, shutting down newspapers, TV channels, website and deporting the foreign journalists is a common practice in Egypt under the current president Abdel Fatah El Sisi⁶⁰.

Media system in Oman can also be put in the context of the media in other Arab countries. According to a United Nations Human Development report, media in the region is similar and is used as a propaganda machine by the regimes⁶¹. In the World Press Freedom Index of 2017, Oman ranked 126 out of 180 countries⁶². The country is ruled by Sultan Qabus for the last 45 years. Media and private citizen of the country may be arrested for insulting the head of state, country’s culture, writing against the countries which have friendly relationship with Oman. Media houses are targeted for reporting the corruption in the government institutions. In 2016, two independent newspapers ‘*Azamn*’ and ‘*Al-Balad*’ and an online magazine ‘*Al-Mowaten*’ were closed due to political pressure⁶³.

⁵⁹Ahmed Aboulenein, New Egyptian Law Establishes media regulator picked up president, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-media/new-egyptian-law-establishes-media-regulator-picked-by-president-idUSKBN14F11S> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁶⁰Cecily Hilleary, Egypt Clamps Down on Media Ahead of ‘Arab Spring’ Anniversary, <https://www.voanews.com/a/egypt-clamps-down-on-media-ahead-of-jan-25-arab-spring-anniversary/3147904.html>

⁶¹UNDP & Arab fund for Economic and Social Development, 2003, P. 65.

⁶²Data of Press Freedom ranking 2017, <https://rsf.org/en/oman>, (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁶³Reporters Without Borders, <https://rsf.org/en/oman>, (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

Saudi Arabia is one of the least free in terms of media freedom in the world. It is one of the richest countries in the region and according to documents of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia leaked by Wikileaks⁶⁴ in July 2015; Saudi Arabia manipulates the media across the world. According to the leaked cables between Saudi Embassies across the world and the Saudi Foreign Ministry, Saudi Arabia was influencing the media to improve its image globally and favorable reporting. Saudi was funding the media houses across the world in the form of donation or subscription to the Television and newspapers of many languages including Arabic, Persian and English. But despite spending huge money, Saudi Arabia has failed to improve its image in terms of media freedom in the country. The country has the history of banning books, broadcasting and other publication. In 2015 a famous writer Zuhair al-Kutbi called for political reforms in the country in his writing and he was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment. In October 2015, Abdulkarim al-Khodr, the co-founder of the "Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association" (ACPRA) was sentenced to 10 years prison for various charges. Blogger Raif Badawi is still in jail and faces 10 years imprisonment, 1000 lashes and one million riyal fine⁶⁵.

In the Article 39 of the 1992 basic law of Saudi Arabia, authorities are given extensive powers to control the media in the country. There are provisions to prevent defamation, disunity, detract from man's dignity and national security. A mild criticism of the royal family or the internal or external policies of the government may lead to the arrest of journalists and closing down of media houses. In 2009 a law was imposed according to which defamation or any form of insult to government, ruling family is considered as criminal activity. Any expressions that insult Islam is liable to death sentence or sever flogging. At the time of Arab uprising of 2010-11, government issued a decree according to that publishing or broadcasting a news against *Sharia* laws, against 'national security' and such other news may attract lifetime imprisonment, fines up to 500,000 riyals or trails without prior permission from judiciary. Another law named 'The panel Law for Crimes or Terrorism and its Financing' was passed in 2014. This law defines terrorism as 'any action intended to insult reputation of state, harm public order, and shake the security among other such

⁶⁴ The Saudi Cables, Buying Silence: How the Saudi Foreign Ministry controls Arab media. <https://wikileaks.org/saudi-cables/buying-silence> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁶⁵ Naomi Sakr, Optical Illusions: Television and Censorship in the Arab World, <http://tbsjournal.arabmediasociety.com/Archives/Fall00/sakr1.htm> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

definitions. Therefore concerns are raised that this law may be used against the journalist carrying out their professional duty⁶⁶. Censorship is a normal thing in Saudi Arabia and all the Medias from broadcast, print to the internet are heavily censored.

Another Arab country that present itself the example of media freedom in the Arab World and houses the most famous and one of the biggest media networks of the Arab world 'Aljazeera' is Qatar. Speaking in an event in November 1995 then Emir of Qatar Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad al-Thani has said:

“We realize the role of media in deepening awareness of the importance of popular participation in development by informing the public as to its objectives and requirements and bringing out the extent of challenges facing us in our march to realizing it, and inculcating the values of belonging and self-reliance.

As you are aware, we have lately lifted the censorship on the press. We are confident that our press knows that responsible words means adhering to the truth and objectivity, observing the values and tradition of the society and commitment to the higher interests of the country, that it will be a forum for meaningful opinion, objective dialogue and constructive criticism that it will back success and ring the bell as to the shortcomings and the defects without seeking to libel or vituperate.⁶⁷”

To world it might be showing as a beacon of free press as claims the country, but in reality it is also not much different from other regimes of the region. Media censorship and self-censorship is widely practiced in the tiny Gulf country. In 2011 a popular national daily Qatar Peninsula⁶⁸ has written an editorial titled “The Crippled Fourth Estate” accusing the government authorities of censoring and intimidating the media by defamation. According to editorial a complaint from anyone can lead to policemen raiding the newspaper offices and harassment and prosecution of editors and reporters. In 2015 another English Language news site “Doha News” has accused the government authorities of censorship and blocking the site. In a statement the news site said:

⁶⁶Freedom of the Press 2014, Freedom House <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2016/saudi-arabia>, (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁶⁷<http://doha.biz/2011/03/05/a-crippled-fourth-estate/>

⁶⁸ Matt Duffy (2011) Despite Arab Uprising, Press Freedom Still Elusive, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/28732/Despite-Arab-Uprisings,-Press-Freedom-Still-Elusive> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

“We can only conclude that our website has been deliberately targeted and blocked by Qatar authorities...We are incredibly disappointed with this decision, which appears to be an act of censorship”⁶⁹.

Other Arab countries have the same environment as in Egypt, Oman or Saudi Arabia. Media is heavily censored, journalists intimidated and imprisoned and channels, publishing houses and online portals are closed regularly on the pretext of ‘national security, terrorism etc. Jihad Khazen, a former editor in chief of ‘*Al-hayat*’ newspaper describing his experience as journalist had written in an article:

“In all my years as editor in chief, whether in Beirut, Jeddah, or London, I have never been told to publish anything. But I have been asked not to publish something more times than I care to remember”⁷⁰.

These types of experience are shared by most of the journalists working in the Arab region. In the Arab region, each country has its own issues that are considered prohibited to report. From the head of the states to women, Islamic fundamentalism and border disputes and others are the topic that is difficult to report or cover. Most of the Arab journalists cover the issues of the world with utmost freedom and objectivity, but at back home, they are scared to touch the sensitive issues. Take the example of most successful and widely known Qatari media house *Al-Jazeera*, it covers all the issues of the world with great professionalism, criticize the policies of governments, covers humanitarian crisis, but rarely reports the issues concerning its home state Qatar. Same is the situation with *Al-Arabiya* which covers everything objectively, but when comes the turn of Saudi Arabia and its allies, it is hesitant in speaking truth.

Banning of publication or broadcasting is normal in the region. Aljazeera is perhaps the most hated channel in the region and banned every second day in one or other Arab country. Currently *Aljazeera* is banned in Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate and the Israel to report from the country or establish its

69Matt Duffy (2011) Despite Arab Uprisings, Press Freedom Still Elusive, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/28732/Despite-Arab-Uprisings,-Press-Freedom-Still-Elusive> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

70Tom Finn, (2016) Blocked Qatari news site blames government censorship, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-qatar-media/blocked-qatari-news-site-blames-government-censorship-idUSKBN13Q4EX?il=0> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

bureau inside country. On the banning of *Al-Hayat* his former editor Jihad Khazen says:

“Al Hayat was banned in certain Arab countries sixty times in 1994, thirty-five times in 1995, twenty times in 1996, and twenty times again in 1997.”⁷¹

Media in every country of the Arab region plays different role and work under different circumstances. For the last one decade, the situation of the media has changed due to social media and online media. Still the mainstream media is the most popular form of information for the people of region. Young generation is using new technologies, VPN (Virtual Private Network) and other proxies to gain access to banned or censored information. Meanwhile, international media has emerged as new sources of information for the people who don't believe on the state run or state control media. International satellite channels like BBC, CNN, and Russia Today are the alternate source of news in the region. Besides satellite TV channels, web editions of international newspapers like New York Times, The Guardian and the Washington Post are the best source of news for online readers.

Self-censorship as a policy in Arab media

The journalists in the Arab world work in such an environment that is not conducive for their professionalism. Restraints in the name of nationalism, state, religion, culture and customs are erected in their way of performing their duty. Arab journalists are victim of detention, harassment by state or non-state actors, dismissal from the job, torture, abduction and confiscation of their passport. Media in the region function in very hostile condition where a mild criticism of head of state, religious tradition or state policy can land journalist in jail and shutting down of media house. Arab society is very conservative and rigid to their religion, culture and tradition and any criticism in these elements are not tolerated. Even journalists also remain very cautious in writing about religious values, women, sex and cultural practices of the society. The people get offended when somebody speaks against their cultural values. Journalists who wish to speak or write about the ills in society are scared to speak or

⁷¹Khazen, J. B. "Censorship and State Control of the Press in the Arab World." *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, vol. 4 no. 3, 1999, pp. 87-92. *Project MUSE*, muse.jhu.edu/article/28409

write sensing the repercussion and are scared of defamation. The Arab monarchies also don't want to offend the people and want to remain in power by maintaining the status quo. More the society becoming conservative, more likely the self-censorship is practiced. In such a condition, journalists have no option other than censoring the news and that practice is carried out across the region by journalists and media houses.

The legal framework of the region is not favorable for the press freedom so the media houses adopt such policy that may not put them in trouble. According to some school of thought, this practice is adopted from early days, because post-independence regimes never tolerated the freedom of press⁷². The journalists of the region are accused because they don't publish hard news, scoop, and corruption by the state agencies like do their counterparts in the world. But they are forced not to do that by media houses, state, non-state actors and the religious or cultural bodies. Market and the government pressure are the two main factors behind the self-censorship in the region. Media in today's world is an industry and owned by business tycoon who have nothing to do with freedom or values. Most of the revenue is earned by advertisement and main source of advertisement is government in world over. Same principle applies in the Arab region, as most of the media houses from print to the broadcast are owned by members of royal families and businessmen affiliated with the governments. Members of the royal family are interested in advancing their own interests through media. The businessmen don't want to go against the policies of the governments, so they cannot let their media houses practice freedom of expression that may be against their business interests. In such a situation, journalists have no options other than not reporting the hard news because they also want to keep their job safe. Sometimes reports are published or broadcasted on any sensitive issue that may not be favorable to governments, but when threatened by security agencies, clarification, or regret is published for the same and online news is removed with immediate effect. In such an incidence, the national newspaper in Abu Dhabi has published the news about tourists getting arrested by authorities for taking pictures,

⁷²Hussain Amin (2002) Freedom as a Value in the Arab Media: perceptions and Attitudes Among Journalists, *Political Communication*, 19:2, P. 125-135, published online: 10 November 2010, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10584600252907407> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

but the news was removed after a few hours under the pressure of authorities⁷³. According to a report by an online news and views portal ‘*al-monitor*’⁷⁴, most of the journalists in the region are frustrated because of this stifling environment and want to report the truth to the power, but they are forced to self-censor their reporting. The report further state that many journalists of the region who reported truth and unearthed the exclusive and sensational information are arrested, tortured, fired from their job or intimidated. The new technology have provided a weapon to the journalists which they are using to expose the authorities without being noticed and are doing a great favor to the people. In another report published in ‘Doha Centre for Media Freedom’, Jo Glanville argues:

“Self-censorship is part of being a journalist in the Middle East.... While there are individual journalists who are outspoken and will be courageous and push boundaries, for the majority of journalists, they can only operate by censoring themselves.”⁷⁵

Lebanon is considered the freest country for the press in the region, but there also self-censorship is practiced widely due to political reasons. A journalist working in the country says *“Journalists are seen as a weapon in Lebanese politics.” And when reporters become fair-game on the battlefield, they are weary of reporting freely*⁷⁶. Militant Shia group Hezbollah and the party of Hariri rule the country; both are powerful forces and influence the media to great extent. Media of the country is also owned by Hariri and Hezbollah. Such type of situation is in the whole Arab region from Morocco to Tunisia, Iraq and United Arab Emirate.

⁷³Matt J. Duffy, UAE Newspapers & the self-censorship debate, <http://mideastposts.com/middle-east-business/middle-east-media-analysis/uae-newspapers-self-censorship-discussing-the-line/> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁷⁴Rana al-Sabbagh, Independence of Arab Journalists under fire, <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2015/01/journalism-censorship-middle-east-arab-spring-reporting.html>. (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁷⁵Sakhr Al-Makhadhi, Self-censorship in the Arab world, <http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/self-censorship-arab-world>. (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁷⁶The Press in Lebanon: Awakening Media, <https://en.qantara.de/content/the-press-in-lebanon-awakening-media> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

New Media in Arab: Breaking the barriers

The digital media has surged in the Arab world from the beginning making the region one of the most digitized region of the world. If we consider the penetration rate of internet in the region, from 2006 to 2011 the number of internet users in the Arab countries have increased by 23% annually. If we compare that with the global expansion of internet, in the same period of 2006 to 2011, internet growth rate was only 14% annually. Same trend was in the usage of social media sites also. By 2014, 'Facebook' users reached to 74 million out of which 42 million were daily users, the number of 'twitter' users also rose to 5 million by March 2014. The Video streaming site 'YouTube' had gained over 300 million daily viewers on daily basis⁷⁷. The usage of other social networking sites like 'Instagram', 'WhatsApp' and 'LinkedIn' also increased with the same pace.

Today, internet has emerged as one of the most sought after information sources around the world and people are using it as a primary source of information. Penetration of internet has made the people aware of their rights, responsibilities and the source of affordable communication on regional and international level. The internet connection in the Arab region started in 1990s when internet was available in government offices, universities and other business offices. Gradually internet usage kept increasing in the region with the help of governments. Governments took great interest in expanding the internet in the region by inviting international firms in the region. The Arab regimes saw it a powerful tool and a sign of modernization and invested heavily in this sector. The coming of social media and smart phones played major role in the spread of internet in all over the region and far flung areas of Arab countries. By June 2017, 43.8% Arab population⁷⁸ had the internet facility and around 40% of population⁷⁹ was using social media like 'Facebook', 'Twitter' and other social networking sites by January 2017. In the beginning the internet was accessible to the

⁷⁷Alexandra Buccianti and Sarah el-Richani,(2015) After the Arab Uprising, The Prospects for a media that serves the public, BBC Policy Briefing September 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/policy/briefings/after-the-arab-uprisings> (Accessed on 17th January 2018)

⁷⁸<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats19.htm> (Accessed on 18th January)

⁷⁹Active social media penetration in Middle East & North African countries in January 2017, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/309668/active-social-media-penetration-in-arab-countries/> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

elite section of society, but with the penetration of smart phone, internet has become available to everyone from poor to rich alike. Arab population has used internet as an empowering weapon from the beginning. The ‘Arab Spring’ of 2010-11 has proved the power of internet and its usage for positive change. The mainstream media was considered as elitist media in the region and most of that media was under strict government control. The advent of new media, internet and social media has democratized the information system in the region. It emerged as a tool in the hands of common people to express their views and make their voice heard by authorities and the mainstream media. It opened new horizons for the mainstream media as well to get information easily from cities to the villages. Till the Arab revolution, governments have not realized the power of new media and mechanisms were not adopted to censor and control it. But the Arab uprising surprised the Arab regimes when head of states was toppled using the power of new and social media assisted with mainstream media. During and after the Arab Spring, cyber journalism became a major source of unfiltered information for the people of region. The new portals, websites, twitter and Facebook pages were launched dedicated to regional news. The governments started blocking the internet, shutting down websites, deleting social media pages, but despite all this, government failed to control and tame cyber journalism. Arab countries have introduced tough laws to deal with internet activism. But despite all efforts, the regimes have failed to control the cyber activism and online media in the region.

New media is operated and run by the youngsters who are well versed with the new technologies and filtering and blocking technologies of the governments. They have the solution for every obstacle created by government in their way. At the time of Arab Uprising, when protests spread across the Arab region, governments applied the tactics of blocking internet, and filtering the online media, but failed to control the online traffic completely. The reason was young and educated youths who are expert in cyber activities and proxy networks. Most of the people working on online media are not professional journalists and they are not doing this as a profession, instead that is their passion and are working for the sake of dissemination of information. Countries like Syria, Libya, Egypt and Yemen have banned the independent media in their countries in the recent civil wars, and international independent media is also not allowed to report from the country. But still the information of atrocities, torture,

indiscriminate bombing on civilian areas is reaching to the world regularly. The sources of this information are these armature journalists recording atrocities on their mobiles and sending around the world to people and mainstream media via WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. These cyber journalists are challenging the narrative of mainstream media and governments by risking their lives. They are challenge for the governments also who don't want to know the world that is happening inside the countries.

Media and religion in the Arab society

Arab is a predominantly Muslim society as out of total 366 million population of the Arab world, 90 % population is Muslims, 6% Christian and 4% others⁸⁰. Therefore due to demography of the religion, religion plays a great role in the regional affairs like politics and media. All the head of states in the region are Muslims, major media houses are owned by Muslims and majority of journalists are also Muslims. In such a situation, Islam is destined to play its role in the media of the region. Religious programs are broadcasted on almost all the Arabic language TV channels. One of the most watched satellites channels of the Arab world is Aljazeera Arabic and it broadcasts Islamic program and famous Islamic scholar *Yusuf al-Qaradawiis* permanent personalities who discusses the Islamic issues on the channel⁸¹. Another famous rival Arabic channel *Al-Arabiya* also hosts Islamic programs regularly. Beside the news channels, there are number of religious channels broadcasted in the region. According to a study⁸² conducted by the Northwestern University in Qatar in 2014 there were 75 religious channels in the Arab World. According to the research, there are 55 Sunni religious channels, 11 Shia religious channels and nine Christian channels. Most of these channels are hosted by Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. In such a volatile region, these religious channels are creating division among

⁸⁰ The Arab World Factbook, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>, (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

⁸¹<http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/icons/2014/12/20/%D9%8A%D9%88%D8%B3%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%B6%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A>

⁸² Religious TV Channels on the rise across the Middle East,
http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/religious-tv-channels-on-the-rise-across-the-middle-east_39536 (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

the society by putting their views and condemning other views. The views of other religions are rarely tolerated on these channels.

