Broadcasting Public Service in the Arab World: Rupture and Continuity

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Abstract

A large proportion of the media around the world, especially those related to radio and television, belong to the state. In principle at least, there are three different terms to talk about these types of media: (1). The public media that draws on the treasury to present programming that is in the interest of the general population. They do not support any political party, not even the party in power. (2). National media owned by the state and using the treasury money, are also controlled directly by the state. (3). Government media that is owned by the ruling party and uses the treasury money, are also controlled by the ruling party. These three models coexist already in the Arab world since independence. This phenomenon almost removed the clear distinction that existed in principle between the government media and the public media. After the Arab Spring in 2011, however, this distinction remains important. The public broadcaster model was based on a principle that is still justified for most of the world and that the private media alone can not guarantee the pluralism of broadcasting. The problem, however, is that the government media have also largely failed. In several countries, the arrival of private media has pushed governments to exercise editorial control of the public media. The discussion of media regulation is aimed primarily at ensuring that the media financed by the Public treasury exercise their profession with the full independence of the government of the day to which they are entitled, rather than aiming to restrict the freedom of the media that already enjoy full editorial independence. In the Arab world, there have been some attempts to recover and modernize the ideal model of public media, as for example the case of Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan. This study aim to search if the Arab broadcasting meet the recognized standards and the requirements of the concept of public service?

Keywords: Regulation; Arab media; Arab spring; public service broadcasting; state television; Arab world, media in democratic transition

Introduction

First, we should admit that despite the status of the internet in the social, economic and political relationships, television in general and public television in particular still represents the instrument, which refines and influences most of the public opinion in the world and more precisely in the Arab world. It is also worth to say that, as far as the management and the supervision of the media scenes are concerned, there is no country, which is similar to any other country, be it on the level of regulations or structure. The third fact in the framework of this quest about "the public service media in the Arab World" is the consideration of television and its organization cannot be underestimated apart from the inevitability of the coexistence of a private sector and a public service media. which means that the dual

system and not the monocular one in media is one of the determining factors to understand democracy and a bundle of associated basic liberties (such as expression, information etc.).

In addition, public service television, with the advent of the spring of Arab revolutions, is no more perceived through the same mechanisms of the Tunisian and Egyptian pre-revolution (Sakr, 2012). The post-revolution public service television has become an attractive target for all those willing to protest against the government performance or the information and the political marginalization, which is likely to be targeting a social, political, religious or ethnic group. On the other hand, assaults against journalists from the authorities or from the citizens have become suspicious since the appraisal of their performance is based on the legacy of the old media and how the journalist was considered as one of the major actors who was instrumental in perpetrating the political reality and polish the image of the former regimes.

The Arab post-revolution public service television, after the retreat and draw back of the oppressive authority in all its manifestations, has become the ultimate resort for the Arab citizen striving for justice, equity and freedom in the Tunisian and Egyptian models (Abdulla, 2016). This trend was not basically different in the Libyan, Syrian or Yemenite cases. Indeed, the public service television is often the first to be criticized even before other oppressive bodies (army, security services, ruling party etc.) Therefore, we can say that the television authority has replaced the ruler's authority and people resorted to complain to television in the absence of the of the ruler in a quest for a voice which is effectively present after all social classes have been muted and kept away .

The mutation of the role of the public service television in the Arab World since the outbreak of the Arab Spring proved the need for this service not only to be reviewed, but also to be able to keep place with the transformations and revolutions undermining the existence of the Arab World (Buccianti and el-Richani, 2015). It has become clear then, that television, in addition to its leading role in forming the public opinion trends, is considered as one of the determining factors in the process of social integration and a major carrier of culture. Some people consider it as an instrument which defines the choice of individuals in their relation with others and with their environment. From this point, the effect, mission, and role which television can play particularly during democratic transition have become a central issue which requires the provision of a set of determinants the most important of which is that the television of the democratic transition should be a public and democratic facility. Our study on "the public service television in the Arab World" falls within this context. Circumstances of the post- revolution period have matured

more than ever before, hence the necessity to consider the reasons behind the lack of development of the public service television. Any bid to reform the media in the future cannot be possible without being based on a scientific diagnosis and a critical approach to the way Arab countries deal with the public service television.

Research topic and references

First, we have to deplore the lack of media-related literature and research dealing with the public service media in the Arab World. This fact resulted in a discrepancy between the requirements of the society, the change in the television's functions and the absence of research likely to update the agenda of the public media.We can say that the subject of media and communication on the research level, though being subject to some consensus concerning its definition despite its newness, the public service television is still shrouded in mystery and interference. The issue becomes more complicated when we try to find out the essence of the possible relationship, intellectually and structurally, between the question of public service and another issue called television. That is to say demonstrating the junction and the articulation points which led to this complex and intellectually unstable relationship, be it in the democratic societies or in those being in a phase of democratic transition. At first glance, and from a preliminary reading, the subject seems to be of a technical aspect. But originally, the issue is inherent to the concepts and beliefs, that is to say how we perceive freedom of speech within the space of television and the best way to ensure pluralism and manage the public service in a rational, communicative, free and independent environment. Therefore, the relationship between the structure and democracy on the one hand and the public service television and its multiplicity on the other hand, is basically an intellectual and a political issue, or more than that, it brings a response to the question of what kind of society do we want (Zran, 2011).

