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**Tribes in A Wired Global Village :  
Mass Communication Challenges in the Era of Globalization**

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## Contents

1. Introduction .
  - 1.1 Questions in need of answers .
  - 1.2 Aim of the study .
  - 1.3 Methodology .
2. Challenges facing communication in the Arab World .
3. Communication and human development in the next millennium
4. The new World Order and its impact on the democracy of communication in the 21st Century .
5. Communication and information and their impact on national cultures (National identity within globalization : Tribes in the global village ) .
6. Information and communication revolution: The internet and international communications and its impact on the elite in international communities : ( Global Elite in the Small Global Village).
7. Mass communication and cultural invasion .
8. Mass Communication : Profit, entertainment industry, consumption, promotion, and privacy invasion .
8. Conclusion .

# **Tribes in A wired Global Village: Mass Communication Challenges in the Era of Globalization -“The Arabic Case”.**

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## **Introduction:**

By end of the 20th century the world foresees new economic and political changes, that are likely to affect human societies in the coming century.

The rise of the New World Order ( NWO ) is one of these changes which has put an end to the existence of two Camps, The Eastern camp and the Western camp ,together with their allies. In addition to the NWO, there is a trend towards globalizing and liberalizing the economy which has directly effected a movement towards democracy, and a movement towards the institutionalization of political regimes and the creation of civil communities.

The world also witnesses\ the growing influence of the technological and industrial revolution, especially in the field of mass communication. These revolutions have resulted in better means of communication and human interaction. It also imposes international and regional competition in the international communication arena. Such competition is expected to occasion real challenges at various levels.

Throughout the history of mankind, communication has been the most important human activity in man’s life and in his interaction with other fellowhumans. When man discovered language, writing, and drawing ,he moved towards sepanding his horizon by interacting with others and the environment. (Man, as aresult) employed varied waup of communicating. There waup became the means of communicating between individuals, as well as the mean of expressing man’s basic needs in every day living, interacting, working, adapting to the environments, and in settling disputes. They have also become the means of self-expression.

Now days man’s right to communicate has become one of his undeniable rights as approved by international covenants and constitutions. The United Nations charter acknowledges the following :

1. The right of all nations to share and exchange information on an international level on the basis of justice fairness and integrity of interests.

2. The right of every nation to use its private resources of information to protect its sovereignty, defend its cultural, moral and political values, and inform the world of its interests and expectations.
3. The right of the public, ethnic and social groups and individuals to make use of sources of information and to effectively participate in the communication process.
4. The right to respect peoples' values and individuals' private lives (Al - Ma'moudi 17 - 19 :1982).

Mass Media and information in the world today have dominated man's life in such a way that led one of the scholars to describe their power over human life as a second God. Schwartz believes that "radio and television are everywhere and they are always with us. Millions listen to the same networks hum the same commercial jingles, share with soap-opera characters the testing of souls, the mystery of love and death, the agony of the sinful, and the triumph of the righteous... The media profoundly affect community attitudes, political structures, and the psychological state of entire countries. God-like, the media can change the course of a war, bring down a president or a king, elevate the lowly, and humiliate the proud, by directing the attention of millions on the same event and in the same manner." (Schwartz 1983: 1& 2-3).

Therefore, the power of the communication media and the rights of man and nations to communicate impose challenges on the following levels:

1. The individuals level :

The revolution in information and technology resulted in global liberalization. This enabled the Arab World to acquire information and communicate with individuals from other nations, particularly via the internet which, more than anything else, provides enormous amounts of information, data, and opposing views.

2. Local communities:

Their response to the intellectual and cultural challenges and the influence these challenges have upon national and public cultures.

3. Regional Societies:

For example, the Arab World as a regional unity and its ability to respond to mass media challenges on both regional and international levels.

4. The international community:

The challenge which arises from international communication networks and what this may lead to within the current trend towards globalization of the economy, and the trend towards democracy. As well as , their effect on nations.