On the other hand religion also impacts the normal functioning of media from television, newspaper, radio to the new media. Narratives are drawn on the basis of religion and the politics of the religion is also seen with the prism of religious sects Sunni or Shia. *Fatwas* (Islamic decree) are issued on various sensitive topics that torn apart the social fabric of plural societies. *Yusuf al-Qaradawi* has issued some of the *Fatwas* which are considered very dangerous, violent and which are of standard of *Al-Qaeda*⁸³. The main problem with the Arab media is that journalists lack the knowledge of religions and when they report half-truth, that create confrontation among the followers of different religions and sects. An Arab Algerian journalist Larbi Megari has analyzed the religious reporting in the Arab media. According to him, lack of knowledge of religions, political situation of the region and restrictions on the freedom of media are some of the issues which hinder the quality reporting of religious issues in the region⁸⁴. With the division in the society on the basis of religion, sects and allegiance, the media of the region is also divided and see the news with the prism of religion and sects. Shia and Sunni are the two main sects in the Arab World, Sunni are n majority, but Shias are also in good numbers in some countries like Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Bahrain. Regional politics is also a factor in the reporting on religion. Groups like Islamic State, Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah have emerged as major player in the politics of the region and its impact is seen on the media of the region as well. The reporting on religion is also seen with the global politics like invasion of USA and its allies in Iraq or the Palestine-Israel issue.

Sectarianism and Arab Media

Sectarianism is the biggest problem in the Muslim world and especially in the Arab World. Society, politics and the media of the region is divided on sectarian lines and that is proving to be the biggest hurdle in peace process. Saudi Arabia and the

⁸³ Most Extreme Qaradawi Fatwas that threatened millions of lives, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2018/01/17/VIDEO-Most-extreme-Qaradawi-fatwas-that-threatened-millions-of-lives.html> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

⁸⁴ Larbi Megari, In THE ARAB WORLD; "RELIGIOUS REPORTING" VERSUS "REPORTING OF RELIGION" <https://www.theiarj.org/blog/2013/05/09/in-the-arab-world-religious-reporting-versus-reporting-on-religion/> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

Iran is the biggest player in the regional politics representing Sunni and Shia respectively. On the one side Saudi Arabia is presenting itself as the representative of Sunni Muslims across the world and on the other hand Iran considers itself as the representing the Shia Muslims of the region and the world. The media of the region whether TV channels, radio, print or online are divided on the same sectarian lines. One of the biggest media players of the region, *Al-Arabiya* also work on the same line sometimes. *Al-Arabiya* is owned by the MBC (Middle East Broadcasting) Group that is owned by the ruling family of Saudi Arabia and it has its website in Persian language⁸⁵ also to influence the Iranian people those are Shia in majority. Iran has also started its channel in Arabic Language named “*Al-Aalam*”⁸⁶ to influence the people of Arab region those are Sunni in majority. *Aljazeera* media network is owned by the ruling family of Qatar who has diplomatic and trade relations with Iran and is blockaded by Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate (UAE) and Bahrain. Therefore *Aljazeera* also takes political line and favor Iran in some issues of the region. Currently, media is considered an affective mean to advance the political interests in the region by all the countries of the Arab World and Iran. Every country is investing heavily in this industry and establishing state of the art media houses. *Al-Arabiya* was launched as an Arabic Language channel by Saudi Arabia to cater the Arabic speaking audiences of the region and to compete the *Aljazeera* Arabic in the Arab region. But *Aljazeera* launched its English Channel in 2006, following the footsteps; *Al-Arabiya* also started its English, Persian and Urdu service. On the other end of political centre, Iran has also launched the Arabic channel “*Al-Aalam*” in February 2003 and later to compete with *Al-Arabiya* started its English service. In the Medias of Arab world, especially the Middle East, sectarian discourse is common thing that is dividing the societies of the region. The media is carrying out its coverage to levels that totally contrary to the media ethics and the cause for which Arabs came on streets in 2010. It is also considered by some sections of scholars that governments are adopting the tactics of dividing the people on sectarian line to remain in power⁸⁷. In the Arab spring of 2010-11 people from all the sects and religions came on streets against the dictatorial regimes demanding political and economic rights.

⁸⁵<https://farsi.alarabiya.net/>

⁸⁶<http://www.alalam.ir/>

⁸⁷Brahim El Gaubi, Arab Media, Islamism and Sectarian hatred, Rhetoric, <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2012/02/29469/arab-media-islamism-and-sectarian-hatred-rhetoric/29469/> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

That was the unity of the people that forced dictators to step down and forced others to bring reforms in then systems. Scared with the unity of the people in the Arab spring, regimes started divide and rule tactic to remain in power and used media as a tool to advance their agenda. That was the reason behind the failure of Arab spring as after the over throw of Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, civil wars started in the region from Libya to Syria and Yemen. When popular protests started in Syria, it was attended by the people of all faiths whether Sunni or Alawite. But gradually media started giving it a sectarian color of Shia and Sunni, Iran came in the support of Alawite president of Syria *Bashar-Al-Asad* and Saudi and its other Gulf allies started supporting the so called rebels. Soon the country descended into civil war resulting millions of civilian killing and millions of internal and external migration. The civil war in Syria is a classic example of destruction of country on sectarian reasons⁸⁸. According to an exclusive report by “The Guardian” in February 2012⁸⁹, the regime has started an all-out war against the Sunni population of country; anybody can be arrested, put behind bar, tortured or killed on being Sunni in Syria. When *Aljazeera* or *Al-Arabiya* covers the news from Syria, they report as brutal regime forces added by shite Iran and terrorist organization Hezbollah killing civilian and even sometimes killing Sunni population of country. At the same time when Press TV or *Al-Alam* or Iran reports from Syria, they report that terrorist *takfiri* are fighting against the legitimate Assad government and killing Shia community of the country. While reporting from Bahrain, the tone of both the Medias changes,*Al-Arabiya* reports that Shia are fighting against the legitimate state government while Iranian media terms it civilian fighting the brutal state repression⁹⁰.

This type of binaries of Shia and Sunni are created by print media and new media also. The new media is more dangerous as it has not much restriction and operates freely. Its audiences are also divided into sectarian groups, some portals are solely created for one sect Shia or Sunni and they reports accordingly. Social media

⁸⁸ طارق حمو , الخطاب الطائفي والارتهاان على الخارج سيدمر الثورة السوري . , <http://elaph.com/Web/opinion/2011/12/703618.ht>

⁸⁹ Martin Chulov, They are pushing Syria into a religious war that they will certainly get, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/16/syria-revolution-religious-war> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

⁹⁰ Ali Mamoori, Sectarianism Guides Mideast Media Coverage of Syria, Bahrain, <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/ar/originals/2013/09/sectarianism-dominates-mideast-media.html> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

has also become a dangerous weapon in the hands of sectarian powers who are using it to destroy the social fabric of the region⁹¹.

Media and Arab Youth

Youths are the topic of discussion, research and deliberation around the world today; all the industries from political to consumer and media are targeting the younger generation and tapping them for their own benefit. According to a World Bank report,⁹² in the Arab region that consists of 22 countries, 28% of the population is youth between 19 and 29 of age. It means 100 million of current population of the Arab World is youth. New generation of Arab has been in news and focus since 9/11 internally and externally. The role that media play in the lives of the youths is widely accepted and acknowledged. According to United Nations Youth Report 2005 “*It is impossible to undertake an effective examination of youth cultures without exploring young people’s relationship with the media*”⁹³.

Like the youth of other parts of the World, the youth of Arab region are also ambitious, career oriented, tech savvy and fashion loving. With the emergence of new technology, satellite TV channels and new media, the role of youth in the Arab society has increased. From the 1990s onwards, Arab governments have been wooing the youths by establishing sports club, keeping them away from politics and engaging them in fashion, entertainment and other activities. The reason of keeping them away from politics was fear of governments so that they could not challenge the authoritarian and archaic rule of old rulers. After the globalization and liberalization, many Arab youth went in western and European countries to study. Beside study they also observed the change between their native country and the European and western countries. They mingled with their western friends, learned from them and compared the culture, politics and the system of western countries with their home states. They observed that their counterparts in the western countries have freedom, like freedom to choose their rulers, freedom to criticize their governments and freedom to vote to

⁹¹Geneive Abdo, Salafists and Sectarianism: Twitter and Communal Conflict in the Middle East, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/salafists-and-sectarianism-twitter-and-communal-conflict-in-the-middle-east/> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

⁹²<http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/mena/overview>

⁹³UN Division of Social Policy and Development Youth, World Youth Report 2005, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/world-youth-report/world-youth-report-2005.html> (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

the candidates of their choice. But on the contrary, they had no such freedom in their home state and even a small criticism or displeasure towards their ruler can land them in jail. In such an environment they felt the need to change the system, live like their foreign friends and do as they were doing. To change the system they started taking support of new technology, new media and new strategies. The Arab uprising of 2010 was the result of all these changes and strategies adopted by the youth. The restless youth have planned these uprising for years and were waiting the appropriate time to do that. The suicide of Mohamed Bouzazi in Tunisia gave them that reason and they revolted against their rulers. That revolt changed the concept of the world and Arabs alike about the youth of the Arab. They organized protests peacefully without any leadership; they used social media like Twitter and Facebook to call for the protest. That uprising changed the region. The mainstream media also saw the power of youth and engaged them positively. Media also considered the power of youth and credited them of changing the system for the positive reasons⁹⁴. After that the mainstream media also started giving importance to them and recognizing the role of Arab youth in the Arab society. Oil has been the main source of power in the Arab region, but a columnist thinks otherwise and says the youth of the region are more powerful than oil. According to Sarah Fahed Abushaar:

“The Middle East’s greatest natural resource and power source, is not in its oil or its gas but in its predominantly young population..... It is when we empower young people that we feed life-blood into the pipelines of our nations - feed dynamism into societal circulation - rather than have it spill wastefully at the behest of radicalization.”⁹⁵

The Western media and the governments have also presented the Arab youths as radicalized, fundamentalists and conservative but Arab Human Development Report 2016⁹⁶ has negated this perception. According to report Arab youths are being excluded socially and politically, are facing unemployment and there is need to

⁹⁴Dauod kuttab, Connected Arab Youth are the secret to Present Uprising, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/daoud-kuttab/connected-arab-youths-are_b_817533.html (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

⁹⁵Sarah Fahed Abushaar, Arab youth, not oil, are the region’s power reserves, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/blog/2016/02/17/Arab-youth-not-oil-are-our-power-reserves.html>

⁹⁶UNDP Arab States, Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the prospects for human development in changing reality, http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/huma_development/arab-human-development-report-2016--youth-and-the-prospects-for/ (Accessed on 19th January 2018)

address these issues. The Arab governments have also started taking the issues of youths seriously and have started programs for the development of youth and to give them space to develop and work for the betterment of the region. The Government of UAE has announced Arab Youth Media Initiative⁹⁷. The main purpose of this initiative is to connect the youth of the country with regional and internal media and use the energy and enthusiasm of youth for the betterment of society. Speaking in the launching event of initiative the youth minister of UAE Shamma Al-Mazrui said *“Some see youth as a danger or a burden, but they are an opportunity”*.

The mainstream media of the region also gives a lot of coverage to the issues of youth. TV Channels and radio are broadcasting special programs dedicated to the issues of youth and newspapers also bringing out special section for the youth and are giving a reasonable coverage to the youth of the region. There are many magazines exclusively for the youth in the Arab world. Young and energetic youth in Saudi Arabia Mohammed Bin Salman and in Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani have taken the reign of power and that has inspired the youth of the region as the young generation is playing its role in the politics of the region.

Conclusion

Media plays a great role in the development of any society. It works in educating, informing and transforming the society. Media and society impact each other and work with each other. In the Arab world also, society and media have been working and changing with each other. Since the independence of Arab countries, Arab society has been changing with the time. With the time, literacy rate and awareness has increased in the Arab society and media has played the most important in this journey. After the independence, Arab regimes started Television programs to educate people and encourage the people towards the development of society. From the Egyptian radio “Voice of Arabs” to the launch of Aljazeera channel by Qatar, media has constantly working with the society and for the society. Despite the limited resources lack of freedom, media played an important role in the Arab society in bringing to the modern times.

97 AFFIYA ANSARI, UAE youth minister announces Arab Youth Media Initiative, <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1093336/media>

After the privatization and liberalization, Arab governments and private business houses started new media houses, especially satellite TV channels that transformed the information and communication system in the region. But these satellite channels were also under the control of ruling elites and their allies. The agenda of program to be broadcasted were being set in the corridors of powers and common people had no role to play. But the introduction of internet and subsequently the social media transformed the region by giving power in the hands of common people. The people used this new power responsibly and the Arab Uprising of 2010-11 was the result of this same power. New media, coupled with mainstream media played a great role in the transformation of region before and after the Arab Spring.

Censorship from government side and also the censorship is norm in the region. Draconian media laws are media in almost whole Arab region and violators punished with the closing down of media houses, putting the editors and reporters behind bars and imprisoning them for years. Scaring the backlash, media houses never dare to challenge the regime and adopt measure to self-censor the news and views. This censorship is equally implemented on new media, but due to advance technology, new media sometimes breaks the barriers of censorship and disseminate the banned information in the society. Religion, sectarianism and social cultural norms are also playing its role in the Arab world. Media houses and journalists are targeted if they publish or broadcast any news which is not liked by these groups. After the Arab Spring, the media environment of the region has become more hostile with the emergence of militant groups like Islamic state and the conflict in the region.

CHAPTER- IV

Arabic Media in the Post Arab Spring Period

Arab Spring: An Introduction

“Arab Spring” (الربيع العربي) is the term used to describe the demonstrations and protests (both non-violent and violent), riots, and civil wars in the Arab world that began on 18 December 2010 from Tunisia. Arab Spring is the term borrowed from revolutions of 1848 in Europe that was called “springtime of the people” and the “Prague Spring.” of 1968. This term was used for the first time in an American Magazine “Foreign Policy” according to Joseph Massad, Associate Professor of Modern Arab Politics and Intellectual History at Columbia University says in his article-on Aljazeera on 29 August 2012. He said:

“The dubbing of the uprisings in the Arab world by western governments and media as an "Arab Spring" (it is said that the American journal Foreign Policy coined the term first) was not simply an arbitrary or even seasonal choice of nomenclature, but rather a US strategy of controlling their aims and goals.”⁹⁸”

But most of the analysts do not agree with the word “spring” as gradually it turned out to be “Arab Winter” when western political powers started interfering in it to fulfill their vested interests in the region. In the beginning it was spring when a hand full of people descended on the streets to protest the brutality and miss governance of their dictatorial regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. Soon they were accompanied by thousands of people across the region, who was suffocating in tight control of the regimes. As a result, the government of Bin Ali of Tunisia was toppled on 14th of January 2011 and the Government of Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was overthrown in February 2011.

As the time passed, many analysts differed about the usage of the term “Arab spring” and started naming it as “Uprising” or ‘crisis’ as says Katerina Dalacouri:

“The political upheavals in the Arab world during 2011 have irrevocably transformed the Middle East. Yet, as the year draws to a close and the euphoria subsides, it is clear that comparisons of the ‘Arab spring’ to the end of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 were premature”. There has been—and there will be—no

⁹⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/08/201282972539153865.html>

serial collapse of authoritarian regimes leading to a democratic future. Instead of 'revolution', the talk now is of 'uprising', 'revolt' or even simply 'crises'⁹⁹

Beginning of Arab Spring

Arab Spring began from Tunisia following the self-immolation of an unemployed youth Mohamed Bouazizi in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia on 17th December 2010. Bouazizi set himself on fire after he was humiliated by police for selling fruits on the road. Demonstration spread in the city and soon all over the country to protest against the repression by the regime. The people who were already suffering in the hand of dictatorial regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali got a reason to protest against the atrocities of the regime. People from all walks of life came on the streets and demanded the resignation of the president and overthrow of the repressive government. The government replied with more repression and hundreds of people were arrested and put in jails. Hundreds of people were killed and wounded. Bin Ali assured people to act against those responsible for the problems in the country, but the people were not ready to listen to him. People wanted Bin Ali to step down. At last when the situation went out of control, on 14th January 2011, Bin Ali fled to Saudi Arabia and incumbent prime minister, Muhammad Ghannouchi took the charge of president. As he was also the man of old regime so people wanted him also to step down. Political and popular opposition led to his resignation on 27 February. He was replaced by Beji Caïd Essebsi, who had no links with Ben Ali.

Soon after the demonstration erupted in Tunisia, it spread across the region as the news went through Satellite channels like *Aljazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and social media. People came out on the streets asking their governments to act according to the demands of the people.

Egypt was the second country after Tunisia, which took the baton of the 'Uprising' and the people descended on *Tahrir Square* (A ground in the heart of Cairo) demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. Started on 25 January protests spread from Cairo to across the country. They gradually snowballed, gathering momentum after calls for a 'day of rage' (يوم الغضب) on 28th January. On 29 January President Hosni Mubarak announced a new government, to assure the people that his son Gamal Mubarak would not succeed him. He appointed Omar Suleiman,

⁹⁹ *The 2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications* Published by <http://www.chathamhouse.org/>

head of the General Intelligence Service, to the vice presidency. However, protesters were demanding the end of Mubarak government (اسقاط النظام) demanding Mubarak's resignation. As the situation deteriorated, the army moved in, to calm the situation, The Army received an enthusiastic welcome from the protesters.

Hosni Mubarak also said that he will not contest the election in 2011 but the people were not ready to accept that, they were demanding his resignation. On 11th February Mubarak resigned from the post of Egyptian president and transferred his powers to the military.

After Tunisia and Egypt it was turn of Libya and Yemen. Protests started in Libya from Benghazi the second largest city after Tripoli and quickly spread across the whole of the east and to some parts of the west. Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi replied with fisted hands attacking and suppressing the protesters. He warned the people not to come out of their houses and gave the free hands to his mercenaries to kill who dare to oppose the regime.

Soon the uprising took political turn and due to vested interests, the Western, European and some Gulf countries started meddling in it in the name of humanitarian aid. The UN Security Council allowed the military intervention by NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) from March 2011. Foreign intervention made the situation a humanitarian tragedy in which thousands of innocent people got killed or wounded. However, by early September 2011, after months of apparent deadlock and a war on Gaddafi's regime imploded and he himself was brutally killed on 20th October 2011.

Meanwhile the protests had spread all over the region soon after the Egyptian overthrew their dictator, but as the revolution took an ugly turn with the so called "humanitarian intervention" of world powers, the dream of the Arab spring was shattered.

In Bahrain the protests were suppressed with the help of Gulf Cooperation Council (hereafter GCC), led by Saudi Arabia. GCC sent the Army in Bahrain and ended the protests, killing scores of people in the capital Manama in a deadly attack on peaceful protesters. It also showed the double standard of the western powers towards their so called "human rights" pain when they did not say a single word against atrocities in Bahrain and kept silent on the intervention by GCC. The protests also broke out in Syria but the western powers deteriorated the situation in the country pushing the people to civil war. Thousands of people have been killed in the country

since the civil war and millions have been displaced making the conflict the biggest human tragedy of 21st century.

After the fall of Hosni Mubarak regime, protests started in Yemen on small scale in some parts of the country. But soon thousands of people started protesting against the president Ali Saleh and demanded his resignation. As the country was already in deep trouble because of internal conflicts and the situation deteriorated day by day. Nevertheless, Saleh used a combination of repression, counter-mobilization, economic enticements, and promises to stay in power for some time. With agreement with GCC, he agreed to transfer the power to his deputy, subsequently the elections were held in the country and Saleh resigned from the presidency.