Literature dealing with the Arab media broadcasting in the Arab media library is quiet modest, and if nay, it is mostly presenting research approaches of a descriptive and historical nature and generally focusing on the history of television and its development. The study of satellite media in the Arab World has been also made according to a country- based approach. As an example, the publications of May Al Abdulla Sannou on "Television in Lebanon and in the Arab World" (Al-abdallah-2001). In this context, we can also mention two studies issued by a non-governmental organization, the Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies. The first study is focused on the Arab public media, whereas the second deals with the development of the public media in Europe under the title of "The experience of audiovisual media in Europe", a western study translated into Arabic by Ahmad Hassou and published by the center in 2007. The subject of the first study, which was published under the reform issues series in 2007 under the title of "Media in the

Arab World: between emancipation and the reestablishment of domination: study of the media status in Jordan, Egypt and Morocco" (Hassou, 2007).

The most important part in this study is its conclusions, which remains relevant despite the numerous evolutions and it can be summarized as follows: the gap is still huge between the limited developments in these countries and the freedom of information guaranteed in the democratic countries. The study pointed out to the existence of common points undermining the freedom of information and this applies to Morocco, which inaugurated form the mid-nineties an era of democratic transition, which resulted in higher expectations concerning the information freedom opportunities. The study confirmed that the main common points hindering freedom of information in the Arab World in general, and in these three countries in particular are:

- The expansion of the scope of criminalization in a way largely exceeding the accepted constraints in democratic societies on freedom of information and expression, whereas legislators in the concerned countries (Jordan, Egypt and Morocco) tend to penalize these offenses by penalties involving freedom.
- The increase of the amount of tough restrictions imposed on journalists in their quest to find the information in a way that made allowing the publication of an information an exception.
- The growing of the community pressure opposed to the freedom of information as a result of the prevailing political culture characterized by its conservative nature and the increasing power and influence of the political Islamic movements which continued to use the religion and the social traditions to trigger anti- information freedom campaigns. The study pointed out that the rise of political Islam movements pushed governments to comply with their speech and eventually go beyond it resulting in intensifying the pressure on freedom of information. In its recommendations, the study called for the reorganization of the audiovisual sector by taking the following actions:

Completely ending the government's hold and monopoly on the public media sector to ensure its transformation into a public service in the service of the people and enjoying autonomy in management, funding and programing.

Subjugating the management and the organization of the audiovisual sector to regulatory councils and bodies enjoying financial and administrative autonomy setting them free from the domination of the political authority. These bodies shall be granted executive and decision-making powers.

Empowering the regulatory bodies of the audiovisual sector with the prerogative of granting the broadcasting permits according to clear and rigorous rules and standards defined by law, which shall be applied with transparency to avoid impartiality.

Lawfully preventing any form of prior censorship of the broadcasted content. The regulatory bodies shall be in charge of following up and monitoring the broadcasted materials to ensure compliance with the law requirements and the requirements provided in the broadcasting permit, mainly to ensure the commitment of the broadcasting corporations to the cultural, political and intellectual pluralism and to the accepted restrictions to freedom of expression according to the international law.

Finally, we can also mention the study of Matt J. Duffy (2014) on Arab Media Regulations: Identifying Restraints on Freedom of the Press in the Laws of Six Arabian Peninsula Countries. The result of this review finds that all of the GCC countries share several traits regarding their approach to regulating journalists and communication. This approach with juridical angle can be attributed to the unique cultural aspects of Gulf society but should not be linked to the common religion, Islam. Many countries with Muslim populations allow for freedom of expression and press while retaining their Islamic identity.

Problematic and Hypotheses of the Study
The relationship between the civil society components (political parties, associations, opinion leaderships etc.) on the one hand and the public service media audience (viewers and listeners public…) on the other hand with the public service television is a repulsion relationship characterized by a great deal of tension, which can be defined as a feeling of dissatisfaction towards the outcomes of the public service television and the role it can eventually play in promoting the principles of democracy, pluralism and modernism. The problematic of the study could be formulated as the following: to what extent are radio and television corporations in the Arab World in compliance with the public service customary standards of the recent democratic experiences.

As for the definition and requirements of the public service in the field of audiovisual industry, there is a consensus between the experts in adopting a number of indicators among which we can mention:

Funding source: are the resources of the audiovisual organization coming from public funds (state treasury) or from a royalty paid by the public for the audiovisual "service"?

The supervising bodies: is the audiovisual organization subject to the supervision of a ministry or another public authority such as supreme councils or regulatory bodies (Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan)?

The way of appointing the organization's managers, members of its board of directors (if any) and program committees (if any) and what are their responsibilities: are they directly appointed by the government or the concerned ministry or by a regulatory body through selection and curriculum vitae?