## **Questions which need to be answered**

The challenges that are taking place in the mass media of today, together with current international economic and political conditions, force one to adopt a visionary approach. Thus, this paper is concerned with answering a number of questions:

- 1) To what extent could internal, regional and local political conditions affect the quantity, and the quality of communication in the Arab world in the new millennium?
2. What are the challenges which the communities may have to face vis a vis as a result of the direct impact of the information and communications revolution on the individual's lifestyle and education?
3. What are the expected effects of the media on elite, popular and national cultures?
4. Can mass media result in an international culture parallel to the current international economic order?

There are no straight forward answers to all of these questions. Answers may be had by a set of fields which constitute the basis of the impact of mass media upon the individuals and group level and upon local, regional and international societies.

## **The aim of this study**

This paper is intended to look at a number of challenges which are likely to face the Arab world in the coming millennium within the field of communication. This study considers that the futuristic challenges are not disconnected from the reality of existing challenges.

Some of the future challenges will be a direct result of the continuation of living under the same socio-political and mass communication conditions in the present century. While others will be the output of future political, economic and technological conditions ensuing from the development of hi-tech communications.

## **Methodology**

This paper adopts an analytic and critical approach which explores the reality of the present challenges and their future impacts. The paper is divided into seven major fields:

- 1) Communication challenges facing the Arabs World .
- 2) Communication challenges in the next millennium .
- 3) The NOW and its impact on the democracy of communication in the 21st century .
- 4) Communication and information and their impact on national cultures ( i.e. tribes in the global village ) .
- 5) The revolution of communication and information: The internet and international mass media in the 21st century and their impact on the elite of international societies .
- 6) Mass media and cultural invasion.
- 7) Mass media : profit, the entertainment industry, promotion of consumption and invasion of privacy.

These seven major fields attempt to answer , indirectly , the above-mentioned questions

- Field one answers question one .
- Fields three, six and seven answer question two .
- Fields four and six answer question three .
- Fields five and seven answer question four.

This presentation offers an initial reading as this topic deserves further dedicated research . The suggested seven fields need further study and scrutiny and are meant provoke more questions about communication challenges in the next millennium .

## **2) The challenges the Arab World faces concerning issues of mass communication .**

2.1. Mass media in the Arab world constitutes a special case as it cannot be separated from Third World and at the same time from the developed countries of the North .Mass media in the Arab world is similar to Third World countries as it suffers from shortage of financial capabilities, and from constraints imposed on the freedom of expression. In addition to the nature of information which reduces the active human participation to passive recipients of knowledge.

To be able to achieve all the functions of communication is not an easy matter, because communication is affected by individual and societal factors . The individual is affected by his education, his psychological attributes, his interests and his economic, social and mental situation which all add up to affect his level of success in communicating with the masses .

Also, societal, political, economic, cultural and , ideological factors have tremendous effect on the individual communicator on one hand, and on the mass

media establishment , as well as on the message transmitted and its recipients on the other .

In order to address the challenges that face the Arab mass communication, we must dwell on the pressure, and restraints confronting the Arab mass communication as well as the factors preventing the Arab media from delivering its message properly. These challenges, which are expected to continue into the next millenium, can be divided as follows :

1) Political challenges :

The Israeli occupation represents a central challenge in the Arabs World with the ensuing problems of a nation. In addition to democratic problems and issues of political freedom pertaining to development and dependancy. Such issues link information and communication with the comprehensive development in the Arab world .

2) Governmental legislative & management control:

This is depicted in the laws and regulations that control mass media organizations, and the laws that guarantee or limit liberties, legislate licenses and censorship. Therein trum, issues on the freedom of the press and the democracy of communication

3) Ideological challenges:

They occur when there is an ideological clash between the government's ideology and bet wean the ideology of the mass media organization. Obviously this is a major challenge that cannot be overcome except through democratic means. This is turn raises the issue of the freedom of expression .

4) Financial and Economic challenges :

These are represented by a number of pressures and effects (direct and indirect ) on the mass media organization, which are:

- a) sponsor. b) promoter. c) consumer ( the public ).
- d) customers ( individuals and governments ). e) distributor.

These challenges are also affected by the scarcity of resources and the market limits as conditioned by within international and local competitive frameworks .

5) Societal challenges :

They are of various forms : some are manifest on the educational and cultural level of the society which we may call learning and cultural illiteracy. These factours affect the mimber of reades or message receives . Some challenges are manifest on the economic level of the society to which we can include pressures exerted from intellectual and political organizations and sectarian groups. Such challenges raise the issue of the effect of communication on society .