The Protests were also held in about all over the Arab countries from Morocco, Algeria to the wealthy Gulf countries. Some of these countries promised to bring reforms in the system, some suppressed the protests with force and some used the money power to calm down the situation.

The journey to the Arab Spring

Nothing happens without a cause. Similarly, every revolution also takes place due to certain reasons. For example, the French revolution (1789-99) took place because of the economic difficulties, political rights and rising food prices etc. “springtime of the People” revolution in Europe in 1848 happened because of poverty, rising food prices, inflation and human rights violation by communist dictatorship.

The Arab Revolution 2011 was also the result of many deep rooted problems in the region. The main problems were unemployment, ageing dictatorships, corruption, human rights violation, suppression etc. as says Katerina Dalacouri:

“An explosive mix of socio-economic problems and widespread and deepening political grievances constituted a common causal thread behind all the uprisings. Poverty in absolute terms does not take us very far by way of explanation, but relative deprivation and a clash between expectations and reality played a role. The longstanding structural problems afflicting the Arab world came to a head prior to 2011 through a combination of persistently high unemployment, especially among youth (and educated youth at that), rampant corruption, internal regional and social

*inequalities, and a further deterioration of economic conditions because of the global 2008 financial crisis and food price increases*¹⁰⁰.

Historically all the Arab countries have been under strict and repressive autocratic rule since their independence from Western and European powers. Soon after the fall of Ottoman Empire most of the countries went under colonial rules. The people saw the dream to liberate their countries and sacrificed their lives and did everything to achieve that. In the middle of 20th century, most of the countries were liberated from the colonial rule after a long struggle by the people.

After end of colonial rule, the people have thought that they will live in their countries free from suppression and suffering. But the happiness they received after the colonial rule was short lived for them. Actually it was just power change in most of the countries. The foreign dictators were replaced by local dictators and the dreams of the people of free countries were shattered. Again they were being suppressed by the rulers who were from among them. The ‘Arab Nationalism’ idea of Gamal Abdel Nasser has lost its relevance amidst dictatorship and the people have accepted this as their destiny. But the revolution of modern technology changed the perception and lives of the people forever. At the end of the 20th century there was the advent of the revolution of satellite TV in the region and soon this revolution took the region on storm. The people were more aware about the issues concerning them as well as world. Now they were able to see how the democracies functions around the world, what does liberty to the people in other western and European countries mean and could compare themselves with these countries. TV channels like Aljazeera were showing them a new world out of dictatorship. But independent channels were banned in many countries.

After satellite channels, came the internet revolution that changed the region and its people drastically. Now the people were not dependent on TV channels and its censored news. They have the freedom to search and know everything and also have the freedom to express their views freely. Through internet people made their relations with the people outside the region. Exchange of ideas made a big difference in the lives of the people in region. In the first decade of 21st century came the Facebook and Twitter and these both social networking sites gave a new way of

¹⁰⁰ *The 2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications page no 67. Published by <http://www.chathamhouse.org/>*

communication to the people in the Arab World. The people used the power of social networking effectively and converted it into revolution that transformed the region.

When the revolution erupted in 2010-11 it surprised the world. As the region, that was believed accustomed to dictatorship was belying the analysts. The anger and the frustration of people came out in the open and they started demanding their rights. They started questioning their regimes and their policies. The people were now educated and have the knowledge of their rights.

To get rid of all the repression and dictatorship, the people took to the streets and forced some of the autocrats to step down and others listen to their demands. And that uprising of the people is called “Arab Spring.”

Role of Media in Arab Spring

Majority of media in the Arab world is under strict control of the regimes and the contents broadcasted on televisions, printed in the papers or posted online are strictly censored. From the beginning of media, there was no private media in the region and the state media has been always the mouth piece of the ruling powers. The newspapers or TV channels covers only the functions of the governments and the schedule of the autocrats with high titles like ‘His Highness’ and ‘His Excellency’ etc. But the privatization of news media changed the situation after 1990s.

Emir of Qatar Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani took the power in 1995 in a bloodless coup against his father. Soon after assuming the power, he thought to modernize the country and the media was the best way to do that.

It was most suitable time to start an independent news channel as BBC was closed down the same year. In 1996, Emir of Qatar started the *Aljazeera* and gave it the complete freedom by disbanding the Ministry of Information. Most of the journalists were hired from BBC who were experts in their field. Emir gave the complete editorial freedom to *Aljazeera*. Right from the beginning *Aljazeera* surprised the world by its bold and fearless coverage of different issues. The channel covered the issues which were considered taboo in the Arab conservative society. *Aljazeera* started asking the Arab monarchies uncomfortable questions about their track record

in human right violations and their miss governance and corruption. These types of questions were unprecedented in this region.

Taking the courage from *Aljazeera* many other private news channels were started from many countries of the region and especially from the wealthy Gulf region. Saudi Arabia also started *Al-Arabiya* in 2003 at the time of Iraq war and soon there were a lot of channels in the region competing with each other. Topics like rape, women rights and politics were being debated in the news studios for the first time in the region. As says eminent media scholar Kai Hafez:

“The media have inspired people’s minds through their liveliness, plurality and dynamics. The old idea that a “triangle of taboos”— politics, sex and religion— expresses Arab culture is outdated in the new media age. While religion is still sensitive, hedonism is an element of many Arab programs and it has become an acceptable part of life to debate politics.”¹⁰¹”

All these satellite channels played a great role in the democratization of Arab society. Now the people of the region have the options to choose over tedious and uninteresting governments run channels. Through these channels the people were learning to question the rulers. The free flow of news gave the people reason to introspect. It was the force of media that helped the Arab World transform and also helped the democratization of the minds of the people. It showed the public the way to democracy and guided them to ask their rulers for freedom and democracy. The media gradually encouraged the public to raise their voices against injustice and brutality that was norm in the autocratic Arab regimes. The self immolation of a vendor in Tunisia in 2010 was just a spark to put on fire the whole region and that was the moment the people were waiting. This moment gave the people justification to vent their anger.

In the Arab Spring of 2011 the media played both constructive as well as destructive roles in the region. The private media played a good and positive role in mobilizing the people against despotic regimes. But the state media was creating hurdle in the aspirations of people by supporting their regimes blindly. In the following section, we will take a look on the roles played by the State media, private media and social media in the Arab spring.

¹⁰¹ *The Role of Media in the Arab World’s Transformation Process, page no 322*

Role of state media

Most of the media in the Arab World is under strict control of the regimes and it is not allowed to function independently. In about all the countries of the region strict rules are made to censor the media. As says Daoud Kuttub in an article in the journal “Arab Media & Society”:

“In the Arab world, ministers of information (or ministers of disinformation as some sarcastically call them) are responsible for state-run media. Some of them have offices at the national television headquarters where they direct the content of what their people get to see and hear. They are often personally responsible for the content and order of the news and current affairs programming as well as who should be invited as guests and who should not be allowed to grace the national screen.”

When the ‘Arab Spring’ started in Tunisia, the news of that was spread all over the region through Social Media and international Satellite channels like Aljazeera, CNN and BBC etc. but the state media all over the region completely blacked out the happenings in Tunisia. Most of the state channels and newspapers called the protesters as thugs and terrorists who were destabilizing the country. State media from Tunisia to Egypt and Bahrain to Morocco was labeling the popular protests as propaganda against the “legitimate governments”. The states where all the media was under strict control of the governments like Tunisia, Bahrain and Libya, the only source of real information for the people was foreign media channels like Aljazeera, BBC and CNN etc. But these channels were also banned in these countries; the people got the information through internet and social networking sites. The governments also tried to ban and censor the internet in their countries but they could not succeed, because the younger generation had the expertise to lift the ban and uncensored the censored sites. This situation of censorship and intimidation was continued in many countries. Private media was also being censored in many countries like Egypt, Morocco and Algeria.

Despite the efforts of state media blacking it out, the revolution was spreading in all over the Arab World in country after country and the states were unable to control despite the suppression and intimidation.

Role of Private and International media

There are two types of private media in the Arab countries. One is private media under the governments and other is independent private media. Private media are those that are under the control of government and were reporting the news like state media and were supporting the government to control the popular uprising. But the media that were independent played the most crucial and positive role in mobilizing the people. The channels like *Al-Arabia*, *Aljazeera* and Future TV were in the forefront in reporting happenings to the audiences. The private media that is run by Arabs was not bold like the foreign media like CNN, BBC and *Al-Hurra* TV.

The most positive role was played by foreign channels in spreading the news in the world and making the spring the biggest news in the world. All the international media networks started giving special coverage to the protests in the Arab World and sent their correspondents all over the region. As BBC created a separate section in its both Arabic and English website named “Arab Uprising”¹⁰² (الربيع العربي). Like that CNN also gave extensive coverage to the situation unfolding in the Middle East in Arabic as well English. Other international news networks in Arabic like Russia Today TV, France 24, *Al-Hurra* TV of USA and *Al-Aalam* TV of Iran also covered the situation very closely by sending their correspondents and reporters on the spot for the real picture of the region. They broadcasted special reports and documentaries assessing and analyzing the situation and its past and future. The International media showed their audiences the background of the uprisings and also its repercussion in the future on international politics. The international media played a key role in mobilizing the international community behind the popular uprisings in the Arab World that helped the people in toppling the dictators.

New Media in the Arab Spring

Internet spread in the Arab region in the 1990s that gripped the region very fast. The Arab governments, mainstream media, religious, political and social organizations started using it as an alternate mode of information and communication. Over the time, internet kept increasing its presence in the Arab society and gradually

¹⁰² <http://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-25435213/arab-uprising-fresh-concern-over-egyptian-freedom>

laptops and smart phones boosted the usage in the region. With the internet came the new ideas in the cyber world, the culture of blogs and websites emerged in the region that transform the region with its new and innovative powers. In the 21st century many social media sites came up connecting the world in one platform that proved to be one of the greatest information revolutions, the world ever has gone through. With the eager population of youth in the Arab region, the social media became very popular in the region. Another technology that changed the communication system in the region was smart phone technology. At the end of 1st decade of 21st century, the smart phone revolution spread in the world very fast including Arab World. Like the youth of other parts of world, Arab youth also started using new technologies to connect with the world and with each other. The Arab youth also used the new technology, social media and new media for the positive change in the region. By 2010, the social media and new media spread across the corners of the region among the rich and poor alike. The information of the world was on the fingertips of Arab youth and they were using that to change their own lives as well as the lives of people. Starting blogs, launching new websites and creating group on social media was so easy that many youth started web portals dedicated to special causes, created social media pages to mobilize people for special issues and started writing blogs on different issues concerning the region and the countries. At such a juncture happened the tragic incident of self immolation of Mohamed Bauzazi in a town of Tunisia. That incident becomes the starting point for a revolution that has never imagined by Arab dictatorial regimes, the world or even the youth themselves. Youths started organizing protests, ‘days of rage’ and demonstration on particular places via social media groups. When thousands of people started attending the protests and demonstration, then the world and the regional media realized the power of social media and the power of youth that they have ignored before.

The new media has emerged as a very powerful tool for the common people and by using it positively; a great change can be brought in the world, but, as the United State Institute of Peace put it:

“new media such as smart phones can help hold governments accountable and coordinate relief efforts... but they can also convey inaccurate information and promote violent agendas”¹⁰³”.

The protests organized in Arab region brought down many dictators from Egypt to Libya and started a pan-Arab demand of freedom, political rights and reforms in ruling system. Internet based media like Facebook, Twitter YouTube and blogs played vital role in spreading the news of protests and brutal response by government forces across the world and helped foreign audiences to see the real time feeds on Twitter and Facebook and unedited and uncensored videos. Almost all the academicians and scholars researching on the impact and role of new media in Arab spring agree that new media played great role in mobilizing the people against autocratic regimes. But some consider it as exaggeration and don't give complete credit to new media; they instead see the role of mainstream media as vital in shaping the force of new media and social media into right direction. Journalist and media commentator Tom Felle talking about the role of new media in the Arab uprising says:

“Absolutely new media had a great role to play, but it is often overstated how important it was. Aljazeera had a much more potent role in Egypt, for example, as accessed to twitter was confined to a technologically literate and mainly younger elite. Aljazeera spoke in Arabic to a mass audience of millions”¹⁰⁴”.

The digital divide between youth and old generation is considered by some as the issue of contention in the role played by new media in the Arab uprising. New media in the 'Arab Spring' was used by youth who are tech savvy and are well versed with new technologies, but old generation who are not tech savvy or users of new or social media also had a great role in the uprising. People from all walks of life and all ages were on the street demanding freedom from autocratic regimes. But broadly speaking it cannot be denied that new media and especially social media like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube played vital role in spreading the news across the world and

¹⁰³ Aday, Sean, et al. "New media and conflict after the Arab Spring." *Washington: United States Institute of Peace* (2012). <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/150696/PW80.pdf> (Accessed on 20th January 2018)

¹⁰⁴ Hofman, Caroline. "What role did New Media play in the Arab Uprisings, and to what extent is New Media a useful tool in conflict situations?." <https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/government/governmentpolreview/CarolineHofman.pdf> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

organizing the demonstrations in the region. In Egypt, the groups like “we are all Khalid Said” were instrumental in attracting the attention of regional and international media¹⁰⁵. Khalid Mohamed Saeed was a young Egyptian killed by security forces in custody on 6th June 2010 and his killing was a main factor behind the revolution in Egypt in Alexandria in January 2011. The Facebook and the Twitter pages spread awareness across the world about the situation on the ground and mobilized the youth of the world against brutal and corrupt regimes. The Arab spring might have been converted into Arab winter as per some scholars, but it changed the world and educated the youth of the region to fight for their rights. As stated by Ghannam in 2011:

“the rise of an independent vibrant social media and steadily increasing citizen engagement on the Internet that is expected to attract 100 million Arab users by 2015.1 These social networks inform, mobilize, entertain, create communities, increase transparency, and seek to hold governments accountable. To peruse the Arab social media sites, blogs, online videos, and other digital platforms is to witness what is arguably the most dramatic and unprecedented improvement in freedom of expression, association, and access to information in contemporary Arab history”¹⁰⁶”.

The impact of the social media was so strong that Arab regimes started blocking social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. The mainstream media and the web portal also constituted their social media teams to gather news from social networking sites and that was the biggest source of news at the time of uprising for the mainstream media and international media. Many media houses accepted that they would follow the social media groups created for the purpose of protests and demonstration and collect the news and information from there¹⁰⁷. The influence of social media varies from region to region and country to country in the Arab world. As researchers found that in some countries there were more clicks on the URL or social media dedicated to protests and some countries or region were fewer clicks. That is the difference due to penetration of internet and the basis of education But still

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk/>

¹⁰⁶ Ghannam, Jeffrey. "Social Media in the Arab World: Leading up to the Uprisings of 2011." *Center for international media assistance* 3 (2011): 19-34.

<http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Social%20Media%20in%20the%20Arab%20World%20Leading%20up%20to%20the%20Uprisings%20of%202011.pdf> (Accessed on 20th January 2018)

¹⁰⁷ Ghannam, Jeffrey. "Social Media in the Arab World: Leading up to the Uprisings of 2011." *Center for international media assistance* 3 (2011): 19-34.

the mainstream media played role in informing and educating the people about their rights.

The Arab regimes sensing the power of social media started using the same weapon to control the situation and maintain calm in the region. Thereafter the regimes and individual also has misused the power of social and new media to set their personnel goals. But despite all, new media is playing a positive and constructive role in the Arab region. Majority of people are using this medium to educate, inform and transform the fellow citizens.

Arab media after Arab Spring

The Arab uprising of 2010-11 that overthrew dictators and transformed the region was the result of one and half decade of media transformation in the Arab region. This transformation was provoked by the satellite TV channels from the last half decade of 20th century. Radio, Print media and most importantly the new media has also worked to educate and inform the masses. This media gave voice to the voiceless, brought new forms of activism and created the public opinion against status quo. When satellite TV came in the region, it gave tough competition to the state media and forced it to change its way of functioning. Then came the international media in the region, Big media houses of the world like BBC, CNN, Russia TV, Sky New and France 24 launched their Arabic language services that provided a direct window towards the world to the audiences of the region. Then came the turn of new media and it changed the news system of the region drastically making common citizen of the region as journalists and part of media professionals. The Arab revolution of 2011 was the result of all these innovation of different media that took place for decades. The uprising impacted the media landscape of the region and enabled launching of dozens of new independent channels, newspapers and news portal. The political uprising started in 2101-11 was considered as historical, but that withered away within a year. The spring converted into winter plunging the region into winter of destruction, civil war and misery. People, who have expected a new dawn in the region with the fall of dictators, were occupied by new dictators who proved to be more brutal then previous. In all these events, media played direct role and the same media that has shown the people a new dawn of freedom and prosperity, deceived the people by siding with regimes, enemy of freedom or with actors who

were dividing the region on communal, sectarian and economic lines. State media, private media, satellite channels, Print media, international media and the new media all are equally responsible for the event unfolded in the region after the Arab spring. In the following section, we will analyze the role of different Medias in the region after Arab spring.

Transnational media Post Arab Spring

The transnational media especially the satellite television gained popularity in the 1990s with starting almost all the Arab countries their own satellite news channels. The introduction of transnational satellite media in the region made a monumental difference in terms of media consumption. People fed up with archaic state media started watching transnational satellite news channels to get objective information. That led many governments and private businessmen to invest in this industry resulting into the boom of satellite business in the region. The emergence of Aljazeera in the region led to drastic change in the media demographic of the region. Aljazeera and other satellite channels played decisive role in democratization of region that resulted into Arab uprising of 2010. The new media might have played role in the uprising, but the ground for these uprising was prepared by the satellite televisions for years especially *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*. As a study by BBC put it:

“Traditional forms of media remain highly relevant. Nearly everyone in the region (97 %) watches a TV and two in three listen to the radio (65 %)”¹⁰⁸

In the Arab uprising also, these traditional media means were the main source of news for the larger audiences of the region and they played well role in publicizing and dissemination of the information across the region and the world. *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* were reporting from the ground zero in Tunisia and Egypt and from the freedom squares of various countries impacted by the popular uprising in 2010-11. Highlighting the role of these traditional media, eminent media scholar Marc Lynch in a search paper in the “Journal of Democracy” says:

¹⁰⁸ Alexandra Buccianti and Sarah el-Richani,(2015) After the Arab Uprising, The Prospects for a media that serves the public, BBC Policy Briefing September 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/policy/briefings/after-the-arab-uprisings> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

These broadcasts facilitated a “scale shift,” as local struggles became linked together within a common narrative framework that helped to spread protest from one country to another. The diffusion of protest from Tunisia to Egypt and then to virtually the entire region is difficult to imagine without this unifying media environment”¹⁰⁹.