Subordination of the audiovisual organization to a so-called purpose and resources contract, which is a kind of specifications (in Morocco they call it the terms booklet). Is the public service television in the Arab World submitted to any specifications that define in details its role and the services it is supposed to fulfill in terms of information, culture, entertainment and serving the society to which it belongs?

Subsequently, the hypotheses of the study can be formulated as the following:

The public service television in the Arab World does exist in many countries and plays a social, democratic and civilizational role given that it is funded from the public treasury.

The public service television is a public facility in the service of the government or the ruling party, therefore it is without substance.

The public service television does not fulfill its role because of the lack of independence of its editorial policies, the weak viewership, the lack of concomitance between the goals and the organization and the absence of regulatory bodies.

Methodology and Pattern of the Study

To get deeper insights into the problematic and hypotheses of our study, we have opted for a sociological survey using the form as an instrument. The form, which has been addressed to most television and radio management of the member countries of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), is divided into five parts including more than thirty questions:

1. General information about the organization (Table 3)
2. Program and funding of the public service bodies (Table 4)
3. The corporate Organization Chart (Table 5)
4. Regulations governing the organization (Table 6)
5. The editorial policy (Table 7)
6. Ten Arab broadcasting corporations have taken part in this survey:
   i. The Broadcasting Corporation of the Comoro Islands
   ii. The General National Broadcasting Corporation of Sudan
   iii. The General Broadcasting Corporation, Yemen
   iv. Jordan Broadcasting Corporation
   v. Bahrain Broadcasting Corporation
   vi. Kuwait Television
   vii. Palestine Television
   viii. Tunisian Television
   ix. Radio and Television Union, Egypt
   x. Lebanon Television

We can say that the response of all these corporations to the survey represent a representative sample of the study group since it represents more than 30% of the total number of members of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) which is 29 public broadcasting corporations. According to the Arab States Broadcasting Union's report of 2014-2015, the number of Arab corporations broadcasting satellite channels is about 758 corporations, 29 of which are public corporations and 729 are private sector (Table 1). These corporations broadcast or re-broadcast 1294 channels, 165 are public channels and 1129 are private channels. 91 Arab Television corporations (public and private) are broadcasting more than one channel each, while 667 corporations are broadcasting a single channel.

Table 1: Arab Corporations broadcasting satellite channels (ASBU-2015)

Public	29
Private	729
Total	758

Objectives of the Study
The study aims to address the following issues:

What is the structure of the public service television in the Arab World?

What are the characteristics of the Arab televisions organization in terms of management and administration?

How to finance the broadcasting corporations from the public treasury?

What are the differences between the Arab countries in terms of broadcasting corporation management model?

What are the competition challenges between the public and the private sectors in terms of basic functions of the public media and the role of flexibility in management and the adaptation of programs to the constantly changing needs of the public?

Results

From the survey form addressed to all members of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), from which 10 have responded, we can conclude the following:

Characteristics of the public service television in the Arab World

It is clear that the Arab World has complied with the information and communication values incorporated in radio and television as a mass communication instrument quiet lately. Moreover, we can notice that there is a substantial time disparity between the launching of the first and the last television in the Arab World. Historically, Egypt was the first country to adopt the mass media by launching its first radio station in 1934. Iraq was the first country to have launched a television channel in 1958. On the other hand, some other Arab countries have had their first television only in the seventies, such as Bahrain. As for Palestine, due to the occupation condition, its television has only been launched by 1994 after the Oslo Agreement signed in 1993.

The naming of the organizations in charge of the audiovisual information in the Arab World is characterized by its similarity. In fact, most of these organizations are called Authority and there is often an incorporation of the radio with the television services, except in Soudan and Tunisia, where the organization was till recently called the Radio and Television Corporation. The merger of radio and television is not due to a rational choice or thinking about the public service media, but rather to the facility of monitoring, managing and controlling a single body.

On the quantitative level, we can speak today about a satiety in the audiovisual scene in the Arab World. The number of radio stations is no longer a handicap for the provision of a public service and the question now is how to find a balance between this big number of channels and a media public service, which respects pluralism and democracy and addresses all the community layers. Most Arab countries possess about four radio stations and four television channels or more (Comoro Islands, Yemen, Tunisia, Bahrain…) , except Palestine where there are private and associative radio and television channels which are not subject to the government. It is also worth pointing out the absence of specialized public service radio or television in the Arab World. In fact, specialization has become the monopoly of the private sector (Table 2). Rotana and Dream music channels are an illustrating example. The coming battle of the public media will not be the quantity but the quality to face the increasing need of the Arab audience for a public media embracing its daily concerns and problems.