6) External challenges :

They take various forms including the conditions and the nature of competition under which international communication operates. Also, foreign embassies might get involved in adopting direct pressure i.e. sending letters to editors, in addition to economic pressures through subscriptions or international advertising .

#### 7) Occupational challenges:

They are linked to two types of influences :

a- Factors related to the management and organization of mass media through administrative style , method of organization, efficiency of workers and their cooperation and harmony and the aims of the mass media organization.

b- Factors related to the nature of the mass media worker. This in itself is related to the gatekeeper and the tasks of his profession which are affected by space, time, and the services of the press agencies.

These factors are inseparable, they are dynamic & interactive because they are related to the process of communication & its formation.

#### 8) Technological challenges:

The accelerating media technology, accompanied by the flow of information, represent a form of permanent challenge to the mass media with respect to its ability to keep up with the technological developments in order to face the local , regional and international competitions.

### **How to face the challenge?**

There is no mass media message which is perfect and fully successful. As perfection in relation to the human effort is non-existent, especially when it comes to dealing with the communication process, with all its complexities and dynamism in the light of the complications resulting from regional and international communication. Therefore, the ambition of any media user focused on fulfilling some degree of success in communicating his message.

Any attempt to transcend existing challenges- or at least to deal with them in a logical way -requires that we deal with the elements of the communication process wisely and scientifically, so that we can achieve the maximum degree of success.

No doubt such challenges will remain part of the Arab concern for communication in the 21st century. Since such challenges are beyond the power of a single individual, to say the least, we can describe them as institutional and societal. In order to transcend them, we need more than one side to participate in facing them.

The Arab world, does not expect that democratic problems will be solved all of sudden. Even if legislations allowing individuals their political and intellectual freedom are passed. This is due to the fact that the freedom of the individual , requires that individuals themselves take on responsibility . Some of the challenges which face mass media organizations can be solved. For example, a television station may use an expert in mass media who knows how to design a successful message, on scientific basis. This expert has the theoretical knowledge by which he can use mass communication to influence his audience, by possessing the best way of addressing them . But in a situation which does not allow the communication message to reach the audience, this media person becomes like any parasite on the communication network. He becomes a person who is unable to do his job properly, and instead , is just publishing his name every day in the media.

In order to transcend the crisis of media communication governments and media institutions participate through educational institutions and families because information is the product of this environment .

Also mass media organization will face challenges on a macro-competitive level, resulting in the reduction of organizations with individualistic natures giving way to bigger ones. Bigger organizations expected to enlarge their communication activities in various fields, such as publishing, advertising, journalism, television production and so on. The domination of Arab governments on mass media will continue in the 21st century either explicitly or implicitly through their participation in the shares of the capital or the complete possession of some of the mass communication organizations. The intensity of competition will increase in the field of communication, especially among Arab satellite channels and this will lead to more Arab satellite channels .

Just as the spreading of fax and photocopying machines offer a speedy circulation of forbidden information and printed matters, the spreading of the internet and the spreading of satellites channels, will lead to more Arab interaction . They will also increase the opportunities of dialogue, and will help in reinforcing the flow of communication and the spreading of democracy and will enhance and protect the freedom of the individual and societies .

### **3) Communication and human development in the 21st century :**

In 1994 the population of the Arab world reached 245034 million . The Arab world still suffers from real problems in development . In spite of the fact that the record of human development in the Arab states shows obvious progress until

1992, deprivation in the Arab World, as the report of the international human development shows, is prevalent the report shows the following :

•1 In relation to health:

In the rural areas only half the population obtain clean water, and only one third are provided with a basic sewage system.

•2 In relation to education :

- there are around 60 million analphabets in population of million .
- There are 9 million children who have not attended an elementary school and 15 million who have not attended secondary school .

•3 In relation to income and poverty:

73 millions are still under the poverty level, and 10 millions suffer from malnutrition.

•4 In relation to women :

■ Only 25% of the Arab women participate in the official labor force , compared to 39% in the developing countries whole.

- Women only occupy 4% of parliamentary seats , a percentage which is so small in comparison to that of the average percentage of the developing world (10%) .