But after the 2011 uprising, changed the politics of the region and that political change altered the media behavior. As despite being one region connected on the basis of religion and Arabic, Arab is very different from inside. The idea of nationalism or Arabism that was promoted by Gamal Abdel Nasser has faded away with the time and very rigid and conservative political system has taken place. At the time of uprising, people have adopted the same idea of Arab nationalism and on the basis of shared culture and language started protesting against their authoritarian rulers. That idea of Arab nationalism proved to be very dangerous for the monarchs and the only solution with them was to divide the people on the basis of sects, ideologies, religion and regionalism. Playing the same old and proved card, the people were divided into groups, sectarian and ideological basis. The media was the main weapon to do that and all the states used that effectively. The same transnational media that was instrumental in transforming the region and spreading a democratic aspiration to the people got divided after the Arab spring. Internal conflicts between the countries played a negative role and the satellite channels played a role in favor of their home states. *Aljazeera* that is considered as the symbol of democratization in the region started playing the politics of its home state Qatar. The policies of Qatar in the region were evident in its post Arab Spring coverage of issues like Libyan civil war, Syrian crisis and the Egyptian coup against the elected government. According to media scholars, these transnational media houses are playing in the hands of their bosses and dividing the people. Media scholar Lina Khatib in his book ‘Image politics in the Middle East: the role of the visual in political struggle’ says:

“These stations are thus often “proxy” platforms for rivalries between Arab countries, clashing political groups and international political agents, whose primary motive “is the propagation of messages favourable to the self while discrediting others.....Satellite television coverage in the region has not

¹⁰⁹ Lynch, M. (2015). After the Uprising: How the media trashed the transitions. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99., <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/after-arab-spring-how-media-trashed-transitions> , (Accessed on 10th January 2018)

only been a tool of communication, it has also been a symptom and sometimes even a cause of power struggles in the Arab world”¹¹⁰.

The transnational media is divided into different ideological camps and promoting the sectarian rhetoric. Following the political lines of their masters, media has drawn parallel lines in the region that is enhancing the intolerance among the people. According to a research by BBC;

The media to settle their narrow political interests, the Arab regimes are using media and in such a situation, media is becoming a part of problem instead of being part of solution¹¹¹.

Aljazeera and *Al-Arabiya* are the two main satellite channels in the region which influence the larger public opinion and reach across the region from North Africa to the Gulf countries. *Aljazeera* is owned by Qatar, while *Al-Arabiya* is owned by Saudi Arabia. Both of these channels serve the interests of their respective countries. In the Arab spring, both of these channels were supporting the uprising in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and Libya, but when the number of Bahrain came, both of them followed the policies of their countries. Saudi sent his army to suppress the popular protests in Bahrain, hundreds of people were arrested, imprisoned and killed, but these media houses dubbed it the conspiracy of Iran to overthrow the Khlifa family government of Bahrain. The coverage of *Aljazeera* was somewhat better than *Al-Arabiya*, but still it was different in comparison of its coverage from other countries impacted by the uprising. In Libya, most of these satellite channels supported their chosen groups. In Egypt, *Aljazeera* was lenient towards Muslim Brotherhood, in Tunisia with Ennahda and other stations took anti-Islamists position by running sensational, suspicious positions. That partisan created the blocs in the region dividing the people on sectarian, ideological and communal lines. These channels disturbed the lives of people, calling the uprising in one country as legitimate aspirations of people while in other country as conspiracy of foreign countries to destabilize the legitimate power. For example, they took in Libya and Syria different position and for Bahrain different stance. And the result was that civil war broke out in Libya, Syria and Yemen,

¹¹⁰ Khatib, L. (2013). *Image politics in the Middle East: the role of the visual in political struggle*, IB Tauris. P 181,

¹¹¹ Alexandra Bucciatti and Sarah el-Richani,(2015) *After the Arab Uprising, The Prospects for a media that serves the public*, BBC Policy Briefing September 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/policy/briefings/after-the-arab-uprisings> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

protests were suppressed in Bahrain and other countries who were allies of Saudi or Qatar. These blocs ended the enthusiasm of people who were fighting for their legitimate demands of freedom and democracy descending the region into chaos and political uncertainty. Eminent media scholar Marc Lynch put it:

“This partisan turn, along with images of state collapse and horrific violence coming from Libya and Syria, likely contributed to the fading of enthusiasm for popular uprisings. Partisanship also dashed any hopes that transnational media might provide a neutral forum in which the various vying national-media narratives could coexist and perhaps even come into dialogue with one another”¹¹².

With such a partisan and divisive attitude, these broadcasters dashed the hope of reconciliation among the people, sects and religions. One the fine example of that attitude is the Army coup in Egypt in 2013. In the run up to coup, *Aljazeera* was blindly supporting the Mohamed Morsi led government of Muslim Brotherhood, while *Al-Arabiya* was supporting Army and its general Abdel Fatah El Sisi. That stance of these channels was the result of policies of Qatar and Saudi Arabia towards Egyptian crisis. Qatar was supporting the democratically elected government of Muslim Brotherhood, but Saudi Arabia and its allies were against the Muslim Brotherhood government and were in the favor of overthrow of this government. Therefore, they were supporting the Army and were opposing the elected government. *Al-Arabiya* was focusing on the protests being held against the Morsi government across the country but *Aljazeera* was focusing on the protests being held in the support of Morsi government. In such a dividing situation, the professional, ethical and responsible journalism which both of these channels claims of doing was missing. That partisan coverage of both the channels tore apart the society of Egypt dividing the people into pro-Morsi and pro-Army blocs. The coup resulted into killing of more than hundred people in the hands of army and suppression of dissenting voices against illegal coup by armed forces led by General El Sisi. In the post Arab spring period all the transnational media in the Arab world failed the masses and its own responsibility as UNESCO put as *universality, diversity, independence and distinctiveness*.

¹¹² Lynch, M. (2015). After the Uprising: How the media trashed the transitions. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99., <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/after-arab-spring-how-media-trashed-transitions> , (Accessed on 10th January 2018)

The Role of National Media

The state media in the Arab region has been always the mouthpiece of state and a propaganda tool in the hands of ruling dictators. When the Arab spring started, this media was dubbing the protests as foreign conspiracy, conspiracy of state enemies and act of some misguided people against legitimate state power. In the countries where dictatorial regimes were overthrown like Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen, in these countries the behavior of state media changed with the time. The same media that was dubbing the protests as a conspiracy was supporting the regime change later. But again it adopted the same old strategy of supporting the state in right and wrong and started presenting the governments in good light, working for the people day and night and started praising the new dictators and persons in helm of ruling the country. According to a survey conducted by BBC¹¹³ in 2013 and 2014 in some Arab countries, people consider the state broadcasters and national media the biggest source of information for them and they watch the state broadcasters more than private media. According to survey Tunisian people considers it must to watch the evening news bulletin and 72% of people said they watch state media for the national news. In the same survey, the people consider that they want to see the state media as voice of unity, and representing the voice of people. But baring a few countries like Lebanon, the state media hides the gloomy picture of human rights violation by state authorities, corruption and women issues and instead present good picture of governments. Lebanese state media and especially the national broadcaster 'Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International (LBCI)' is the fine example of responsible state media which run popular social programs like food safety, corruption, minority rights, and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Egyptian media was considered somewhat pluralistic and progressive before Arab spring. At the time of revolution, it covered the issues of both the protesters and the regimes. But after the Arab spring when Muslim Brotherhood formed it government in the country, Egyptian media emerged as a fine example of responsible journalism which covered the stories with utmost professionalism and ethics. It criticized the government for its failure on economic and political fronts; it made the

¹¹³ Alexandra Bucciatti and Sarah el-Richani,(2015) After the Arab Uprising, The Prospects for a media that serves the public, BBC Policy Briefing September 2015, P. 16.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/policy/briefings/after-the-arab-uprisings> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

government accountable towards the need and issues of people facing on daily basis. State media in Egypt is also one of the biggest media conglomerate in the whole Arab world. The state broadcaster in Egypt employs nearly 45000 people¹¹⁴. And with this size, it is supposed to play a greater role for the benefit of people. But the broadcasting narrative in Egypt changed drastically during the army coup of 2013. The national media suddenly became the mouthpiece of army and security forces dividing the country into two parts, pro-Army and anti-Army. All the people who disagree with the policies of army were declared as anti army and even anti national. During the run up to army coup in the country, media started campaigning against the elected government and justifying every move of armed forces. Analyzing the role of media at that time, media scholar Marc Lynch says:

“Both state-run and private media organs campaigned against the Brotherhood, combining scare-mongering about Islamist ambitions with heavy coverage of economic and social breakdowns that stoked popular discontent. Outlets that had once been known for criticizing the powerful began acting as apologists for the revived security state, while once-marginal conservative figures surged to the center of the public sphere. Lavishly supportive coverage of demonstrations against Morsi in late June 2013 set the stage for his removal by a military coup in early July—a step that most of the media eagerly cheered”¹¹⁵.

In such an environment created by media, the society was bound to divide into Islamists and anti Islamists creating a dangerous situation in the country that led to hundreds of deaths in anti government and pro government protests. With the success of coup, the media of the nation become more polarized and even cheer leaders of army. The violations of human rights in the hands of army was justified, even every action that army took after the overthrow of elected government was justified by the state media. Many journalists were forced to resign from their post or withdrawn from airing their views. Many journalists who were critical of the policies of government were arrested and put behind bar, but their counterparts remained mum and even justified that. Foreign correspondents like from *Aljazeera* were also arrested, but

¹¹⁴ Alexandra Buccianti and Sarah el-Richani,(2015) After the Arab Uprising, The Prospects for a media that serves the public, BBC Policy Briefing September 2015, P. 17.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/policy/briefings/after-the-arab-uprisings> (Accessed on 18th January 2018)

¹¹⁵ Lynch, M. (2015). After the Uprising: How the media trashed the transitions. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99., <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/after-arab-spring-how-media-trashed-transitions> , (Accessed on 10th January 2018)

nobody spoke against this all out war against freedom of expression by the government and security forces.

The nongovernmental media also got divided into pro regimes and against regimes and led down the common people. The first country which overthrew the dictator was Tunisia and that is the only country in the region which largely succeeded from dictatorship to the democratic transition. In such a situation, the role of media becomes more vital in uniting the polarized country and making the new government accountable. In comparison to Egypt, the Tunisian media fared better in terms of its coverage of common issues in transition period. Although the media in Tunisia was least free in comparison to Egyptian media. The state had complete control on media and news was censored in the regime of Bin Ali. But when government changed, the media system also changed its style of reporting and broadcasting. In 2013, the Tunisian media also adopted the way of Egyptian media when it sensationalized the assassination of opposition leader Chokri Belaid and blamed it on Islamist government. The media reported it as complete breakdown of law and order in the country and put wild allegation of corruption on ruling Ennahda party. In 2014 presidential election, President Moncef Marzouki lashed out at media calling the state television a “*lying and corrupt media that does not have the right to speak in the name of Tunisian*”¹¹⁶.

In the countries which were impacted by the uprising to a limited level like Jordan, Morocco, Oman etc. the media of these countries also did not fared well. In Morocco, media has limited freedom and can criticize government except the king. The government has introduced political reforms¹¹⁷ in the wake of popular protests in 2011 and has guaranteed the freedom of expression in the new constitution. But the definition of the freedom is so vague that it complicates the situation. On the side of media, the opposition media is very active in the country that work responsibly and reports professionally. The dispute of Sahara region is one of the issues that work against the journalists. The political dispute is going on for years between the government and a rebel organization for the freedom of Western Sahara. Any journalist who reports the issues unfavorable to the government may attract the wrath

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Al-Balad (in Arabic), 3 November 2014.

¹¹⁷ Maghraoui, A. (2001). Monarchy and political reform in Morocco. *Journal of Democracy*, 12(1), 73-86. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/17096/summary> (Accessed on 20th January 2018)

of government and may be incarcerated and tried for that. The state media always take the side of government and never criticize the government policies in Morocco. In other Arab countries also, the state media never criticize the policies of government, but private media do its best to cover the relevant issues considering the limited freedom of expression.

The Role of Social Media after the Arab Spring

The social media was considered as driving force in the Arab uprising and that played a vital role in connecting the people of region under the banner of Arab Nationalism and Arabism. In the uprising, new media and especially social media was on the fore front to defeat the tactic of mainstream media and the state media. When the mainstream media was reporting in the favor of regimes and demonizing the revolutionary forces, social media was the only weapon that was spreading the reality across the world. The force of social media was so strong that world declared it as Facebook revolution or Twitter revolution. After the uprising it was expected that social media will emerge as an alternative media in the region where mainstream media is strictly control by authoritarian regimes. The new media is an instrument in the hands of common people that can challenge the status quo in the media of region and can provide a platform to express views. But power of social media depends on the basis of its users. The same media that was used for the positive means in the Arab spring was used after the spring against the uprising creating confusion among the people. According to Marc Lynch:

“Unfortunately, the very qualities that made Facebook and Twitter so useful for coordinating protests during the time of anti-dictatorial mobilization also made these sites troubling carriers of highly destructive rumors and falsehoods during the time of transition”¹¹⁸.

Social media after the uprising served in erecting the sectarian lines between Sunni and Shia in the Gulf region. In the civil war of Syria, in war against Islamic militant group like Islamic State, Al-Qaeda and other conflicts, social media played very negative role. Social media is used in groups and that group consists of likeminded people. In these groups hate mongering against other sects and religions is

¹¹⁸ Lynch, M. (2015). After the Uprising: How the media trashed the transitions. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99., <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/after-arab-spring-how-media-trashed-transitions> , (Accessed on 10th January 2018)

a common practice. Besides that, social media is an unregulated media where fake news is spread to divide society and gain the supposed benefit. In such an environment, social media users in the Arab region divided the people and the state and non-state actors are equally complicit in such type of activities as Marc Lynch put it:

“Initial moments of unity gave way to growing regional, ethnic, sectarian or ideological polarization, and set Islamists against anti-Islamists. Populist media oriented toward mobilization interacted with partisan and polarized social networks the drive discourse to the extremes and intensify divisions between groups.”¹¹⁹

The past six years after the Arab Uprising have been very polarizing and dangerous in terms of social media usage in the Arab world. From Egypt to the Gulf countries, sects, religions and political and social groups are pitted against each other. If continued, this may create bigger problems for the regimes of the region and there is utmost emergency to control this situation and work towards reconciliation.

Conclusion

Media plays a vital role in educating the people about their rights and the democratization of the society. The Arab media also has been educating and informing the people after the independence of these countries. The awareness spread by media and particularly by satellite TV channels and the new media led to the popular uprising in the Arab World in 2010-11. In December 2010, popular protests started from Tunisia after the self immolation of an unemployed youth. Immediately these protests spread across the Arab region and people took to streets demanding political and social rights and the employment. Media especially satellite TV channels and the news media had a great role to play during these popular protests. In the initial stage of the uprising, media played very positive role and emerged as the voice of the people especially the youths who were protesting against their dictatorial regimes. But gradually the nature of protests changed, international intervention started, regional and world powers started supporting certain groups and regimes as per their political interests. These interventions led to the catastrophic civil wars, killing of millions of innocent people and destruction of many countries including Libya, Yemen and Syria.

¹¹⁹ Lynch, M. (2015). After the Uprising: How the media trashed the transitions. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99., <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/after-arab-spring-how-media-trashed-transitions> , (Accessed on 10th January 2018)

In such a volatile situation, it was responsibility of the media to play its positive role. But unfortunately, media also get divided along with political lines and harmed the interests of common people. Whether that is TV channels, print media or new media, mostly could not do justice with their profession in the post uprising Arab World. The most dangerous role was played by the news media and especially social media. That same social media had played the most positive role during the Arab uprising. It has emerged as the most effective tool to organize protests and highlight the atrocities of security against civilian. But after the Arab Spring when the the political reality of the region changed, social media become a breeding ground of sectarianism and political conflict.

Governments have also taken harsh measure against the freedom of speech after the uprising. Scared with the sudden uprising, the regimes have passed new media laws, launched counter media to the free media and have encouraged the sectarian conflicts tacitly. In such a scenario, media has responsibility to inform and educate the people about the ground realities and play the role of reconciliation force.

CHAPTER- V

Comparison of Arab Media with International Media Houses

Introduction:

Arab World has been the centre of attraction for media since the first Gulf War of 1991. At that time, the regional media was not much advanced and the war was covered by international and particularly Western media houses like CNN and BBC. That coverage was the encouragement also for the Arabs to start their own media houses. Afterwards, Arabs started their own satellite channels like *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* etc. The region remained always in conflict since 1990. After the 9/11 incidents, the region plunged into more quagmires like Iraq war of 2003, emergence of Al-Qaeda and other Islamic militant groups, Arab Uprising of 2010-11 and the civil wars in various Arab countries afterwards. In such circumstances, the world media gave special attention to the region. The world media assigned special correspondents and reporters in the region to cover the happenings in the region. Many satellite channels launched their Arabic service also to cater the audiences of the region and the Arabic Diaspora across the Western and European countries.

Considering the strategic and political importance of the region, developed countries are giving special attention to the region. Government as well as private media houses are increasingly investing in the media market of the region to cover the conflicts of the region. The coverage of international media houses from the Arab world has also attracted condemnation and criticism due to lack of objectivity and misunderstanding of the politics and the culture of region. The audiences in the Arab World don't rely much on the international channels for local news; instead of that they get the news from regional channels like *Al-Jazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and state channels etc. The Western and the European media houses are largely considered as the propaganda tools which cover the region as per the political views of their own countries in respect to the Arab region. Only CNN and BBC are the media channels that are not owned directly by any government and all the other channels are owned by the governments like Russia TV by the government of Russia, France24 by the government of France, CGTV by the government of China etc. Therefore, considering the ownership of these channels, it is natural that they will cover the news according to their respective state policies in the Arab region. In this chapter the coverage of these media houses in the Arab region will be analyzed and compared with the regional media houses, especially Aljazeera about the important issues like Islamic State, Syrian War and the Arab Uprising.

MAJOR FOREIGN MEDIA HOUSES IN THE ARAB WORLD

CNN (Cable News Network)

CNN is a US based satellite channel founded in 1980. It got popularity in the Arab World in 1991, when it covered the Gulf War live and that was also the first live coverage of war in the region. Considering the importance of the region and to reach out to the native Arabic speakers, the network launched its Arabic portal¹²⁰ and bureau in Dubai dedicated to the Arab news on 9th February 2002¹²¹. Beside Arabic portal, the main website of the network has also a dedicated section for the news of Middle East and North Africa. CNN is one of the major trusted media houses in the Arab World.

BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) Arabic Service

Arabic Service of the BBC radio is one of the oldest and longest running services. It started its broadcast in 1938¹²² and still BBC Arabic radio is one of the most popular news services in the region. BBC Arabic Television was launched in 1994, but it was shut down in April 1996. BBC launched again its Arabic Television on 19 January 2009 as 24 hour satellite channel. Weekly viewership of BBC Arabic channel during the Arab Spring was 33.4 million.¹²³ With its Radio service, television and the news portal, BBC Arabic is one the biggest media players in the Arab region that has won the trust of viewers since beginning.