Table 2: Breakdown of the Arab satellite channels by specialization (ASBU-2015)

Specialty	Public sector	Private sector	Total
Multidisciplinary channels	67	256	323
Commercial channels (marketing, interactive and advertising)	00	248	248
Sports channels	41	129	170
Drama channels (films and series)	11	141	152
Music channels	01	123	124
Religious channels	04	86	90
News channels	04	64	68
Children channels	04	22	26
Education channels	15	02	17
Business channels	03	16	19
Documentary channels	03	13	16
Family channels	01	15	16
Cultural channels	05	04	19
Travel channels	00	04	04
Others	01	06	07
Total	165	1129	1294

Table 3: General Information about the media organizations

Corporation name	Establishment date	No. of stations	broadcasting hrs.	Broadcasting languages	Interaction with the audience	Staff No.
Radio and TV Corp. Comoro Islands	1975	4 Radio Stations 3 TV Stations	TV : 12 hrs. Radio: 24 hrs.	Arabic, French, Swahili	Website, Portal, email	Adm. : 18 Journalists:51 Tech.:75
Nat. Radio Gen. Corp. of Sudan	2009	8 Radio Stations	80 hrs. per day for all stations	Arabic, English, French	Paper magazine, Portal, email	Adm. : 78 Journalists:287 Tech.:40
Radio and TV Gen. Corporation, Yemen	1990	2 Main Stations 1 Youth station 10 local stations 4 TV Stations	92 hrs. for all channels	Arabic, English, French	Website, email	Total 2977
Radio and TV Corporation Jordan	-	-	-	-	Website, email	Adm. : 433 Journalists:160 Tech.:865
Radio and TV Corporation Bahrain	Radio: 1940 TV : 1973	5 Radio Stations 4 TV stations	24 hrs.	Arabic, English,	Paper magazine, website, email	700 (admin. journ. Techn.)
Kuwait Television	Radio: 1951 TV : 1961	7 Radio Stations 6 TV stations		Arabic, English, Urdu, Persian	Website, Portal, email	Adm. : 500 Journalists:200 Tech.:100
Palestine Television	1994	1 The voice of Palestine 1 TV of Palestine	24 hrs.	Arabic	Email	Adm. : 112 Journalists:158 Tech.: 230
Radio of Tunisia	1936	9 stations	National : 24 h Local: 20 h Youth: 18h Cultural:15h	Arabic, French	Paper magazine, website, email	Adm. : 427 Journalists:226 Tech.:173
Radio and TV Union, Egypt	1934	24 national stat. 34 local stat. 23 satellite channels	1010 hrs. per day for all channels	Arabic, English, Urdu, Persian, 21 foreign languages	Paper magazine, website, email	Adm. : 19624 Journalists:8246 Tech.:12020
Lebanon Television	1957	-	-	Arabic, English,	-	Adm. : 210 Journalists:30 Tech.:24

Table 4: Programming and funding sources

Corporation name	Transmission type	Equipment type	Radio transmission Band	Radio production	TV production	Funding	External auditor
Radio and TV Corp. Comoro Islands	Ground Satellite	Satellite Analog, Digital	FM Internet	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury Tax	Yes
Nat. Radio Gen. Corp. of Sudan	-	-	FM MW SW Internet, Satellite	Local prod. Imported Arabic		State Treasury Advertising	NO
Radio and TV Gen. Corporation, Yemen	Ground , Satellite, internet	Satellite Analog, Digital	FM MW SW Internet, Satellite	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury Advertising	Yes
Radio and TV Corporation Jordan	Ground Satellite	Analog, Digital	FM, MW, SW	Local prod. Imported Arabic	Local prod. Imported Arabic	State Treasury Advertising	
Radio and TV Corporation Bahrain	Ground , Grnd. Digital Satellite, internet	Satellite Analog, Digital	FM MW SW Internet, Satellite	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury Advertising	Yes
Kuwait Television	Ground , Satellite, internet	Analog, Digital	FM, MW, SW	Local prod. Imported Arabic	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury	
Palestine Television	Ground Satellite	Digital	FM	Local prod.	Local prod. Imported Arabic	State Treasury Advertising,	Yes
Radio of Tunisia	-	-	FM MW SW Internet, Satellite	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign		State Treasury Advertising, Tax	Yes
Radio and TV Union, Egypt	Ground , Grnd. Digital Satellite, internet	Satellite Analog, Digital	FM MW SW Internet,	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury Advertising	Yes
Lebanon Television	Ground Satellite	Analog			Local prod. Imported Arabic Imported foreign	State Treasury	Yes

Table 5: Organization of the Radio and TV corporation

Corporation name	Admin. Affiliation	Policy oversight	Board of Trustees or Board of directors	Board composition	No. of Trustees or directors	Board membership	Designation of CEO or GM
Radio and TV Corp. Comoro Islands	Ministry of Information	Ministry of Information	YES	Designation	Less than 10	Civil society, associations, experts , academic	Designation
Nat. Radio Gen. Corp. of Sudan	Independent corporation	Ministry of Information	YES	Designation	Less than 10	Civil society, associations, experts , academic	Designation
Radio and TV Gen. Corporation, Yemen	Ministry of Information	Ministry of Information	YES	Designation	Less than 10	-	Designation
Radio and TV Corporation Jordan	Ministry of Information	Ministry of Information	YES	Designation	Less than 10	Trade unions , Civil society, associations, experts , academic	Designation
Radio and TV Corporation Bahrain		The government	NO	-	-	-	Designation
Kuwait Television	Government	Ministry of Information	-	Designation	-	-	Designation
Palestine Television	Independent corporation	Administration Board emerging from a board of trustees	YES	Designation	10-20	Trade unions , Civil society, associations, experts , academic	Designation
Radio of Tunisia	Prime ministry	Audiovisual regulatory board	YES	Designation	Less than 10	Civil society, associations	Designation
Radio and TV Union, Egypt	Independent corporation	Audiovisual regulatory board	YES	Designation and elections	More than 30	Trade unions , Civil society, associations, experts , academic	Designation
Lebanon Television	Public service managed by independent organization	Board of directors	Board of directors	Designation	Less than 10	experts , academic	Designation by the Council of Ministers