•1 In relation to children :

The infant death rate for children under five years shows - 73 cases in every 1000. It is 4 times higher than the average rate in industrial countries

•2 In relation to the environment :

With the availability of less than 1000 cm of water for the individual every year , 55% percent of the population suffer as a result of a scarcity of water (1996 دليل التنمية البشرية) .

This reality imposes serious challenges in the face of progress in the Arab society. progress can not take place except through continuous development dependent on the active participation of people in the development projects. Since the 1950's Learner, Sharm, Rogers and others participated in the study of the role of mass media in development, which they consider necessary for carrying out development. The public can only be moved through development communication which forms an important element for the success of development projects (Abu Osba 1984). Many of the Arab development projects and plans undoubtedly lack clear vision for the role of mass media in development. Therefore, human development challenges facing the Arab world, must proceed a long with a clear vision of the role of the development communication. Our awareness of this role, as we are at the threshold of the 21st century, must guide us to create development communication cadres which are skilled and are academically and professionally trained. Their role must not stop at being part of the ministry of information, but it

must extend to become part of all ministries & institutions concerned with development.

### **The New World Order : Tendencies Towards More Democratic Communication.**

The last ten years of the twentieth century witnessed a great deal of international change . After the Gulf War the idea of “The New World Order” came into being enforcing the role of the United State as the leader of the world . With the collapse of the Eastern block and the foregrounding of the one - pole system as a form leadership of the world, the new international changes under the umbrella of NWO have reinforced some basic concepts such as individual freedom , human rights , democracy, women and minority rights , and the nationalhood reinforcement of a free market and the globalization of economy. These concepts are present in the issue of mass media on the one hand, and are influential in the atmosphere of the field of communication the other.

Nowadays, the international inclination is towards civic societies and reinforcement of democracy. This inclination means that societies should work to press for civil liberties and to build democracies that reinforce public representation and public participation. This inclination encompasses various implications which are related to communication such as :

1. Civic societies need civil institutions that represent them and convey their values and expectations.
2. To be part of the International democracy club, civil and democratic societies need the free flow of information and open channels for international communication.
3. Societies which are undergoing new experiments in democracy will remain under the scrutiny of the international democracy club, and there will be further reviews and reports from national, regional, and international institutions to protect human rights and to monitor the freedom of mass media, their violations, and the degree of open opportunities for further flow of communication from various directions.
4. The NWO will enable multinational corporation and international institutions to play wider roles-with governments’ participation - in the reshaping of future life by utilizing information and communication technology. Communication and information corporations and networks will play a bigger role in controlling the forms, quantity, and quality of communication. This will lead to further competition in international

markets to promote communication and information equipment and products along with the values of their producers.

5. There is an increase in demand for information under the current inclination toward solving disputes by peaceful means or with the help of an international umbrella.

The NWO carries within itself the concerns for freedom liberty and democracy and the people's hopes for progress and equality. The future, however, does not foretell of a world in which nations become equal in their economic, technical, and information capabilities. The gap between the world's peoples in the above mentioned capabilities, will remain, a situation that will make the issue of balance and fairness in information exchange one of the top priorities of the coming millennium.

It is not expected during the 21st century that fairness and balance of communication flow between the North and South countries, will be established. The issue of free flow of communication in one direction will continue to dominate the international information market, and a huge gap will remain in communication technology. The Report of "Managing Global Affairs Committee", refers to communication imbalance: "despite the occurrence of a vast increase in the range that some mass media have reached, there still remains some serious aspects of imbalance with respect to the opportunities of reaching information and even in the distribution of the most basic technologies. There still remains two billions of people - more than one-third of world population- who lack electricity. During 1990, the total number of available telephone lines in Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, and Nigeria is less than that of Canada in which a population of only 27 millions lives. This imbalance recurs also in the ownership of communication satellites, which are the basis of the globalization of mass media." (جيران في عالم واحد 1995 : 53)

Despite the international inclination towards democracy and defending human rights, regardless of the intentions behind these inclinations and the interests they aim at, it is not expected that the issues of democracy, justice, and human rights will become fixed values among various regimes that govern the world especially the ruling regimes of the Arab World and the Third World countries.