Al-Hurra (الحررة)

¹²⁰ <https://arabic.cnn.com/>

¹²¹ Gulf News, Mohammed Opens CNN Arabic Portal, Bureau:
<http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/general/mohammed-opens-cnn-arabic-portal-bureau-1.375990>
(Accessed on 20 January 2018)

¹²² Partner, Peter (1988). *Arab Voices: The BBC Arabic Service 1938-1988*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation. p. 57

¹²³ BBC Media Centre: Record Audiences for BBC Arabic Service,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/051211arabic.html> (Accessed on 10 January 2018)

Al-Hurra (The Free One) is a US based satellite news channel launched on 14 February 2004¹²⁴. Failing to counter the “negative coverage” US policies in the Arab region by Aljazeera, US government decided to launch its own news channel through which US could directly interact with the people of region and justify its policies in the region. The channel is owned by Middle East Broadcasting Networks and funded by the Broadcasting Board of Governors that is owned by the government of USA. Besides this TV channel, Middle East Broadcasting Network also owns a radio station “Radio Sawa” dedicated to the audiences of the Arab region.

Russia Today (Rusia Al-Yaum روسيا اليوم)

Russia Today, the international broadcaster of Russian Government launched its Arabic Service “*Rusia Al-Yaum*” on May 4, 2007¹²⁵. The channel covers the issues of Arab region according to the policies of the Russian government. Beside news, it also hosts documentaries, talk shows and interviews that propagate the Russian policies in the Arab World.

CGTV (China Global Television Network)

CGTV (China Global Television Network) is an international broadcaster of the government of China owned by ‘China Central Television’. Formerly known as CCTV (China Central television) was launched in 2000 and launched its Arabic service on July 25, 2009¹²⁶. IT is the official organ of Chinese government in the Arab World that propagates the Middle East policies of Chinese government in its diverse programs including news shows, documentaries and the talk shows.

France 24

France24 is a 24 hours international news channel owned by the government of France under media company “France Medias Monde”. France24 launched its Arabic Service in April 2007. In the beginning, channel began the service for 4 hours

124 Leung, Rebecca (14 May 2004). The Image War. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-image-war/> Retrieved 20 January 2018).

125 <https://www.digitalstudiome.com/article-297-russian-tv-launches-arabic-version-for-middle-east>

126 <http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Showbiz/Story/A1Story20090725-157065.html>

a day and in October 2010, it was converted into 24 hours Arabic channel¹²⁷. The channel broadcasts the news shows, documentaries, talk shows and the interviews to advance the policies of Russian government in the Arab World.

DW (Deutsche Welle)

DW is Germany's international public broadcaster and its service is available in 30 languages. Founded in 1953, it is owned and funded by the government of Germany but its work is regulated by Deutsche Welle act according to which the contents are always independent of government influence. Deutsche Welle started its Arabic service on September 12, 2011¹²⁸. The DW is not much famous in the region, although the quality of its program is good and standard but still the policies of German government influences the coverage of Arab World by DW.

Sky News Arabia (سكاي نيوز عربية)

Sky News is a UK based English TV channel first launched in 1989. It started its Arabic channel in collaboration with Abu Dhabi based ADMIC (Abu Dhabi Media Investment Corporation) that is owned by a member of ruling family of Abu Dhabi Emirates (ADE). Sky News Arabia was launched on 6 May 2012.¹²⁹ The channel commits itself of following independent views in covering the issues of region. A six member editorial committee look after the channels editorial output.¹³⁰

i24News

i24 News is an Israeli international 24 hours news broadcaster that was launched in 2013. It broadcasts news in Arabic, English and French. The media house is owned by 'Patrick Drahi' who is a Moroccan born Jew businessman with French and Israeli citizenship. The channel is aimed to put the perspective of Israeli government and its policies towards the Arab World.

¹²⁷ France24: FRANCE 24's Arabic Channel Goes to 24 hours, <http://www.france24.com/en/20101012-france-24-arabic-channel-goes-24-hours-north-africa-middle-east-news-television> (Retrieved on 12 January 2018)

¹²⁸ <http://www.dw.com/en/deutsche-welle-presents-new-television-services-in-arabic/a-6616014-1>

¹²⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2010/nov/29/bskyb-arabic-news-channel>

¹³⁰ Martin Chulov: BSKYB Launched Sky News Arabia, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/may/06/bskyb-launches-sky-news-arabia> (Retrieved on 1st January 2018)

Beside these satellite channels there are hundreds of web portal, mobile applications in Arabic Language operated from foreign countries which covers the news, culture and other issues of the Arab World. Radio is still considered one of the most effective means of diplomacy and most of the world countries have their Arabic service to influence the Arab viewers and expand their state policies in the region. Famous radios with Arabic service are BBC Arabic from London, Radio Tehran from Iran, Radio American Forces Network from USA, Radio Monte Carlo Doualiya of France, Radio Sawa of USA, Deutsche Welle (DW) of Germany and Radio France International etc. All India Radio, the public radio of India has also its Arabic service, but that is not much popular in the region.

Considering this much foreign media in the region, it is vital to understand what role these media houses play in the political, cultural and the social lives of the people of Arab World. How these media houses covers the particular issues of the region and how they are different from the regional media is also to be understood. Analyzing it deeply, most of these media houses are the mouthpiece of their countries and they spread the views of their countries to advance their political and strategic goal. But some of the channels are very important and they play a great role in the lives of Arab people. Channels like BBC Arabic, CNN, *Al-Hurra* and *Rusia Al- Youm* are very important in the region and they also shape the policies of world towards the Middle East and North Africa. These channels are mirror of Arab World for the outer world and especially the Western and European policy makers.

For last two decades, Arab media has evolved and has become global media player considering its reach and impact. Arab satellite channels like *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* shape the destiny of the region and also compete with the foreign media house in terms of quality and objective reporting. *Aljazeera* has emerged as an alternative media house against the western channels like CNN and BBC. It has ended the hegemony of Western and European media houses on global level and has established its credential across the globe due to its bold coverage and quality programs. The major issues are covered by both the foreign media as well as local media, but there is great difference between the coverage of both. Even within the regional media, there is great disparity in covering the issues and every media house covers the issues as per the policies of country by which it is owned. In the following

section, the pattern of the coverage of the particular issues will be analyzed by local and foreign media.

Arab World News Discourse by Transnational Medias

The Arab World is the centre of one of the biggest and longest conflicts in the world namely Israel-Palestine. The issue is very sensitive for the people of various religious, political and cultural denominations in the Arab World as well as out of Arab World. World has differing views with regard to the issue and media also reports it very cautiously. For some media houses it is the occupation of Palestinian land by illegal Israeli settlers while for some, Israel has right to exist on his promised land and they have right to defend their territory. Media whether local Arab media or Western media has always sided with a particular point of view. Arabs have always been alleging Western media of biased coverage against Palestinian and on the other hand Israel has been alleging Arab media of biased coverage. The reality is that both the media work as per their terms and conditions and also considering their audiences and viewers. The biggest example of this is Aljazeera Arabic and English. Aljazeera Arabic caters to the Arabic speaking audiences and covers the issues of Palestine-Israel with pro Palestinian perspective. But at the same time Aljazeera English has different style of reporting for its international audiences. Some media houses like BBC and CNN tries to report the situation objectively and avoid siding to any particular side. But other western channels like *Alhurra*, Fox News etc show open biasness towards the Palestinian people. Aljazeera calls the land occupied by Israel after 1967 as occupied Palestinian land, while CNN and BBC avoid calling it occupied.

On other issues of the region, most of the coverage is done on the basis of the policy of the country that owns the particular channel. Like Aljazeera is owned by Qatar and reports according to the policy of Qatar in the region or country. *Al-Arabiya* is owned by Saudi Arabia, and it try to promote the policies of Saudi government. CNN and BBC claims to be very independent media houses, somewhere they are influence by the policies of USA and UK in the region and cover the issues accordingly. If we compare the reporting of local Arab media and the foreign media in the region, the coverage of regional media seems more depth and exhausting. The reason is that the local media is aware of the regional issues and problems and have

access to information as well. The knowledge of language is also a privilege in favor of regional media, while foreign media mostly rely on translation and interpretation.

Coverage of “Arab Spring” by Aljazeera and Fox News

Arab Spring was news of international importance that was covered by media across the world. For many days, the main headline in international media remained Arab Spring that impacted the world as well when people across the world took to the streets against injustice. Arab media and especially satellite TV channels covered the protests across the Arab world very enthusiastically considering it once in a life time opportunity. The channels that created the Arab Spring and then reported it for the world was Qatar based satellite TV channel Aljazeera. But Western media also covered the uprising very fairly and dubbed it a new beginning in the Arab World where people were on streets protesting against their rulers for democracy and basic rights. But the nature of coverage by both the Arab and Western media was different. To understand the difference by both the Medias it is need to compare both the coverage. To do that I have chosen the most watched news channel of Arab World, Aljazeera and one of the most famous news channels of USA Fox News.

Fox News is a US based cable and satellite channel owned by Fox Entertainment Group. It was founded by famous Australian-American media mogul Rupert Murdoch and launched in October 1996. The Fox news has been accused¹³¹ of biased coverage and supporting Republic Party of Trump. Beside other US media, it also covers widely and promotes the US policies in the region. In the Arab Spring, it covered the protests extensively with its correspondence on the ground. In the following section the Arab Spring coverage of both the network is being analyzed.

The Coverage by Aljazeera

Aljazeera had already established its importance as a regional media player by its coverage of war in Afghanistan, War in Iraq, Palestine-Israel conflict and the other issues of the region. When Arab Spring started from Tunisia, Aljazeera was on ground zero to report that and with much funfair and enthusiasm. It maintained that enthusiasm all over the Arab World except in Gulf Monarchies especially Bahrain.

¹³¹ Compton, James Robert. *The integrated news spectacle: A political economy of cultural performance*. Vol. 6, P 204. Peter Lang, 2004.

The events in the Arab world shifted the global viewers towards the local Arab media and with days the viewership of Aljazeera increased in millions. IT emerged as a primary source of news from Arab World during the revolution in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. Aljazeera's English and Arabic satellite channels, its website, social media handles were most were updated regularly about happenings in the region. There emerged also credibility crisis also for Aljazeera when its director general Wadah Khanfar resigned and Sheikh Ahmad, a member of Qatar's ruling family appointed in his place¹³². Another blow to the credibility during this period was when its Lebanon correspondence Ali Hashem resigned accusing channel of biased coverage to support the narrative of Qatar¹³³. But despite this crisis, Aljazeera was no doubt on the fore front covering the anti- government protests across the Arab region.

During the protests in Tunisia and Egypt, Aljazeera was more vocal and aggressive and was playing the role of an activist. Due to that the viewership of its Arabic channel in the Arab region the English Channel across the world increased manifold. The channel was praised internationally and Arab masses were sloganeering in its favor on the Arab streets¹³⁴. After Tunisia and Egypt, popular protests spread across the Arab World including the Gulf countries. When Aljazeera reported from Gulf countries, its coverage was very different and tamed. Its reporting from Bahrain was the precursor of its fall from the hearts and minds of people and that also decreased its viewership. The same channel that was representing the voice of people in Egypt and Tunisia has turned into voice of regime¹³⁵. On the protests in Gulf monarchies, Aljazeera remained very passive in its coverage. The reason was that Qatar, the owner of Aljazeera is member of Gulf Cooperation Council that suppressed the protests in Bahrain and other Gulf countries by force. Dozens of protesters were killed in Bahrain and hundreds were arrested and tried. In these protests, Aljazeera Arabic was openly supporting the move of GCC but the coverage

¹³² Philip Seib (2011) The Resignation of Wadah Khanfar and the Future of Al JAzeera, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2011-09-27/resignation-wadah-khanfar-and-future-al-jazeera> (Retrieved on 20 December 2017)

¹³³

¹³⁴ Al-Arabiya (9 June 2013) Battle of the Airwaves as Arab Spring gives boost to TV News, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/media/2013/06/09/Battle-for-the-airwaves-as-Arab-Spring-gives-boost-to-TV-news.html> (Retrieved on 10 December 2017)

¹³⁵ Souaiaia (2012) Qatar, Aljazeera and the Arab Spring, <https://mronline.org/2011/11/17/souaiaia171111-html/> (Retrieved on 10 December 2017)

by its English channel was somewhat objective that highlighted the public issues through talk shows and documentaries.

Again when protests shifted to Libya, Aljazeera emerged as the mouthpiece of Qatar. IT was more active in covering the atrocities on Libyan people in the hands of Gaddafi forces. During the war in Libya, Aljazeera remained covering the happenings in the country 24/7 from internet blackout by Libyan regime, presentation of National Transition Council against Gaddafi to the United Nation decision to intervene in Libya, Aljazeera was in forefront. In that war too it was alleged that Qatar government is using Aljazeera to advance its foreign policy and manipulating the news in its favor¹³⁶. Coverage of Aljazeera in Syria was different altogether, where it supported anti-Assad rebel groups openly relying on secondary sources. There it can be said that the coverage of Arab Spring by Aljazeera was mostly guided by the policies of the government of Qatar. The coverage changed with the countries and region. In Egypt and Tunisia it was different; it changed in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and again changed in Libya and Syria.

The Coverage by Fox News

Arab Spring also dominated the media coverage in the American media and especially the evening news was dominated by the Arab Spring during that period. According to a research¹³⁷, the Arab revolution dominated the evening shows on American satellite channels an average 10% in 2011. American channels like Fox News, CNN and MSNBC covered the news of Egyptian and Tunisian revolution, Libyan civil war and other issues very prominently and analyzed the situation of the region in American perspective.

Fox news is considered a right wing news channel in the USA which spread Islam phobia and cover the issues of Muslim world with a certain anti Muslim perspective. During the Arab spring also, it covered the issues with that perspective and spread fear of Islamic extremism, Muslim Brotherhood among the audiences. Muslim Brotherhood was the main target of the news channel which considers it a

¹³⁶ Samuel-Azran, Tal. "Al-Jazeera, Qatar, and new tactics in state-sponsored media diplomacy." *American Behavioral Scientist* 57.9 (2013): 1293-1311.

¹³⁷ Al-Jenaibi B (2014) The Nature of Arab public discourse: Social media and the 'Arab Spring'. *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies* 3: 241-260

danger, radical, extremist organization and very organized political opposition¹³⁸. Therefore, instead of informing and educating the audiences, it actually misinforms them by creating false narrative and propaganda. A research was conducted about the Arab Spring on the audiences of Fox News in New Jersey and the results of the research were really perplexing. The survey was carried out by Fairleigh Dickinson University and asked questions about the Arab Spring and general Arab issues to check and understand the awareness of people who watched Fox News during Arab Spring. Therefore, only 48% of the respondents could give the answers correctly¹³⁹. The Fox News was accused of biased coverage and misinforming the audiences about the real issues of the Arab World during these demonstrations.

Comparing the coverage of both the networks, it can be said that Aljazeera fared much better in comparison of Fox News in covering the Arab Spring. Aljazeera was very much informed aware about the issues of the region and was covering very professionally from beginning. IT changed its coverage on the basis of the foreign policy of Qatar in some countries, but overall, it shakes the region and the world by its coverage of the events. Aljazeera has the privilege of being in the epicenter of the Arab Spring from beginning and used that privilege in its favor. On the other side, Fox News was prejudice towards the Arabs from beginning and was also not much aware about the political and social fabric of the region. Therefore, with its biased coverage, it misinformed the audiences and created a false narrative about the region in USA.

Coverage of ISIL on CNN and Aljazeera

ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Levant): Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is a terrorist group emerged in 2014 in Iraq and Syria in the wake of civil war in Syria and internal sectarian conflicts in Iraq. The history of the group goes back to 2003 when USA invaded on Iraq and made it a fertile ground for non state actors like Al-Qaeda and other extremist groups. The

¹³⁸ . Glover K (2013) Analysis of CNN and The Fox News Networks' framing of the Muslim Brotherhood during the Egyptian revolution in 2011. The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications 2: 125-134. www.elon.edu/docs/e-web/academics/communications/research/vol2no2/11gloverjfall11.pdf (Retrieved on 1st December 2018)

¹³⁹ RFN (2012) Really Fox News? <http://www.reallyfoxnews.com/> (Retrieved on 1st December 2018)

group has been evolving since that time that got the good opportunity to spread in the region during the civil war in Syria after 2010-11 uprising. It surprised the world when news of the fall of Mosul, second largest city of Iraq came on 10 June 2014. Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi declared him as the caliph of the Islamic State, three weeks after it captured Mosul. The fall of Mosul followed with the atrocities committed by this group on common people especially on Yazidi community in Iraq, beheading of western journalists and killing of Iraqi and Syrian forces. After that, world wake up to this threat and started fighting it led by USA. The operation against ISIL was conducted mainly through airstrikes in Syria and Iraq. Afterwards intervention of Russia and Iran started in the region that changed the geo-strategic situation in the region.

The fast development of political situation in the region changed the strategies of regional and international media as well. Correspondents from foreign media outlets and the regional rushed to the ground zero to report the happening in the battle fields. This region also proved to be one of the most dangerous zones for media personal. That war of media created the crisis of credibility as well where it was difficult to verify the stories on ground. Among this crowd of media are the CNN and Aljazeera. Both these channels are considered the agenda setters in their respective regions. Both of these channels covered the issues of Islamic State and the war against it very extensively. Here the coverage of ISIL by both the channels will be analyzed.

Closely analyzing the stories, reports and the discussions on both the channels, we observe a great difference in contents, nature of stories and the source of news. According to a research¹⁴⁰, Aljazeera mostly rely on local source like Syrian and Iraqi officials, local people and the social media, while the CNN relied on US officials and other international news agencies like Reuters and APFP. Aljazeera is based in the Middle East and its reporters and journalists are more familiar to the region and the situation on ground level, so they cover it more deeply in comparison to CNN. During the airstrikes on ISIL targets by US and its allies, CNN reported the impact of airstrikes and analyzed the loss of Islamic State. But Aljazeera also analyzed the cost

¹⁴⁰ Alshathry Talal Iowa State University: A comparative framing analysis of ISIL in the online coverage of CNN and Aljazeera (2015) Graduate Thesis and Dissertations: 14683, http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/14683?utm_source=lib.dr.iastate.edu%2Fetd%2F14683&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

of this strike for civilian and how it is driving more extremism in the region. In the stories of CNN international angle was more dominant, while on Aljazeera local angle was highlighted more widely. The internal conflict between the parties in Iraq and the blame game on Al-Maliki was covered by Al-Jazeera. It also analyzed the repercussion of Islamic State on Arab World and also the Muslim world like Pakistan, Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries¹⁴¹.

The refugee crisis that resulted from civil war in Syria and ISIL occupation of large area of Syria and Iraq was covered by both the CNN and Aljazeera, but the coverage of Aljazeera was more depth. It discussed the impact of exodus on Arab countries like Jordan, Lebanon and other regional countries. The tragic face of migration was more widely covered by Aljazeera, but the coverage of the same issue on CNN was more political. On the issue of Yezidi also, both the channel highlighted their plight but Aljazeera in its coverage focused on the suffering and difficulties the sect was facing due to killings, migration and torture. Islamic State beheaded and burned many Western people including journalists; these gruesome acts were covered by both the channels. But the style of coverage was different as per their code of conduct. CNN did not show the burning and beheading videos by ISIL but Aljazeera showed it widely blurring the face and some parts of video¹⁴².