Table 6: Regulations governing the Radio and TV corporations' activity

Corporation name	Interaction with audience	Associations representing the public	Representation of these associations in the corporation	Laws governing the AV activity	Organization standards of satellite transmission	Radio and TV permit Requirements	Audiovisual regulations
Radio and TV Corp. Comoro Islands	NO	NO	-	YES	Legislature laws	Legal standards	Proposing Laws
Nat. Radio Gen. Corp. of Sudan	Email, SMS, readers' mail	Association of Sudan radio friends	NO	YES	Legislature laws Sudanese Gen. Authority for Radio and TV Broadcasting	Legal standards	Proposing laws Supervising respect of laws Board consulting for law issuing
Radio and TV Gen. Corporation, Yemen	Email	NO	NO	YES	Legislature laws	Legal standards	-
Radio and TV Corporation Jordan	Email, SMS	Consumer4 protection Assoc. Nature protection Association	NO	YES	Legislature laws Executive authorities	Legal standards	Supervising respect of laws Board consulting for law issuing
Radio and TV Corporation Bahrain	Email, SMS, readers' mail, pics., videos	Reporters Association	NO	YES	-	Legal standards	-
Kuwait Television	Email, SMS, readers' mail, pics., videos	NO	NO	YES	Legislature laws Audiovisual authority	Legal standards	Issuing laws
Palestine Television	Email Pics and videos	NO	NO	YES	Legislature laws	Legal standards	Board consulting for law issuing
Radio of Tunisia	Email, SMS	NO	NO	YES	Legislature laws Parliament	Legal standards	Supervising respect of laws
Radio and TV Union, Egypt	Email, SMS, readers' mail, pics., videos	NO	NO	YES	Legislature laws	Legal standards	Proposing laws Board consulting for law issuing
Lebanon Television	-	NO	-	YES	The government : National Council of media, Regulatory board (Ministry of communications)	Legal standards Political standards Political standards	Proposing Laws

Table 7: Editorial board policy and its independence in fulfilling its mission

Corporation name	Editorial policy decide by	External censorship	Coverage of political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society activities	Eviction of staff due to conscience	Transmission of religious andethnic multiplicity programs	Observatory for pursuing journalists' excesses	Independence of the corporation	Nature of the provided service
Radio and TV Corp. Comoro Islands	The journalists	Does not exist	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	-	-	YES	Relative	Public service Implementing govern. policy
Nat. Radio Gen. Corp. of Sudan	Board of Directors	Indirect censorship	Trade unions and civil society	Non-binding comments	Specialized religious and ethnic progr. and channels	NO	Relative	Public service
Radio and TV Gen. Corporation, Yemen	Ministry of Information	Direct censorship	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	-	-	NO	Not independent	-
Radio and TV Corporation Jordan	Ministry of Information Board of directors Government	-	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	-	-	-	Relative	-
Radio and TV Corporation Bahrain	-	Does not exist	-	No	religious and ethnic programs	NO	Relative	Public service
Kuwait Television	Government	Does not exist	Trade unions and civil society activities	NO	religious and ethnic programs	YES	Relative	Public service Implementing govern. Policy
Palestine Television	Board of directors	Does not exist	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	-	religious and ethnic programs	YES	Relative	Public service
Radio of Tunisia	Government	Direct and indirect	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	-	-	NO	Relative	Public service
Radio and TV Union, Egypt	Board of trustees	-	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	No	religious and ethnic progr. and channels	YES	Relative	Public service
Lebanon Television	Lebanon TV, public official TV	Does not exist	political parties, associations, trade unions and civil society	Replacement of the programming director for his political affiliation	Special religious programs especially in events	NO	Relative	Public service

As for the broadcasting language, we can say that the predominance is for the traditional globalized languages which are French and English, with the emersion of other local languages and dialects such as in Soudan and Comoro Islands (Table 8). The Egyptian model is particularly distinguished in dealing with the broadcasting languages in that it broadcasts in more than twenty languages. However, there are no signs of a tendency to broadcast in other languages such as Hebrew.

Concerning the presence of the broadcasting corporation on the web, we have noticed the availability of the email service as well as an intensive presence of corporations' websites. Except for Tunisia, Soudan and Comoro Islands, the other corporations do not have an electronic portal for their public. Nowadays, the media and communication portal provided by the radio and the television is considered as one of the pillars of the public service concept because of the interactivity it creates with the public. What grabs our attention is the widespread of the praising speech of the communication technology and its failure in providing a communication service between the radio and television corporations and their public.