The instability of these values among these regimes constitutes a basic challenge in the 21st century. The principle of the freedom of speech will remain governed by the interests and wills of these regimes. The issue of credibility and telling the truth will remain controlled by the wills and domination of the regimes. The area of invasion of an individual's, privacy will remain as long as human rights remain unprotected under the suppressive regimes.

## **5-Communication and Information and Their Impact on National Cultures:**

“Tribes in the Global Village: National Identity within the frame of Globalization”

Marshall McLuhan presents his proposal about the global village in his book Gutenberg Galaxy in which he says : “But certainly the electro-magnetic discoveries have recreated the simultaneous “field” in all human affairs so that the human family now exists under conditions of a “global village”. We live in a single constricted space resonant with tribal drums. So that concern with the “primitive” today is as banal as nineteenth-century concern with “progress”, and as irrelevant to our problem.” (McLuhan, 1962: 43).

McLuhan considers that the globe has become on the one hand, a community of learning, and at the same time, with regard to the tightness of its interrelationships, the globe has become a tiny village. Patterns of human association based on slow communication have become overnight not only irrelevant and obsolete, but a threat to the continued existence and to sanity. Under these circumstances understanding media need the understanding the effects of the media. The objectives of new media have tended, fatally, to be set in terms of parameters and frames of older media. All media testing has been done within the parameters of older media - especially of speech and print. (McLuhan 1967:151-152).

The term “ Small Global Village” used by McLuhan is true to some extent regarding the immense available potentials of international flow of communication. This means an increasing international openness and interaction between human cultures , according to information theorists . But the ability to communicate among different nations has become a hindrance to bring this activity to the required standard. This takes place in spite of the diversity and availability of media information, especially with the availability of local and national channels which compete with each other, on the one hand, and with foreign channels, on the other. For example, an Arab viewer can choose any channel from among more than 30 Arab satellite channels, all of which compete with one another to attract the Arab viewer . Turkish channels also are battered in competition among one another as the number of Turkish satellite channels rises up to ten .

If Arab viewers can receive about 50 satellite channels at a reduced cost, then they will tend to watch Arab TV channels.

Because they have no language barriers, they have the same cultural background and have common interests. As well as, the choices available on Arab satellite channels will provide the Arab viewers with recreational , cultural and ideological options. Thus, the role adopted by the small global village will in fact reinforce what we call, tribes in the small global village in the 21st century. This means that communication media, especially satellite channels, will help consolidate national identity, and reinforce local and popular cultures.

In the past decade, it has become possible for minorities and ethnic groups in a society such as the United States, which considered mass media as a melting pot, to demonstrate the potential of supporting their original cultures and fall back to the roots of their national identities through communication systems. Arab Americans can now watch Arab TV channels from America itself. Be it through TV stations or through cable TV, or even through their ability to receive Arab satellite channels. This applies also to Americans from other backgrounds, such as Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans and others.

Hence, with the role played by mass media in the global village, societies will become fragmented, and so the tendency towards the consolidation of cultural and national identities of nations will increase.

As for the Arabs, and other nations that have convenient communication media opportunities, we may expect that they will go on enhancing and even consolidating their national identities and interactions among their peoples. What Arab satellite stations present, despite our reservation toward the level, method and content of their presentation, they now make a suitable atmosphere for the Arab interaction and dialogue. Arab satellite also creates a field for the masses to express their opinions. We think that this will form a current which will quietly make its way among people and enhance the existence of our Arab tribe in the frame of the small global village. The world global village will not change the identity of nations culture, but it will lead to better exchange of other aspects from different cultures. This exchange is a matter of interaction will help in developing cultures of the global peoples

## **6. Communication and Information Revolution : A Global elite in the small global village.**

We have alluded to McLuhan's proposal of the Small Global Village, and in the American Time Magazine (Time Feb. 3-1997) in a report entitled the "Networked Society: Welcome to the Wired World", Joshua Cooper Ramo wrote that all over the world, the wired and gathered light of pinprick of the wired community is glowing and growing. At the beginning of nineties, a million people were connected or were trying to be connected through the copper cables via the E-Mail. However, when it has become easy to join the internet, it has doubled its value and the number of those who joined the service. Since then the number of the internet employees is estimated at 57 million in the world. John S. Quarterman estimates that the number will reach 700 millions by the end of the twentieth century.