If analyzed and seen the overall coverage of the group and its activities by both the channels, it seems balanced and standard. If compare both the Aljazeera channels, Arabic and English, we see a great difference between both of these in style and coverage. Aljazeera English considers the international audiences and cover news according to international standards, but Aljazeera Arabic considers the local viewership and report news accordingly. Here in the above study, I have compared Aljazeera English and CNN.

¹⁴¹ Alshathry Talal Iowa State University: A comparative framing analysis of ISIL in the online coverage of CNN and Aljazeera (2015) Graduate Thesis and Dissertations: 14683, http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/14683?utm_source=lib.dr.iastate.edu%2Fetd%2F14683&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

¹⁴² Zhang, Xu, and Lea Hellmueller. "Transnational media coverage of the ISIS threat: A global perspective?." *International Journal of Communication* 10 (2016): 20.

Coverage of Syrian Conflict by Iranian Media and Al-Arabiya TV Channel

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been playing a great role in the Arab World since the start of Arabic Spring. To cease new horizons in the region, Iran started establishing cordial relations with Arab countries to counter its traditional rival Saudi Arabia in the region. The visit of Iranian President to Egypt in 2013 and his meeting with his Egyptian counterpart Mohamed Morsi was part of that initiative. The main focus of Iran remains in the Middle East where it has considerable stake. Iran has been supporting Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Iraq government after the fall of Saddam regime. It had good relation with other countries also like Syria and Qatar. When uprising started in the Arab world, Iran supported it for its own benefit especially in Bahrain where majority of people are Shia and are ruled by Sunni rulers. Iran has been presenting itself as the representative of Shia community in the region. When the popular uprising turned into civil war in Syria, Iran started supporting the Assad regime. From sending its troops on Syrian soil to supporting the Syrian regime on international level, it has been playing great role in defense of regime in Syria.

The media in Iran is very nationalistic in nature and supports the Iranian government on domestic and international level. There are restrictions and censorship on media in Iran, media channels, blogs, and newspapers may be closed for criticizing the government or its domestic and foreign policies. Government media in Iran is very strong and it supports the Iranian government on national and international level. In Syrian conflict, Iranian media played the role of mouthpiece of Iranian regime and supported its policies in the Middle East. In respect to Syrian conflict and the policies of Asad government, Iranian media created counter narrative to the Western media. Iranian media especially its satellite channels like *Al-Alam* and Press TV has unquestionable gains in the battlefields and with its reporting it provided legitimacy to Syrian regime. It treated anti Asad militias and rebel groups as terrorists those are fighting with legitimate government¹⁴³. Iranian media portrayed the Iran as

¹⁴³ Syrian Research and Evaluation Organization: Mainstream Iranian Media Coverage of the Syrian Conflict ,
<http://www.principlesinpractice.info/system/files/content/resource/files/main/mainstream-iranian-press-coverage-of-the-syrian-conflict.pdf> (Retrieved on 20 January 2018)

regional and international player by glorifying its actions in Syria and Iraq against Islamic State and other rebel groups. In December 2013 an op-ed page in Iranian daily 'Arman' glorify Iran with headline "Iran has proved to be the most influential regional country in different regional developments"¹⁴⁴. The op-ed further says "Iran has always been the most influential country in the Middle East since the beginning, as regional rivals and analysts admit". The media of Iran has always been glorifying the role of Iran and Russia in Middle East and Syria and demonizing other countries like Saudi Arabia, USA and its allies. A story appeared in October 2013 in daily 'Siasat -e-Rooz' Says:

*"The Foreign movements on the Syrian crisis are divided into two different groups: peace seekers including Iran and Russia, and war mongers, including the West Turkey, Zionists and some regressive Arab countries"*¹⁴⁵.

The term resistance is widely used by Iranian mainstream media for all the forces fighting with Bashar-Al- Assad in Syria including Syrian Army, Hezbollah. Every act of Syrian government and its allies is justified in the name of resistance. An Iranian general in with Fars News Agency of Iran in October 2013 says:

*"Bashar Al Assad is a young man graduated from a British institution. However, thanks to his admirable wisdom and bravery and the altruistic resistance of the Syrian Army I the 30 months war and the people's support of Bashar Assad, he has been able to win the war so far"*¹⁴⁶.

The Assad government is always legitimized in the name of resistance against anti-national forces. Beside Assad, Hezbollah, Hamas and Iran itself are considered as part of resistance camp that is fighting against enemies in Syria. Syrian regime is portrayed as biggest legitimate force in the Arab region that is fighting with Israel and helping all the people who are suffering in the hands of Israel and other forces.

Global actors like USA and its allies are always shown in poor light in Iranian media and they are considered as helping 'Takfiri and Salafi' groups to overthrow the

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.principlesinpractice.info/system/files/content/resource/files/main/mainstream-iranian-press-coverage-of-the-syrian-conflict.pdf>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.siasatrooz.ir/vdcdds0fxyt0z56.2a2y.html>

¹⁴⁶ Syrian Research and Evaluation Organization: Mainstream Iranian Media Coverage of the Syrian Conflict ,
<http://www.principlesinpractice.info/system/files/content/resource/files/main/mainstream-iranian-press-coverage-of-the-syrian-conflict.pdf> (Retrieved on 20 January 2018)

legitimate government of Bashar Al Assad. A conspiracy theory is embedded against the international actors and Saudi Arabia is shown as conspirator along with these international actors which is helping these international forces to destabilize the region and dethrone Bashar Al Assad. January 2014 articles published in *Kayhan* daily asserts:

*“The Syrian Opposition coalition is made up of militia and terrorist groups in Syria and foreign based political factions”*¹⁴⁷.

The coverage of Syrian conflict by Iranian mainstream media is a propaganda machine that only legitimizes Iran, Syria, Russia and Hezbollah and all other actors are demonized for their ‘negative’ role in Syrian conflict. ON satellite channels like Press TV and *Al-Alam* TV, columns, articles and opinion are published only those support Iranian narrative in Syria. Any news or article is never published that is critical of Iranian policies in Middle East. Every act of Iran is justified in Iranian mainstream media and glorifies. Censorship, blockade of internet is also normal in Iran. Criticism of Iran is never tolerated on social media and blogs.

Coverage of Syrian Conflict by Al-Arabiya Channel

Al-Arabiya is owned by Saudi Royal family and it covers the region with the perspective of Saudi government. Both Saudi Arabia and Iran are biggest players in the politics of Middle East. Both are fighting multiple wars for their domination in the region. On the one side Saudi has started war in Yemen against Houti rebels those are allegedly supported by Iranian regime. In Syria, Saudi has been supporting the anti-Assad forces from the beginning of unrest in the country, while Iran is supporting Assad regime. In such a situation, media plays a great role in creating narrative on national and international level in the favor of their owners. That is exactly being done by the media of Iran and Saudi Arabia and its allies. *Al-Arabiya* is the most famous and watched channel in the Arab World after Aljazeera and both these channels impact the politics of the region as happened in Arab Uprising. *Al-Arabiya* takes the side of Saudi Arabia in reporting the particular issues of the region. When civil war started in Syria, the world was divided into two groups, one group was led by USA and its allies including Saudi Arabia and second group was led by Russia and Iran. Saudi Arabia has been supporting the removal of Bashar Al Assad and for that

¹⁴⁷ <http://kayhanarch.kayhan.ir/900814/index.htm>

Saudi and its allies armed the opposition in Syria that resulted into creation of Islamic State in Iraq and Levant. The coverage of Syrian conflict by Al-Arabia was severely criticized and it was banned in Syria by regime. After that it started relying on amateur videos of anti regime activists on social media that created a credibility crisis for the media network. The Al-Arabiya channel emerged as a propaganda channel for Saudi and its allies. When banned from reporting inside Syria, the channel was relying on unverified sources and Syrian opposition staying outside Syria. One London based group called 'Syrian Observatory for Human Rights' was the most famous source of news for international media and *Al-Arabiya* also relied on it for Syrian news. But the authenticity of this group is questioned¹⁴⁸. According to an article in 'Foreign Policy' magazine the stories of *Al-Arabiya* were politically motivated and serve the interests of Saudi and its allies. According to the article, the Saudi media house was creating anti-Assad propaganda and supporting the rebels against the regime. Analyzing the coverage of Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya in Syria he further says:

*"In their bid to support the Syrian rebels' cause' these media giants have lowered their journalistic standards, abandoned rudimentary fact checks, and relied on anonymous callers and unverified videos in place of solid reporting"*¹⁴⁹.

The *Al-Arabiya* has been criticized earlier also for its pro-Saudi stand in many issues including coup of Egyptian Army against the government of Mohamed Morsi, but in this war of Syria, it has done worst. There is no doubt that Syrian regime has committed grave human rights violations against civilian inside the country, but this network has been exaggerating the happenings in the country. The violations are equally committed by anti-regime groups also, but that was rarerly mentioned by *Al-Arabiya*. It has been supporting blindly the rebels group those turned out to be Islamic state as well. But with the change policies of Saudi Arabia changed the coverage strategies of the channel as well. When Islamic states started its worst human rights violation and even threatened Saudi Arabia, the policies of Saudi Arabia changed.

¹⁴⁸

https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Document:The_Syrian_Observatory_for_Human_Rights_is_a_Propaganda_Front_funded_by_the_EU

¹⁴⁹ Sultan Al- Qassemi (2012) Breaking the Arab News,

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/08/02/breaking-the-arab-news/> (Retrieved on 1st January 2018)

With the same, *Al-Arabiya* also started reporting against the group and changed its coverage.

The coverage of *Al-Arabiya* was even supported by many considering the gravity of issue and the savagery that was being committed by Syrian regime against the people. Jillian C. York, Director of International Freedom of Expression at Electronic Frontier Foundation says in his personal blog:

“I have known and talked about the horrors of the regime since long before March 2011. But even 1,000 civilian deaths are far too many, these numbers matter when they are being used to justify intervention”¹⁵⁰. But she further says that “The media’s almost total alliance upon activists-not simply citizens, but self described activists – is therefore problematic”.

The *Al-Arabiya* has been doing the same by relying on activists and so called human rights groups. In such a scenario, a parallel may be drawn between an ethical journalism and the propaganda journalism. Propaganda journalism is a reality that most of the media houses including Western channels are doing in Syria. And that is what *Al-Arabiya* has been doing as well.

Coverage of Syrian Conflict by Aljazeera and BBC

Syria is ruled by Assad family for almost 40 years. Before current president, his father Hafiz Al Assad was the president of Syria who ruled the country with an iron fist. In 2000, Hafiz Al Assad passed away and his son Bashar Al Assad took the power in his hand and continued ruling the country. In 2010-11 when popular protests erupted across the Arab World, it started in Syria also where people called for reforms and improvement in human rights condition. In the beginning, Assad promised reforms, but with that the security forces unleashed brutality and atrocities against protesters arresting scores of protesters. Other regional and international powers were vying for such an opportunity, they that in 2011 and considered it as an opportunity to dethrone Bashar Al Assad. Regional countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey and western country like USA started arming the opposition groups to fight with Syrian regime. On the other hand, Russia, Iran and Hezbollah started defending

¹⁵⁰ Jillian C. York (2012) On Syria’s Media Narrative (s): A Rant, <http://jilliancyork.com/2012/03/03/on-syrias-media-narratives-a-rant/> Retrieved on 1 January 2018)

Syrian regime and this power play led to the civil war in the country. This civil war displaced millions of people, killed more than five lakh people creating this one of the biggest humanitarian catastrophe in the modern world history. In these events, media was the biggest player from all side that created narrative on national and international level taking sides. Besides other media networks, Aljazeera and BBC were on the fore front covering the war, presenting different narratives from political, humanitarian and geo-political point of views. Both of these media networks impacts the politics of the world and especially the Arab region and are considered elite agenda setters. IN trhe coming section, the coverage of both the network will be analyzed to see the difference In perception and presentation of civil war.

Comparing the Coverage of BBC and Aljazeera

BBC is one of the biggest media houses of the world with its service in many languages. Its Arabic service one of the most trusted service in the region. From the start of Arab spring, it has been covering the protests, killing and suppression across the region. In civil war of Syria also, it covered the happenings on the ground by its correspondents and analyzed the situation in talk shows, interviews and special reports.

BBC said that the absence of political rights, lack of freedom and suppression of common people were the main reasons behind the protests and demonstration in Syria. It said, the protests started in *Daraa* province where teenagers and children called for freedom and democracy, the protesters were arrested that led to spread of protests in other regions and then people started demanding Bashar Al Assad to step down¹⁵¹. In addition to that, emergency laws were one of the causes of uprising in Syria. According to a report on BBC:

“There are emergency laws which allow people to be arrested without warrants and imprisoned without trails”¹⁵².

¹⁵¹ Salih. M. (2014) Media Framing of the Syrian Conflict: Aljazeera, BBC and ETV in Comparative Perspective. Unpublished M A Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa. P. 62

¹⁵² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13161329>

On the part of Aljazeera, the main reason of uprising is the 40 years rule of Al Assad family. The channel considers it the main reason behind the revolt and according to it the high handedness by regime led to wide spread of protests across the country. The use of force against protesters angered the other citizens and they also came on streets demanding the resignation of basher Al Assad. According to Aljazeera, in the beginning, the protests were popular protests in which all the people irrespective of sect and religion, but later it turned sectarian that led to the civil war in the country. It says:

“When the Syrian uprising began in March 2011, it was a popular protest against an authoritarian regime, not a Sunni fight against the country’s Alawite leader, but it has morphed into a civil war with an increasing sectarian tone”¹⁵³.

When chemical; attacks happen in Syria, Aljazeera held Bashar Al Assad directly responsible for that negating the capacity of opposition to do that. The channel has been conducting th debates and special shows on the different issues of Syria including chemical attack. The selection of debating panel is also done on the basis of their thinking. In a program ‘Inside Story’ one of the panelists said:

“The Syrian Army fired the rockets and shells containing poison gas which killed hundreds of people in the east of the city”¹⁵⁴.

The coverage of BBC on the same issue was balanced in which the channel quoted multiple sources including UNO and said that UN report did not attribute the responsibility on any particular group but the report indicated that it might be the work of Assad regime. The report says:

“The substance concerned was the nerve agent Sarin and the delivery system was ground-to-ground rockets. Note that the UN inspectors do not anywhere in the report explicitly lay the blame for carrying out the attack at the door of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad. That was beyond the scope of their study, but as we

¹⁵⁴ Inside Story (23 August 2013) Syria: Chemical Warfare.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2013/08/20138237010745744.html> (Retrieved on 12 December 2017)

will see a little later, there are strong indicators from their evidence that point the finger at forces loyal to the Assad regime”¹⁵⁵.

The portrayal of Syrian forces was also different on both the channels. Aljazeera consider the Syrian forces as murderers and killers of civilian. Even Aljazeera was not allowed inside Syria and was reporting via secondary sources like rebel forces, social media posts and videos and Syrian activists living in Western or Arab countries. Therefore in such a scenario, the channels was analyzing the reports and judging the situation on ground. The channel was refereeing to unknown sources and unidentified sources who said that Syrian forces were killing civilian that seemed very biased on the part of a reputed international media channel. The frequently used source by Aljazeera and even other international media was a London based Syrian human rights group named ‘Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR)¹⁵⁶. In one of the statement, the observatory reported that 13 civilian were killed by government forces in a village call Bayda. Aljazeera reported the same news quoting SOHR:

“Forces loyal to Assad have killed at least 13 members of a family in the Sunni Muslim village of Bayda, according to activists. The SOHR said four women and six children were among those killed on Saturday in the central village”¹⁵⁷.

Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) is a news agency of Syrian government which has been an alternate source of information. But the channels, Aljazeera and BBC rarely quoted the version of this agency to report the other side of story or the version of Syrian government. Aljazeera completely depended on SOHR for the news from Syria, and SOHR portray the Syrian government as killing innocent civilian and committing grave human rights violations. In another incidence in the same report about the killing of civilian Aljazeera quoted the same SOHR:

“In May, pro-Assad armed groups killed more than 50 residents of Bayda and over 60 locals in the nearby town of Baniyas. In those killings, some bodies, many of them children, were found burned and mutilated”.

¹⁵⁵ BBC World Service (30 January 2014) Syria Chemical Attack: Key UN findings, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24130181> (Accessed on 20 December 2017)

¹⁵⁶ SOHR (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights) <http://www.syriahr.com/>

¹⁵⁷ Aljazeera English (22 July 2013) Syrian Forces reportedly ambush rebels. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/07/2013721191718490816.html> (Accessed on 12 December 2017)

Rebel forces were always portrayed in positive light by both the media houses and declared them victories on many occasion. Again Aljazeera depended on same SOHR and said that Aleppo and its adjoining areas have been captured by rebel forces. In a report Aljazeera said:

“Syrian rebels have captured an ammunition depot north of Damascus from government forces, activists said, seizing a hoard of anti-tank missiles and rockets which could strengthen their firepower”¹⁵⁸.

BBC also reported same type of reports, but it was relatively balanced in its reporting. BBC has also privilege to report from inside the Syria as it was allowed to report while Aljazeera was banned.

On Military strike in on Syria by USA and its allies, Aljazeera kept linking the civilian killing in the hands of regime forces and the attack. It openly held responsible the Assad government of killing civilian and asked for military response by international community. Justifying the military intervention in Syria, Aljazeera said that the airbase and army installation should be targeted in Syria. Aljazeera advocated targeting Syrian air force as that was the main force fighting with rebel forces in the country. In an article Aljazeera says:

“Syria’s air force has been a dominant force in the war so far as rebel fighters have few resources to bring down the planes. Taking out the country’s air bases would remove one of the regimes biggest advantages. This is certainly one of the ways NATO was able to chip away at Muammar Gaddafi’s forces in the air campaign on Libya in 2011”¹⁵⁹.

BBC also supported the military invention in Syria and even criticized British government for not supporting the US and its allies in this endeavor. BBC said that there should be large scale foreign intervention to deter the Syrian forces as was did in Libya. Quoting the civilian with their plight under Syrian regime and atrocities

¹⁵⁸ Aljazeera English (4 August 2013) Syrian Rebels seize army weapons Cache, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/08/201383194316559131.html> (Accessed on 20 December 2017)

¹⁵⁹ Salih. M. (2014) Media Framing of the Syrian Conflict: Aljazeera, BBC and ETV in Comparative Perspective. Unpublished M A Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa. P. 73

committed on them, BBC tried to make public opinion in UK in favor of foreign intervention¹⁶⁰.