Table 8: Use of languages other than Arabic by the public and private Channels in the Arab World (ASBU-2015)

Language	Number of channels
English	161
French	25
Indian	19
Kurdish	09
Tamazight	07
Persian	04
Urdu	03
Malaysian	02
Hebrew	02
Spanish	02
Hassani	02
Turkish	01
Total	237

Funding Sources and Programming

The chapter on the nature of broadcasting has shown a real disparity between the different Arab broadcasting corporations. We can ascertain that the failure of the radio and television broadcasting on the web is a common feature between most of them. As for the broadcasting itself, the second common feature is the use of FM for radio broadcasting because of its easiness, low cost and its

potential to reach a larger public in addition to the availability of broadcasting via satellites for the majority of Arab broadcasting corporations. As a public service provider, the public television should be ahead in the provision of the easiest and fastest broadcasting technologies for its pubic. The public service television should not be seen as a traditional body providing a service that the state has to provide.

The answer that got a consensus has to do with the funding sources, which is deemed one of the most important indicators of an independent public service provided by the radio and television corporations. As a matter of fact, seven out of nine corporations are funded by the state treasury in the first place and then from advertising. In this context we have to highlight the exception of Tunisia and the Comoro Islands, where the public service television is equally financed by a royalty that citizens have to pay against the radio and television service. This exception is probably due to the influence of the French model based on the obligation of citizens to finance the public service provided by the radio and television.

Public media funding in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, is a central issue in any process of political reform. It is now obvious that the media used to be an instrument for the consecration of tyranny and the fact that the public media is exclusively financed by the government is a prelude for its monitoring and controlling. Therefore, any review of the concept of public service in the audiovisual field should start by reviewing the funding sources of this service, and this a sine qua non condition to have a democratic and independent public media. Simply and regardless of any controversy, the budget of the public media is the tribute of democracy. As an example, the budget of the German public television channels RDA and ZDF is about €7.6 billion, which is equivalent to more than half the Tunisian State's annual budget for 2015. The German citizen contributes in this budget by paying an annual tax of €210 representing 85% of the total funding. As for the budget of British public television BBC, it is estimated to € 4.7 billion, in which every British citizen contributes by €200 yearly, representing 53% of the total budget (le Monde-2015).

The running budget of the Tunisian public television is estimated to 50 million Tunisian Dinar , which is equivalent to US$ 26 million, from which TD 14M (US$ 8) are provided by the state treasury , TD22M (US$13M) from the tax on television paid by citizens and finally TD14M (US$8M) from commercials.

It is worth saying that the state is in charge of the equipment, buildings and supply budget. As we have seen, the income from commercials represent about 28% from the total running budget, whereas the income from the tax on the ownership of a television set - which is included in the electricity bill-, represent 44% of said budget.

The financing resources of the public television have witnessed some evolution. Whereas some Arab countries tend to rely on commercials as a second source of funding, France has banned the broadcast of commercials during the rush hoursin order to give the chance to the private sector, which finds itself compelled to look for alternative sources, which are not necessarily honest amid the absence of a free advertising market. In conclusion, the public service television in the Arab World should review not only its structure and administration rules of the audiovisual sector, but also the issue of funding this service in a context of governance and transparency.

The Public Service Television in the Arab World: Organization and Supervision

The third topic of the survey concerning the organization chart of a radio or television corporation in charge of the audiovisual service addressed the issue of the running methods of a public service organization in charge of providing a public service closely linked to the public affairs, pluralism, democracy and governance.

We have mentioned what seemed to be self-evident in the Arab media literature since the emergence of the concept of the post- colonial state, the subordination of the communication and media sector to a state department called the Ministry of Information, which started to lose ground with the onset of the Arab Spring, which was initiated with the outbreak of the Tunisian Revolution in January 2011 bringing the ministry of information in Tunisia as well in Egypt to their demise. Except from Palestine and Egypt, most of the radio and television corporations are directly attached to the government through the ministry of information even though it has a financial and administration autonomy as in Tunisia and many other Arab countries. The subordination of the radio and television corporations in the Arab World to the information ministry, which is an executive body in the hands of the ruling majority (be it a party, a family, a confession etc.) is a remnant of the political culture of the post-colonial state.

As for the supervision aspect of these corporations, despite the existence of the boards of directors in charge of management and supervision, the main reference and recourse remain the ministry of information and the government. And what makes these boards fake and simulated, is the way of its members are selected, which is generally made through nomination and not through a set of internationally recognized requirements and standards, excepting Egypt, where there is a combination between designation and election. Concerning the membership in these boards, despite the presence of the civil society in its composition, we have noticed an almost complete absence of trade unions, which are considered as one of the most important components of the civil society. Thus, we can conclude that what is meant by the civil society represented in the board of trustees of the radio and television corporation, that component which consents the government's policies, otherwise why are trade unions excluded? On the other hand, it is difficult nowadays to assert the existence of independent trade unions within the radio and television administration boards in the majority of the Arab States, and if any, they are merely associations barely having the right to defend the social and material rights of journalists and are not interested in freedom and basic rights as in the case of most Gulf states.