Fred Briggs, MCI's chief engineer thinks that telephone networks have taken one hundred years to reach their present status. As for the internet, it will reach the same level within five years only. Ramo stressed that it is possible to logically

estimate that the power of the internet will be one hundred times more than it is now as the information tool by the turn of twentieth century. (Time : Irbid p. 32) .

Dr. Shatha Al-Dirkazle observes that the internet has become " a post office ; a market place; a library , a software warehouse; a tool for learning and culture and for reading newspapers and magazines , and an intellectual and a scientific dialogue center between various groups in many places in the world . And these are done using written , visual at oral text ( or what is termed multimedia) on a viewable screen which is similar to TV screen . " ( Al - Dirkazle 1997 : 35) .

The internet , with its wealth of information and the service it provides for interaction between its users , offers a set of communication and information services represented by the E - Mail , File Transfer Protocol ( FTP) which help in transferring files from a computer to another , exchange of reports, research at data basis between researchers , software for all types(freeware, shareware) and commercial , and the World Wide Web (( WWW )) which includes hyper text transfer protocol (( HTTP )) (I bid : 35 - 36 )

Subscription of individual and institutions to the internet is extremely easy. With the help of a computer , a modem , and a telephone line , a subscriber can connect to industrial , government , and academic institutions; scientific research centers, journalistic institutions, television, and publishing houses to obtain the information he needs .

The internet has also become a source of recreation , and a place to promote deviant religious and social ideas , and promote vice and pornography . In this context, the internet , which has forcefully invaded the twentieth century in an unprecedented manner, is characterized by positive and negative effects in the following areas :

1 - Wiring the world through the internet in the small global village will increase the opportunities for human communication and interaction for the international elite. This will lead to further interactive dialogues to obtain information for the political , cultural , scientific , and technocrat elite .

In cultural , intellectual, and controversial issues ( in the field of humanities and social sciences) , interaction will intensify dialogues stemming from varied cultural visions Islam in the internet will be one of the tracks which are open for discussion .

Nisbat and Aberdeen have noticed the following : " The greater the interactive influence between nations, the greater our desire to mention our traditional values not necessarily like the violent Iranian model but rather , at least , in the same degree of enthusiasm .

In the face the accelerating process of homogeneity and conformity in the global life style, we will strive to maintain our national identity whether religious, cultural, linguistic, or ethnic" (نيسبات و ابردين 159-127)

In this context, the West which has lost its traditional enemy after the collapse of the Soviet Union, will intensify its hostility toward a new and fabricated enemy which is justified through violence and blood-terror as is witnessed by some Arab and Muslim countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Afghanistan. Such terror is alleged to be of a religious nature, or to belong to religious groups termed sometimes as "fundamentalist groups".

It is expected that Western mass media will continue to distort Islam and the Arab figures and to side with Israel in its hostile attitudes toward the Arabs. These issues will be hot ones and it will be an issue for discussions between the Arab elites and others.

2 - The Internet; international satellite TV channels such as the American CNN, the British BBC, the French TV 5, and others; and the western refined press which is marketed internationally such as Time, News Week, Der Spiegel, Le Monde, and others, will all provide a base for the national and international interaction of the elite who are capable of interaction particularly in relation to international problems and economic and scientific issues. These elite groups - as the opinion leaders of their societies - can have a great influential role on their societies. We may assume here that it is possible in the future to have an international public opinion about international issues such as issues of the environment, liberties, and democracy as long as the content of these issues does not contradict the concern of national interests, nor does it influence society's cultural identity.

3. The internet and the mass media will make it possible for negative forces whether global organisations, psychologically unstable individuals or ethnic fundamentalist groups to spread their ideas. The News Week of 7th. April 1997 published a report entitled, "Blaming the Web", written by Steven Levy which showed the role of the internet in spreading disturbed ideas after the mass suicide of 39 members of the "Heaven's Gate" group near San Diego in California. Levy stressed that the internet was used by this group as the internet, out represents a free market for information, and provides the opportunity to find followers and share, ideas among such groups.