The coverage was Aljazeera came under more suspicion when a journalists working with the channel defected alleging that channel was openly playing the role of a mouthpiece of Qatar government in Syria. Journalist Ali Hashim claimed that Aljazeera paid \$50,000 to smuggle satellite phones and other devices inside Syria to get inside picture. The journalist alleged that the agenda of channel is decided by Qatar authorities to report their own version of Syrian crisis. He says:

“The channel was taking a certain stance. It was meddling with each and every detail of reports on the Syrian revolution. At the same time it was almost covering up what was going on in Bahrain”¹⁶¹.

The journalist further alleged that they were guided by the channel what to report and how to report.

In 2016, the emails of Hilary Clinton were released in which it was said that Google and Aljazeera were working to overthrow the Syrian regime. Both Aljazeera and Google were working through various internet tools to encourage defection in the Syrian regime. An email sent by Jared Cohen. The Google Ideas chief to Hilary Clinton says:

“Given how hard it is to get information into Syria right now, we are partnering with Al-Jazeera who will take primary ownership over the tool we have built, track the data, verify it, and broadcast it back into Syria.”¹⁶²

Therefore, it may be said that reporting of both the channels from Syria was not that much objective as they claims to be. *Aljazeera* has been criticized in the

¹⁶⁰ Lina Sinjab (30 August 2013) Damascus residents ‘hold their breath’ as strike looms, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23904122> (Accessed on 10 December 2017)

¹⁶¹ RT News (4 April 2012) Ex-employee: Al Jazeera provided Syrian rebels with satphones. <https://www.rt.com/news/al-jazeera-rebels-phones-lebanon-281/> (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

¹⁶² Khaleda Rahman (21 March 2016) Does Google basically works for the White House? <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3503000/Hillary-Clinton-s-emails-reveal-Google-wanted-overthrow-Assad-map-tool.html> (Accessed on 3 January 2018)

region for its biased reporting of many issues in favor of Qatar. BBC also attracted harsh criticism for its reporting in Syria and other countries of Middle East¹⁶³.

Coverage of Arab Issues by *Al-Arabiya* and *Al-Hurra*

Al-Hurra is a satellite channel started by government of USA to contain negativity against its policies in the region and to promote ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’. Before that Voice of America was the main voice of USA in the region. But to counter Aljazeera, new channel *Al-Hurra* was launched in 2004. Since its inception, the channel is struggling the established its credibility among other international channels. But it has almost failed to attract much attention in the region.

The *Al-Arabiya* is UAE based channel owned by Saudi royal family, it was also launched in 2003 to counter Aljazeera. In comparison with *Al-Hurra* it has managed to establish itself as a major media player in the region with bold coverage and discussion on varieties of issues. Its main competitor in the region is Aljazeera Arabic.

In comparing the coverage of the region, both the channel have different perspective in regards to different issues or the region like Israel-Palestine issues, war on terror, Arab Spring and civil war in different Arab countries. Al-Arabiya also follows the policies of Saudi Arabia in its reporting, but it is slightly independent. On the other hand, *Al-Hurra* sticks to the US policies and promote US interest in the region. The main mission of this channel was to convince to the Muslim and especially Arab World that war on terror is not a war against Muslims. Beirut from the beginning, there was doubt that whether it will succeed in objective of bringing Muslim world closer to America. Predicting this future editor of a Beirut based daily newspaper ‘The daily Star’ Rami Khouri has said that “*the network will exacerbate the gap between the Americans and Arabs, rather than close it*”¹⁶⁴. That was proved to be true when in 2008, the website of Al-Hurra positioned at 11,956 number in Saudi Arabia. And even today in 2018 after almost 14 years the ranking of the website in Egypt is at number 2,018 according to web traffic tracker website www.alexa.com.

¹⁶³ Jaber, M., & Baumann, G. (2011). The BBC World Service in the Middle East: Claims to impartiality, or a politics of translation?. *Journalism*, 12(2), 171-182.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1464884910388585> (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

¹⁶⁴ Nasrawi, S. (2004) ‘US Govt’s TV station draws Arab fire’, Associated Press 12 February.

Considering the poor response of Arab viewers to its program, the channel started a new show called 'Al Youm ((اليوم) in 2009. That was a three hours groundbreaking news program. Ten months after the launch of this program, the network conducted the survey and according to that survey, the rating of the network increased impressively¹⁶⁵. The network had a tough competition with regional media houses like Aljazeera, Al-Arabia and other networks; therefore it could not fully succeed in its objectives.

As for as the coverage of the channel is concerned, it remains complete propaganda channel in the region and covered the issues to promote the policies of America in the region. The channels lacks credibility as one the one side it was claiming to promote democracy, USA was occupying Iraq and at the same time was allying with authoritarian governments like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other monarchies. During the 2009 war in Gaza, *Alhurra* was openly siding with Israel. According to a research, 32% of the guests appeared on *Alhurra* channel were Israeli who presented their point of view. While only 28 % guests represented Palestinian point of view. The news reporting was done from Israeli side 57% and only 42% from Palestinian side¹⁶⁶. Therefore, by this analysis we can understand that the channel was clearly on the side of Israel that is also the foreign policy of USA in the Middle East.

During Arab spring as well, the channel was only advancing the policies of USA in the region and almost failed to become the voice of people or democracy.

Al-Arabiya was also launched to counter Aljazeera in 2003, but if we compare this channel with *Alhurra*, it fares much better in terms of coverage of the issues and the nature of its program. Both the channels claim to be against the Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. But there is difference in the approach of issues in both the channels. *Alhurra* never broadcast the views contrary to US policies in the region, while Al-Arabia is more liberal in this regard. *Al-Arabiya* has also been criticised for its coverage in different Arab countries. It is accused as an arm of Saudi foreign

¹⁶⁵ Snow, N. (2010). *Alhurra to Al Youm: The maturation of US television broadcasting in the Middle East*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, online: <http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/luce/snow.html>.

¹⁶⁶ Samei, M. F. A. (2016). Public Diplomacy and the Clash of Satellites. *Media and Communication*, 4(2).

<https://search.proquest.com/openview/ce3943d0a1a7e7b6af4649b55d3032b0/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2034126> (Accessed on 1st December 2017)

policy that covers the news as per the policies of Saudi Arabia¹⁶⁷. The channel has been banned by many countries for its critical coverage. It was banned by in 2004 when it broadcasted a video tape claimed to be made by former president Saddam Husain¹⁶⁸. It has been banned by Iran also in 2009 and now it is banned in Syria. During the Arab Spring, the channel was clearly with the Saudi regime and a covered the happenings in the region as per policies of the country. IT was much vocal in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria, but it failed to report objectively from Gulf countries like Bahrain, Oman, Jordan and Yemen.

Syrian Media: The Counter Propaganda

In the Syrian civil war, most of the international media houses like BBC, Aljazeera, *Al-Arabiya* and CNN were against the Syrian regime and openly backing air strike in Syria, resignation of Assad. Only media that was supporting the Assad regime was Iranian, Russian. The Syrian media has also has been playing a great role in creating propaganda in favour of Syrian government. Syrian TV and the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) is the two main organ of the state propaganda in Syria. Established in 1965, the news agency gives news in Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, Chinese and English¹⁶⁹. The agency creates the counter narrative on the coverage of international media of Syrian civil war. The media in Syria is strictly controlled by the regime and it reports the official version of news.

In 2012, an employee of a television channels, *Al-Dunya* and *Al-Akhbariya* has defected and revealed the propaganda model of Syrian media. He claimed that opposition rebel groups are occupying a large part of country, but Syrian media never report that news. He said that media is acting as tongue of regime. According to him, what to ask in interviews with people, how to report and what to report was all given to them by regime and they were bound to follow that¹⁷⁰.

¹⁶⁷ Andrew Hammond (2007) Saudi Arabia's Media Empire: Keeping the Masses at Home. <https://www.arabmediasociety.com/saudi-arabias-media-empire-keeping-the-masses-at-home/> (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

¹⁶⁸ Peter Feuilherade (25 November 2003). http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3236654.stm (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

¹⁶⁹ Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) <http://sana.sy/en/>

¹⁷⁰ Martin Chulov (3 July 2012) Syrian Regime TV reporter defects, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jul/02/syrian-regime-tv-reporter-defects> (Accessed on 12 December 2017)

In 2012 itself, another person named Al-Omar, who was working in the press office of the presidential palace defected and run to Turkey. He also spills the beam of inner propaganda by the Syrian regime. He said that the media is completely controlled by the regime and most of the stories are fabricated to present the rebels and other opposition forces in negative light. He Said to CNN that “*his job was to fabricate, make deceptions and cover up for Bashar Al Assad’s crimes.*” Describing the propaganda method of the regime, he said that during the bombardment, women and children are brought on camera where they claim that they are affected by the rebel groups and displaced because of them. According to him, the coming of Iranian and Russian military officials and spies was a normal in the Syrian presidential palace where they used to discuss the situation in the country. He said that most of the civilian are killed by the government forces and the rebels are blamed for that on Syrian media. He also claimed that he was instructed by Assad to establish a pro regime TV channel in Aleppo in 2011 when protests erupted against the regime in the area¹⁷¹. Even he claims that he used to fix the interviews of international channels like *Aljazeera, Al-Arabiya, BBC* and CNN with pro regime and their job was to present a positive impression of Syrian government amidst the negative coverage on these media channels.

Considering the above revelation, it may be understood the propaganda model of the Syrian media. The same propaganda is shared by Russian and Iranian media who are allies of basher Al Assad. In the presence of anti- Syrian regime international media, Syrian media is trying its best to present the regime in positive light and blaming the opposition groups, and international plays as the main problem of country. In the international media, Assad is presented as the part of problem; while on the contrary, he is depicted as the part of solution for the Syria.

Coverage of Arab World by Russian Media

After the Arab Spring of 2010-11, Russia has emerged as one of the biggest political player in the Arab region. After the end of Cold War, the role of Russia was seems getting low in international politics. But with the new geo-strategic realities in

¹⁷¹ Ivan Watson, Raja Razek and Saad Abedine (October 12, 2012) Defecting Syrian Propagandist says he job was ‘to fabricate’. <https://edition.cnn.com/2012/10/09/world/meast/syria-propagandist-defects/> (Accessed on 1st January 2018)

the world and especially in the Middle East, weakness of US policies and the conflict in the region, Russia has presented itself a decisive force in the world under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. After the start of civil war in Syria, Russia started supporting Assad regime militarily and politically. From sending troops on ground, providing air support to defeat rebels and Islamic State militants and lending diplomatic hand on international forays, Russia has changed the politics of the region. IN the starting was civil war when US and its allies started arming the rebel forces, it seemed that Assad regime is short lived. But with the Support of Russia and Iran, the situation has completely changed now. Besides supporting politically, militarily and diplomatically by Russian government, Russian media also played a great role in favor of Assad regime. Russia Today TV has launched its Arabic Service ‘*Rusia Al-Youm*’ in 2007 to spread the policies of government in the region. From that day, the channel has been working very well in the region and has presented a counter view of BBC, CNN and Aljazeera. It has emerged as an alternate media house in the region. During the Arab Spring, the Russian media covered the region with its own perspective balancing the relation with regional allies of Russia. The western media and academicians have criticized the Russian media coverage of the region and termed it as ‘disinformation campaign against USA and its allies in the Arab World. Joseph Braude, author and policy analyst at Al-Mesbar Centre for Studies and Research, Dubai in an article on centre on Public Diplomacy says:

“As part of his effort, the RT Arabic TV channel denigrates the U.S. around the clock, promotes a revisionist history of Moscow’s actions in the region, and promotes a cult of personality around the Russian president. The channel does so in an appealing style, tailored to the region’s sensibilities. And millions are tuning in.”¹⁷²

He says that the popularity of Russian media and especially the Arabic Service of Russia Today is worrisome for US and its allies. According to him, the channel is among the 5 most popular news channels for the news of Middle East and particularly from Syria. The author said that the channel push conspiracies theories in the region to win the audiences and especially young population.

¹⁷² Braude, Joseph: (January 5 2018) Pushing back on Russian Disinformation in Arab Countries. <https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/pushing-back-russian-disinformation-arab-countries> (Accessed on 1st February 2018)

The selection of news and the sources of news are in the hands of Russia, the news those are not favorable to Russian policies in the region are censored and ignored out rightly. According to an analysis of news on Russian media by The Guardian, what is happening in Aleppo and other parts of Syria are not reported, instead the reporting is highly defensive of Kremlin and its policies. According to the analysis the Arabic Service of Russia Today TV has been shying away from reporting the civilian casualties in the hands of Syrian and Russian forces in Syria. The Russian media is playing the role of a cheerleader of Russian actions in the region says the analysis of 'The Guardian'¹⁷³. Conspiracy theories are the main reporting by Russian media. What is happening in the Middle East is reported as the conspiracy by CIA and other agencies. Whenever an attack is carried out on civilian areas in Syria by Russian or Syrian forces and innocent civilian are killed, the Russian media blames it on rebels, USA or CIA. Categorizing the coverage of media in the Middle East, the coverage of Russian media may be put in the category of Iranian and Syrian media. While comparing the media of all three countries, Russian media is free in comparison with Iranian or Syrian media. But despite the freedom, Russian media is playing the role of cheer leader of Putin and its policies across the world.

Conclusion:

Arab World has been going through changes and transformations for last 3 decades. From globalization to privatization and liberalization, the region has been transformed. With that change, the media of the region has been also changing and adopting the new situation. After the 9/11 incident, the region came in the focus of international media and academician and it proved to be a fertile ground for many media houses. The region is also very important strategically, economically and politically for international community and especially European and Western countries. Considering the importance of the region, many countries started their Arabic media houses to spread their policies in the region and advance their diplomacy. Countries like UK, USA, France, Russia, China and Germany launched the Arabic service of their satellite channels. That started a new competition among media houses in the region. Arab media houses like Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya were

¹⁷³ Alec Luhn (3 October 2016) Russian Media Could almost be covering a different war in Syria. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/03/russia-media-coverage-syria-war-selective-defensive-kremlin> (Accessed on 10 January 2018)

already competing with each other to become the voice of the people. Therefore, in such a scenario, the media landscape of the region became more interesting and topic of research. Big issues in the region, like Arab Spring, Civil war in Libya, Syria and Yemen and the regional rivalry impacted both regional and international media to a great extent.

The coverage of media also remained divided on the issues according to policies of their owner countries. During the Arab Spring, Aljazeera played a great role in mobilizing the people in Tunisia and Egypt against the regimes, but it tamed its coverage in the countries who were allies of Qatar like Bahrain and other Gulf countries. Likewise, Al-Arabia also followed the policies of Saudi Arabia and played the role of its official organ. In foreign media, BBC and CNN tried to remain objective, but they could not succeed in their endeavor. Other foreign media like CCTV of china, *Rusia Al Youm* of Russia, *Alhurra* of USA, France 24 of French government remained the mouthpiece of their governments. Instead of reporting the ground realities, they kept spreading the positive image of their government. The viewership of these channels also remained very know and also theyre are least trusted in the region for the regional or international news. IN the regional conflict, media could not play its role of educator, informer and messenger. Instead of that it remain divided that shaken the confidence of people in media.

Conclusion

Media started in the Arab world under the colonial rule when printing press was introduced in the region. In the post independent Arab World, media has developed slowly in most of the countries. There were many factors in slow development like policies of governments, low illiteracy rate, absence of modern technology and the lack of resources. In comparison to print media, audio-visual media has developed and spread in the region more steadily. From the beginning, radio has been the main source of news for common people and still it is popular. Popularity of radio may be traced to the high level of illiteracy in the post independent Arab world. The development of media was also impacted by the literacy rate, as the newspapers were read by a handful of elite literate where the majority of people were not able to read it. After the independence, the economic condition of most of the countries was miserable and that also contributed in slow development of media in the region. As the governments started putting efforts to uplift the economic condition of people and improve the literacy rate, with that started the steady development of print media. Since that has increased the proliferation of daily and weekly newspapers across the Arab World. Today, there exists a large number of daily and weekly in different languages in the region. In the rural areas, the culture of newspapers is not that popular, but after the introduction of internet, they are also accessing the online editions of newspapers.

The audio-visual media remained acutely under developed in the region due to poor efforts from the side of governments, lack of resources and the dull programming on the part of TV channels. But with the introduction of satellite channels, interest of people rocketed in the audio visual media that led to further development of TV industry in the region. With the development of technology, investment by government and private sector, coming of international and transnational channels, TV industry has emerged as one of the biggest industries in the Arab World. Competition between TV channels, globalization and privatization has opened the Arab world to discuss new issues that were considered taboo in the region. This competition has provided an edge to the public who can access news from diverse national and international channels. Before the introduction of satellite

television, the state media was the main source of news and its attention was only on state issues and the daily activities of royal families and the monarchs, but the dissemination of international satellite channels changed the landscape of the media making state media irrelevant. These satellite channels were very vocal and critical in their coverage where they criticized the monarchs and government policies that was a new practice in highly controlled media culture of the region. Within a decade, change was felt in the thinking of regimes and people and that change was brought by this new satellite media by its bold and different coverage. From the beginning, these channels introduced call-in shows to bring the common people on debate and providing them a platform to air their views. Seizing this opportunity, Arab public got involved in different type of discussion that was never seen on state channels.

Arab governments voiced their concern on the approach of these satellite channels considering it a threat to the national unity and security of the region. But undeterred, channels like *Aljazeera* continued their coverage exposing the ills of monarchs opening for the public and holding debate on it that attracted praise on international level as well. Despite criticism, the coverage of *Aljazeera* became stronger and stronger day by day. During the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, *Aljazeera* highlighted the human rights violation in the hands of American forces that angered the USA and its allies. Therefore the Bush administration thought of silencing it by killing its journalists threatening to bombard its headquarter and intimidating the Qatar government to control it. But when failed, USA and other governments decided to counter it by launching their own satellite channels. The launch of *Al-Arabiya* by Saudi Arabia in 2003 and *Al-Hurra* by USA in 2004 was directed to counter *Aljazeera*. After that many Arab and foreign countries started their satellite channels to advance their interests and propagate their policies in the region. The issues that occurred in the region since 9/1 like Israel-Palestine war, Arab Spring, civil war in different countries and the emergence of extremist groups like Al-Qaeda and Islamic State strengthened the regional media and also provided them opportunities to prove their worth.

In the contemporary time, the change in Arab media is demonstrated in its style of reporting, covering different issues and questioning the power boldly and initiating the liberal discourse on various issues. This discourse started by satellite

media has led the people of the region to empowerment and emancipation which resulted into uprising in 2010-11.

Internet was introduced in the Arab region in 1990s as a tool of modernization by the governments. In the beginning, it was made available to educational institutions and government offices only. But gradually its reach increased and people started using it to get information and communicate with each other. The introduction of smart phone began a new era in the technological advancement in the world and that also impacted the Arab region. The internet became affordable and people started using it on their smart phones. With the introduction of blogs and social media, internet emerged as a tool in the hands of people to use it against autocratic regimes to demand their rights. Internet also becomes a powerful tool in the hands of mainstream media and they used it to disseminate their stories more widely to the rural and urban people alike. The use of new media and especially the social media revolutionized the communication system of the region and the revolution of 2010-11 was led by the same media that toppled the dictators and shook the region to the core. The social media is still playing its role in the Arab region, but it is much divided now that is also harming the society by spreading communal and sectarian messages. As a counter propaganda, governments are also using social media to influence the people and to advance their agendas.