The last threadin the organization topic, is related to the designation of the managers of the radio and television corporations in the Arab World. In this context, there is an unanimity of all responses that it is made by nomination and nothing else. The issue of audiovisual public service management is closely linked to the democracy and independence of this public service. For this reason, many western democracies opted to forward more than one candidate from those enjoying consensus from the civil society and the political parties in order to ensure the independence of the public media since it is a service addressed to all social categories and not only the body empowered with the executive authority.

Absence of the Recipient and Obscurity of Legislation

The fourth part of the survey form was assigned to the regulations governing the operation of the broadcasting corporations and its interaction with the recipient. As far as the recipient is concerned, its interaction with the public service television could take place through emails, short messages (SMS) and readers' mail. In addition, there is also the possibility to interact by sending pictures and video footages in Egypt, Palestine and the Kingdom of Bahrain. The recipient's contribution in developing the public service policies through the concept of the journalist citizen is one of the major communication increments for the preservation of democracy and ensuring pluralism.

With the spread of the open sky concept, i.e. the satellite broadcasting and the growing ascension of the private sector, the recipient is no more confined to the public television in its traditional pattern. The introduction of the remote control and the availability of several choices for the recipient/citizen sets new challenges to the public service television in keeping pace with the public' s needs and expectations. The fragmentation of the reception forms requires a special reading and review from the side of the public service television, because the polarization manifestations are nowadays numerous and competition is fierce, and the private sector is establishing media poles which are about to dissimulate the public media.

Concerning legislation, this study cannot cover all existing media organization forms and policies governing this vital area in the Arab World. The issue of regulation of the

communication and media system, in which the state is the determining factor on the market, and the self-regulating system, or the combination of these two types of regulation, is now one of the contemporary political issues in most Arab countries. Despite the attempt of establishing a supreme council of communication in Morocco or a media and communication regulatory authority in Jordan, the independence of media is not properly achieved on the democratic and political levels. The reason for that is the restriction of the role of these bodies to a simple consultative or advisory role, whilst the existing traditional operation and administration mechanisms are still effective even if they are not apparent in most of the cases.

The political momentum in Egypt and in Tunisia in the wake of the revolution has proved that the issue of restructuring the media sector has been and is still one of the files, which have not adhered to the revolution's slogans and objectives. This situation has driven some people to call on the establishment of new independent regulatory bodies in charge of organizing the sector independently, and this is what happened in Tunisia after the Supreme Body for Media and Communication has issued a foundation law for a regulatory body of the audiovisual sector in 2013.

The Editorial Policy and the Question of Independence of the Public Television

The independence of the editorial policy in the radio and television corporations is an indicator of the availability of a public service oriented to all social categories. The editorial policy is considered as a pledge for providing a public service media which guarantees the principle of pluralism within the society. From the survey's conclusions, it seems that the main authority having the power of decision about the editorial policy of the radio and television corporations is the government, the ministry of information or the board of trustees, which is often designated as we have seen earlier. The case of the radio and television corporation in the Comoro Islands is unique. Indeed, the editorial policy of the corporation is set by the journalists in this country. We have also noted the absence of editorial committees and boards in most televisions of the sample. Without professional standards respected by all media professionals, Independence becomes nonsense.

As for censorship to which the editorial policy of a corporation may be subjected, the received responses varied from the existence of censorship (as in case of the Comoro Islands, Bahrain, Kuwait and Palestine), while in the other corporations covered by the survey, a direct or indirect censorship could be found. It is obvious that censorship is a matter of fact in most press organizations of the Arab World and that freedom of speech is always relative.

Most of the responses concerning the existence of an observatory in charge of pursuing the journalists' excesses or failures proved that all corporations disregard this major

issue in a public service television, which is the press ethics. In most public press organizations in the western world there is an observatory ensuring the quality of the provided services and evaluating the relationship between the media organization and the audience.

The independence of the audiovisual corporations is considered as one of the major foundations of the public service concept. Indeed, most of the received responses were unanimous on the relativity of independence, which proves that the content presented by these corporations does not address all social categories, as we have noticed that they do not cover the activities of the political parties, which are supposed to represent the public opinion on the major concerns of the society.

Most responses to the question relating to the nature of the service provided by the audiovisual corporation confirmed that it is a public service. Only the televisions of Kuwait and the Comoro Islands admitted that it is a public service but at the same time it is an instrument for the implementation of the government's policies.

Here, we can wonder how the responses relating to independence can affirm that it is relative and in some cases inexistent, while they assert that television is a public service. This conclusion brings us to the ambiguity of the public service concept in the minds of those in charge of the public service media in the Arab World.

Recommendations

According to the study conclusions, we can say that radio and television corporations in the Arab World do not meet the recognized standards and requirements of the concept of public service. This can be seen through the following facts:

- The absence of independent editorial boards in most radio and television corporations in the Arab World. The main authority having the power of decision about the editorial policy of the radio and television corporations is the government, the ministry of information or a designated board of trustees, and the limitation of the role of the media regulatory authorities to a mere consultative role.
- The Arab citizens do not directly contribute in the funding of the public television in most Arab countries, may be lest becoming a controller. And we have seen that 8 out of 10 corporations are funded by the state treasury in the first place and from advertising secondly.
- Naming of the corporations in charge of the audiovisual sector in the Arab World is characterized by the similarity of names. Indeed most of them are called corporations (authorities) and the radio and television services are often merged in a single organization, except in Sudan and in Tunisia, where

the organization was called till recently The Radio and Television Corporation.

- The future battle of the public service will not be about quantity but quality, to face an increasing need of the Arab public seeking a public media which is close to its daily concerns and problems.
- The inexistence of radio and television transmission on the web is a common feature of most radio and television corporations
- The appointment of managers of the radio and television corporations in the Arab World is made by designation.
- The inexistence of observatories in charge of following the journalists' excesses in most Arab countries.
- Predominance of bureaucracy and nomination in the public media administration. Recommendations can be summarized as the following:
- Transforming the file of public media into a societal issue closely linked to the public domain, politics, development and democratic transition,
- Setting a research team or a research center in charge of following up the development of the public media in general and the radio and television service in particular.
- Organizing an annual conference to discuss the public media problems and issues related to the radio and television in particular,
- The necessity of restructuring the public media sector in order to keep pace with technology evolution and the major political changes taking place in the region.
- Reviewing the model of information ministry, the presence of which is contradictory with the democratic transition requirements.
- Involving the citizens in the evaluation of he public television performance.
- Imposing a tax on the audiovisual services.
- Establishing an independent authority for the audiovisual activity in charge of organizing and regulating the sector.
- Reviewing the regulations governing the audiovisual media in most Arab countries.
- The necessity of independence of the editorial policies in the public service radio and television.
- Enacting the role of journalists in their quality ofinterface in the information process.
- Reviewing the role of the civil society in the information process in most Arab societies and granting them the role of partners in defining the public television features.
- Transforming the public service television into a space for pluralism and the consecration of the citizenship values and democracy principles.

- Promoting the independence of the public media from the executive authorities.

Conclusion: Towards a New Public Service Television

The new public service television in the Arab World should become a space for promoting creativity and a cultural model and not an instrument of intellectual banalities and taste marginalization. The public service television is able to provide an optimum service to the recipient provided that it meets the following requirements:

- Democracy as a life style, and the necessity of preserving its elements,
- Preserving pluralism as a sine qua non condition for the freedom of speech, and can only be achieved through ensuring the independence of the editorial policy, the pluralistic orientations and the credibility of news.
- Citizens should become a real actor in the production and publishing of the image through the emergence of the concept of the citizen journalist, the citizen reporter, or the citizen documentalist.
- Priority should be given to creativity in the public service television and to the introduction of the state of the art communication technologies.
- The public service television should be the propeller or the laboratory for all other actors in the audiovisual field.
- The necessity of reaching a respectful audimat by the public service television, and this result should not be a target in itself but a result to be achieved through a clear programming and editorial policy. For example, in France 4 out of each 10 French people watch the public service television programs.
- The diversification and definition of the editorial lines of the public television channels, and especially respecting all editorial tendencies for the sake of serving and preserving the public interest.
- The necessity of restructuring the public service media in the Arab World in terms of legislation, regulations and organization in order to be compliant with the management flexibility, financial autonomy and serving the public interest within the principles of democracy.
- Reviewing the funding mechanisms of the public service television: advertising, sponsorship, commercials…

To summarize, we can ascertain today that amongst the most complicated issues facing the western democracies and other democracies, is how to preserve a public media amid the globalization of media and communication and their transformation into a commodity. Indeed, there is no demarcation today between the public service television and

the globalization which is seeking the establishment of a homogeneous consuming society in the form of a single market with a single taste and culture. For instance, the consumption of reality shows by developed societies and those with an average growth confirms the continuation of human modeling regardless of the local cultural specificities of every society, and this is an issue, which is caused by the yielding of television to globalization, and which needs to be addressed.

The issue of the relationship between television and globalization was clearly and boldly raised by Pierre Bourdieu) Bourdieu, 1996), who emphasized the fact that television production has become with globalization a mere commodity. We know that the logic of commodity is governed by profit and competition, and since the content broadcasted by television today has something to do with culture and the symbolic capital, we can say that the individual and the society in general are at stake.

The transformation of media and television into a commodity resulted worldwide in the emergence of giant monopolistic companies in the west. This will undoubtedly lead to the predominance of marketing instead of promoting the television's cultural and democratic dimension. Today, there is fear that television would turn into a commercial commodity, subject to the buying and selling law, which means consuming and the achievement of the watching pleasure. Bourdieu assumes for example that television turned into a flood and a tremendous amount of information, which encourages the shallow and artificial thinking, and this is the major manifestation of the encounter between the television and globalization. Thus, how can the public television be patriotic, defending democracy, and at the same time not ignore the potential advantages of globalization. This could be the major challenge facing the public service television in the Arab World amid the democratic transition such as in Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan.

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