From the beginning, Arab media has not been independent. Restriction, censorship by governments and self-censorship are a norm in the region. Before the privatization and commercialization of media, most of the media houses were owned by the state governments and the policies were also decided by them. But the introduction of international and transnational media has changed the status and media has become relatively independent. Still the criticism of monarchs and the state policy is not tolerated and strict laws are in place to prosecute the media personals violating these laws. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Qatar have draconian laws in the name of national security and any journalist can be put behind bar and prosecuted in the name of national interest. After the Army Coup in Egypt, many journalists of national and international media houses have been imprisoned for years without charges and the country is considered one of the most dangerous countries for press freedom in the world. But despite all restrictions, imprisonments

and persecution, journalists are working in the region in public interest. Considering this fact, it can be assumed that the future of Arab media is bright in the region.

In the current research, the researcher has analysed the status of media and its development in the region. The main focus of this study is liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) of media in the region with the historic perspective. Going through the books and resources about this research, it is observed that there are many thrust areas which are to be explored further. The main focus of academicians and researchers has been on *Aljazeera*, *Al-Arabiya*, CNN, BBC and other international or trans-national media satellite channels. No doubt, Aljazeera and other satellite channels have played a vital role in transforming the region socially and politically. But the role of regional media, print media, films and especially new media like blogs, online portals and social media cannot be ignored. These media have played a great role in the Arab society and are continuously playing. There is need to go through these media and their roles thoroughly and analytically to understand their contribution to the Arab society. Beside these, the most pivotal role is played by Arabic media and especially online forums and portals which are educating the people for their rights. These are some of the thrust areas which I hope the future researchers should look into.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Books

1. Abdelmoula, E. (2015). *Al Jazeera and democratization: The rise of the arab public sphere* (Vol. 8). Routledge.
2. Akkerhuis, D. (2013). *Western vs Muslim Media on the Civil War in Syria. An Empirical Analysis of Huntington's Clash of Civilizations* (Master's thesis).
3. Alhammouri, L. (2013). *The road to the White House through Arab eyes: Analysis of frames and credibility as presented by Alarabiya, Alhurra and Aljazeera* (Doctoral dissertation, School of Social Sciences Theses).
4. Alterman, J. B. (1998). *New media, new politics?: From satellite television to the Internet in the Arab world*. Washington Institute for Near East Policy.
5. Awwad, Julian M. (2005). *Al-Jazeera's Discourse of 'Arabness': An Examination of the Discursive Construction of Identity in Talk Show Programming*. (Thesis) Montréal, Canada, McGill University Canada.
6. Ayish, M. I. (2002). *Political communication on Arab world television: Evolving patterns*. *Political communication*, 19(2), 137-154.
7. Barakat, Rabie (2011) *New Media in the Arab World: a Tool for Redesigning Geopolitical Realities* (Thesis) Lebanon, *School of Arts and Sciences, Lebanese American University*.
8. Barkho, L. (2008). *Strategies of power in multilingual global broadcasters: How the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera shape their Middle East news discourse* (Doctoral dissertation, Jönköping University Press).
9. Bazzi, S. (2009). *Arab news and conflict: a multidisciplinary discourse study* (Vol. 34). John Benjamins Publishing.
10. Cherribi, S. (2017). *Fridays of rage: Al Jazeera, the Arab Spring, and political Islam*. Oxford University Press.
11. Douai, A., & Moussa, M. B. *Mediated Identities and New Journalism in the Arab World*. Palgrave.
12. FandyMamoun (2007). *(Un) Civil War of Words: Media and Politics in the Arab World*. Praeger.
13. Fang Irving (1997) *A History of Mass Communication: Six Information Revolutions*. London, UK, Focal Press.

14. Figenschou, T. U. (2013). *Al Jazeera and the global media landscape: The South is talking back* (Vol. 11). Routledge.
15. Gruendler, B. (2011). *Book Culture before Print: The Early History of Arabic Media*. American University of Beirut, the Margaret Weyerhaeuser Jewett Chair of Arabic.
16. Guaaybess, T. (Ed.). (2013). *National broadcasting and state policy in Arab countries*. Springer.
17. Gunter, B., & Dickinson, R. (Eds.). (2013). *News Media in the Arab World: A Study of 10 Arab and Muslim Countries*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
18. Gunter, Barrie. (2013) *Arab Media in a Turbulent World*. USA, The Peninsula Publishing.
19. Hafez Kai, (2008). *Arab Media: Power and Weakness*. New York, Bloomsbury Academic Press.
20. Hafez Kai, (2013) *The Myth of Media Globalization* (Google eBook). USA, John Wiley & Sons.
21. Hudson, L., Iskandar, A., & Kirk, M. (Eds.). (2016). *Media Evolution on the Eve of the Arab Spring*. Springer.
22. Jamali, R. (2014). *Online Arab Spring: social media and fundamental change*. Chandos Publishing.
23. Jayyusi, L., & Roald, A. S. (Eds.). (2016). *Media and Political Contestation in the Contemporary Arab World: A Decade of Change*. Springer.
24. Khalid Al-Jaber (2003). *The Credibility of Arab Broadcasting: The Case of Al-Jazeera*. Qatar, National Council, Arts and Heritage.
25. Lahlali, El Mustapha (2011), *Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media*, UK Edinburgh University Press.
26. Megan E.Zingerelli B. A. (2010). *The CNN Effect and Aljazeera Effect in Global Politics and Society* (Thesis). Washington DC, Georgetown University Washington.
27. Mellor, N. (2011). *Arab media: Globalization and emerging media industries* (Vol. 1). Polity.
28. Mellor N. (2005), *The Making of Arab News*, New York, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,

29. Mellor Noha, (2007) *Modern Arab journalism: problems and prospects*. UK, Edinburgh University Press.
30. Mellor Noha, Dajani Nabil, Rinnawi Khalil, & Ayish Muhammad I. (2011). *Arab Media Globalization and Emerging Media Industries*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
31. Miles Hugh. (2010) *Al-Jazeera: The inside Story of the Arab News Channel That is Challenging the West*. UK, Hachette.
32. Mogannam, Gabrielle, (2006). *A study of public opinion, foreign policy and the role of the media in the Middle East*. California, USA, Communiqué Partners LLC, California.
33. Murphy, Emma, Zweiri, Mahjoob (2011). *The New Arab Media: Technology, Image and Perception*. USA, Ithaca Press.
34. Neuman W. Russel (2010). *Theories of Media Evolution*. USA, University of Michigan Press.
35. Noam, E. M. (2016). *Who owns the world's media?: media concentration and ownership around the world*. Oxford University Press.
36. Powers Shawn (2009). *The Geopolitics of the News: the Case of the Al-Jazeera Network* (Dissertation) California, USA, University of Southern California
37. Rantanen, Terhi. *The Media and Globalization*, Sage, 2004
38. Rugh William A. (2004) *Arab Mass Media: Newspapers, Radio, and Television in Arab Politics*, Connecticut USA, Greenwood Publishing Group.
39. Rugh, W. A. (1987). *The Arab press: News media and political process in the Arab world*. Syracuse Univ Pr.
40. Sabry, T. (2010). *Cultural encounters in the Arab world: On media, the modern and the everyday* (Vol. 89). IB Tauris.
41. Sakr Naomi (2007) *Arab Television Today*, New York, I.B.Tauris& Co. Ltd,
42. Sakr Naomi (2007). *Arab Media and Political Renewal: Community, Legitimacy and Public Life*. New York, I.B.Tauris& Co. Ltd
43. Sakr, N. (Ed.). (2015). *Arab Media Moguls: Community, Legitimacy and Public Life*. IB Tauris.
44. Sakr, N., Skovgaard-Petersen, J., & Della Ratta, D. (Eds.). (2015). *Arab media moguls* (Vol. 148). IB Tauris.

45. Salih, M. (2014). *Media Framing of the Syrian Conflict: Aljazeera, BBC, and ETV in Comparative Perspective*. Unpublished MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
46. Samei Marwa Abdel, (2010). *Public diplomacy in the age of regional media: winning the war of hearts and minds in the Middle East Al-Jazeera and al-Hurra*. Political Science Dissertations. Boston, USA, Department of Political Science, Northeastern University.
47. Tatham Steve, (2006). *Losing Arab Hearts and Minds: The Coalition, Al-Jazeera and Muslim Public Opinion*. UK, C.Hurts And Co.
48. Zayani Mohamed (2005). *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media*. UK, paradigm publishers.
49. Zayani, Mohamed (2005). *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media*. London, UK, Pluto Press, UK.

Arabic Books

1. AatifAtiya (1999) *LutullahKhallat: Al-Sahafabain –Al-din wa Al-syasa*, Daar Al-nahaarwa –Al-nashar.
2. Ahmad Abu Saad, 2009, *Hiwar ma Al-sahafatiwawasaal Al-a'laam*, Darulhadasati, litaba'atiwa al-nashar.
3. Ahmad Al Aqid (2002) *Tahleel Al-khitab Al-sahafiminallughatiilaassultah*, Jordan, Darulathaqaafa.
4. Basheer Al-Alauf (1987) *Al-sahafa tarikh anwatatawwuran wa fannan wa masuliya*, Al-maktaba Al-Islami li Al-tab'a'awa Al-nashar.
5. DrGassan Abdul Wahan Al-Hasan (2012) *Aidiologia Al-Ikhraj Al-sahufi*, Daar Osama lilnasharwa- altauzie.
6. DrKhaleel Mohamad Al-Ratib (2012) *Al-tasveer Al-sahufi*, Daar Osama lilnasharwa- altauzie.
7. DrMasha'al Abdul jabbar,(2012) *Aidiologiyatu Al-kitabawa-alsahafah*, Daar Osama lilnasharwa- altauzie.
8. DrMausa Ali Al- Shahab (2012) *Ittejahatma'asira fi kitaab Al-maqaalwa-asuhfi*, Daar Osama lilnasharwa- altauzie.
9. Farooque Khalid (2011) *Al-Ailaam Al-dauliwa Al-aulama Al-jadida*, , Daar Osama lilnasharwa- altauzie.

10. Feblel de Trazi, *Tareekh Al- Sahafa Al-Arabiya*, DaarSadir li –Altaba’awa Al-nashar.
11. HilaalNatoot (2006) *Al-sahafa, nasha’atanwatatavuran*, Al- DaarAljamiya
12. Jihad Nasri Al-Aql, (2005) *Sahafati Al-harkatilqaumiyaalijtemaiya*. Alfuraatlinnasharwa- altauzie.
13. Khalid al-Haam 2007, *Sana’at Al-rae al-aam. Daarannaqaash*
14. Khalid Al-kurki (2001) *Qira’at fi athaqafawalasultawala’alaam*, Al-mossisatul- arabiyalil-dirasaatiwal- anashar.
15. Ma;Ahad Al- Anma Al- Arabi (1985) *Mudavina Al-Sahafa Al-Arabiya Lebnon*,
16. Ma;Ahad Al- Anma Al- Arabi (1985) *Mudavina Al-Sahafa Al-Arabiya Misr*,
17. Manzar Al-Musali (1997) *Al-sahafa Al-suriawarejaluha*, Daar Al-mukhtar.
18. Mohammad Fareed Mahmood Izzat, 2007, *wakalaat Al-amba’a fil aalamil Arabi*. Dar maktabat Al-hilaal.
19. Samar Karami (2008) *Al- Sahafa Al-Nisaiya fi Al-watan Al-Arabi*, DaarAnahza Al-Arabiya li –Altaba’awa Al-NasharWa- Al-tauzie.
20. Sami Zibaan (1987) *Al-sahafa al-yaumiawa –Al-ailaam*, Daar Al-maseera li Al-sahafawa Al-tab’a.
21. Sana’a Mohammad Al-Jaboor, (2010) *Al-Ailaamwa Al-rae al aam Al-Arabi wa Al-Aalami*, Daar Osama linnasharwa- altauzie.
22. Saud Fauaq Al- Aloosi (2012) *AidiologiaSahafa Al- Internet*, Daar Osama linnasharwa- altauzie.
23. Taufeeq Abu Bakar (1998) *Al-sahafa Al-Arabiya wahuqooq Al-Insaan*, Markaz Al-janeen li Al-dirasaat.
24. Waseem Hasam Al Deen Al Ahmad (2011) *Al-tanzeem Al-qanooni li Al-sahafa Al-Arabiya*, Manshuraat Al-Halbi Al-huquqiya.
25. Yusuf QazmaKhuri(2004) *Mudavina Al-Sahafa Al-Suria*, Al-furaat li Al-Nashrwa Al-tauzie.
26. Yusuf QazmaKhuri, Abu Al-Faraj (2003) *Mudavina Al-Sahafa Aljazeera Al-Arabiya*, Bisaan le Al-nasharwa Al-tauzie.

Research Journals

1. Aday, S., Farrell, H., Lynch, M., Sides, J., & Freelon, D. (2012). *New media and conflict after the Arab Spring*. United States Institute of Peace, 80, 1-24.

2. Alalawi, N. (2015). *How Media Covered "Arab Spring" Movement: Comparison between the American Fox NEWS and the Middle Eastern Al Jazeera*. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 11(10), 44-49.
3. Alshathry, Talal, "A comparative framing analysis of ISIL in the online coverage of CNN and Al-Jazeera" (2015). Graduate Theses and Dissertations. 14683.
4. Amin, H. (2002). *Freedom as a value in Arab media: Perceptions and attitudes among journalists*. *Political Communication*, 19(2), 125-135.
5. Armbrust, W. (2012). *A history of new media in the Arab Middle East*. *Journal for cultural research*, 16(2-3), 155-174.
6. Bhattacharyay, B. N. (1996). *Trends in Privatization in the Arab World and its Problems and Prospects*. *Savings and Development*, 5-32.
7. Bruce, M. D. (2014). *Framing Arab Spring conflict: A visual analysis of coverage on five transnational Arab news channels*. *Journal of Middle East Media*, 10, 1-26.
8. Carty, Victoria. 2014. "Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt: The Impact of New Media on Contemporary Social Movements and Challenges for Social Movement Theory." *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* 51(1): 51-80.
9. Cherkaoui, T. (2014). *Al Jazeera's Changing Editorial Perspectives and the Saudi-Qatari Relationship*. *The Political Economy of Communication*, 2(1).
10. Cherkaoui, T. (2015). *The Egyptian Regime, Al Jazeera and the coverage of Egyptian affairs post-Arab Spring: A history of hope and oppression*. *The Political Economy of Communication*, 3(1).
11. Duffy, M. J. (2004). *Media Laws and Regulations of the GCC Countries: Summary, Analysis and Recommendations*. Doha Centre for Media Freedom, ..
12. Duffy, M. J. (2014). *Arab media regulations: Identifying restraints on freedom of the press in the laws of six Arabian Peninsula countries*. *Berkeley J. Middle E. & Islamic L.*, 6, 1.
13. Gerhards, J., & Schäfer, M. S. (2014). *International terrorism, domestic coverage? How terrorist attacks are presented in the news of CNN, Al Jazeera, the BBC, and ARD*. *International Communication Gazette*, 76(1), 3-26.

14. Golan, G. J., & Kiouisis, S. K. (2010). *Religion, media credibility, and support for democracy in the Arab world*. *Journal of Media and Religion*, 9(2), 84-98.
15. Hamdy, N. (2009). *Arab citizen journalism in action: Challenging mainstream media, authorities and media laws*. *Westminster Papers in Communication & Culture*, 6(1).
16. Jaber, M., & Baumann, G. (2011). *The BBC World Service in the Middle East: Claims to impartiality, or a politics of translation?* *Journalism*, 12(2), 171-182.
17. Jamali, R. (2014). *Online Arab Spring: social media and fundamental change*. Chandos Publishing.
18. Jan, M. (2009). *Globalization of media: Key issues and dimensions*. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 29(1), 66-75.
19. Johnson, T. J., & Fahmy, S. (2010). *Who is winning the hearts and minds of the Arab public? An examination of how Arab viewers judge the credibility of Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, Al-Hurra and local Arab stations*. *International Communication Research Journal*, 45(1-2), 24-48.
20. Khamis, S., & Vaughn, K. (2011). *Cyberactivism in the Egyptian revolution: How civic engagement and citizen journalism tilted the balance*. *Arab Media and Society*, 14(3), 1-25.
21. Khouri, R., Yassin, N., Harb, C., Shahida, A., & Moussa, S. (2011). *A Generation on the Move: Insights into the Conditions, Aspirations, and Activism of Arab Youth*. *Youth in the Arab World*, American University of Beirut
22. Kraidy, M. M. (2002). *Globalization of culture through the media*. *Encyclopedia of communication and information*, 359.
23. Kraidy, M. M., & Khalil, J. F. (2008). *Youth, media and culture in the Arab world*. *International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 336-350.
24. Laura Guazzone & Daniela Pioppi (2007) *Globalization and the Restructuring of State Power in the Arab World*, *The International Spectator*, 42:4, 509-523, DOI: 10.1080/03932720701722910
25. Lynch, M. (2015). *How the media trashed the transitions*. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(4), 90-99.

26. Matos, C. (2012). *Globalization and the mass media*. In: Encyclopedia of Globalization. . Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
27. Musa, A. O., & Yusha'u, M. J. (2013). *Conflict reporting and parachute journalism in Africa: A study of CNN and Al Jazeera's coverage of the Boko Haram insurgency*. Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research, 6(2-3), 251-267.
28. Rayman, N. (2013). *Is the Egyptian Press Ready for Democracy? Evaluating Newspaper Coverage as an Indicator of Democratization*. Arab Media and Society, 17, 1-28.
29. Sabry, T. (2005). *What is 'global 'about Arab media'?*. Global Media and Communication, 1(1), 41-46.
30. Sakr, N. (2003). *Freedom of expression, accountability and development in the Arab region*. Journal of Human Development, 4(1), 29-46.
31. Sakr, N. (2006). *Foreign support for media freedom advocacy in the Arab Mediterranean: globalization from above or below?*. Mediterranean Politics, 11(1), 1-20.
32. Samei, M. F. A. (2016). *Public Diplomacy and the Clash of Satellites*. Media and Communication, 4(2).
33. Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Jamil, T., & Bano, S. (2015). *Mass media, communication and globalization with the perspective of 21st century*. New Media and Mass Communication, 34, 11-15.
34. Snow, N. (2010). *Alhurra to Al Youm: The maturation of US television broadcasting in the Middle East*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, online: <http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/luce/snow.html>.
35. Yaghi, M. (2017). *Media and sectarianism in the Middle East: Saudi hegemony over Pan-Arab media*. International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics, 13(1-2), 39-56.
36. Youmans, W. (2009). *The War on Ideas: Alhurra and US International Broadcasting Law in the 'War on Terror'*. Westminster Papers in Communication & Culture, 6(1).
37. Zhang, X., & Hellmueller, L. (2016). *Transnational media coverage of the ISIS threat: A global perspective?* International Journal of Communication, 10, 20.