4. The internet, with the available global networks, will lead the peoples of the world into the 21st century in the opposite direction of what Herbert Marcuse suggested when he said: "Contemporary society tends to abolish privileges of feudal culture and aristocracy and simultaneously abolish their cultural content. If the lofty facts of fine arts and aesthetics of life and thought are limited to a rich and intellectual audience, it is so because the society is repressed. But we cannot assume that there is a marked improvement in spite of the fact that nowadays there are pocket books and micro diskettes or because education has spread, or because it has become possible for the ordinary person to

attend theater or concert not necessarily wearing a formal suit. Intellectual privileges indicated that freedom was unjust, as there is a gap between the intellectual mental product and the material product. It has, however, constructed a closed wall where facts, taboos, and taboos can survive and be preserved to perfection, not merely for those who abolished them.

Nowadays, this separation has disappeared, along with going beyond the limit and being accused. Despite the fact that it is true that text and mode of speech still exist, the distance between them made it like “a wind coming from other planets.” (Herbert Marcuse p 100 - 101)

A close look at the present human development in Arab societies, will make us realize that the difference between the culture of the elite and that of mass popular culture, will intensify in the 21st century. This is due to the following factors:

- a. Educational and cultural levels of individuals.
- b. The economic level which can facilitate or hinder acquiring means of communication. To obtain the necessary information to fit needs and demands.
- c. The language barrier: as humans prefer to communicate, in their mother tongue even if it is to be distorted in some of its aspects.
- d. The easy flow of information and means of communication:

This would facilitate making information available in a way that was never witnessed before. Information will become available to the extent that a specialist would be unable to pursue every new achievement in his field, no matter how much time, effort and potentials he can afford.

What is worth examining is the nature and future of communication, in the 21st century:

1. Abundance of information in all fields and the impossibility of its monopoly.
2. Accessibility of information to those who could obtain it technically, economically and culturally.
3. Expanding communication particularly through satellite networks, televisions and linking computers with television screens would, in turn, make it quite possible to communicate regionally and internationally, and would increase competition. There is no doubt that the abundance of information and the ease of obtaining it will pose great challenges to the youth education and social upbringing. Television will always have an important role in affecting the youth and fulfilling many of their needs.

Connecting the world through satellites , internet and television programs will lead to a revision of theories related to the effects of mass media . It would not be easy to accredit only one of the theories as a means of understanding the effect of communicative devices. As for example , there is the bullet theory, the limited effect theory, all of which, the moderate effect theory, and the powerful effect theory do not contribute in understanding the effect of mass media on the public. Each of these theories is applied in different contexts and only concentrate on some variables and ignore others. That is why studying the effect of mass media on the receiver calls for a more comprehensive understanding of the effect of mass media.( Abu Osba 1995 )

## **7. Cultural Invasion and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

This has been discussed indirectly in the mention of national identity in relation to globalism , and when we talked about the elite in the small global village . However , due to its importance, it is vital to bear in mind the following considerations :

1. The preoccupation with information and cultural invasion.  
Cultural imperialism and electronic colonialism has caused a lot of concern in information and social studies to a degree that such issues have received the utmost attention by some scholars .
2. The overwhelming dominance of communication flow from the south through a variety of media raise the following legitimate question :Do the contents of foreign communication have an impact on the local cultures , or not ?

The number of hours of foreign - and particularly American-programs broadcasted by the Arab regular and satellite television stations is at least one - forth of the total transmission of the daily broadcast . Nisbat and Aberdeen comment :

“ Evidently The USA is the largest exporter of television programs , but it is the least importer of such programs ( with the exception of few British television programs ) despite the benefit that US may gain from elevated arts and imported culture which may , at least , balance cultural balance of payments . International Television has become a near reality through the European multinational network stations . The network is subject to the powerful impact of the uniform international life style , and to the opposing force of national culture and the problem language difference . Although some of the programs of this network may reach a great number of international viewers , most viewers , within their countries , prefer local programs . This is the lesson which the British television has finally realized . ”

(نيسبات وأبريدث 1991 : ص 149 )

3. Within the past thirty years , many studies have confirmed the impact of television on society and on local cultures . The extent to which American media products has spread, is evident all over the world . It is said that American television programs have transformed the world into a global village . Lebes and ataz , in the introduction to their book “ The Export of Meaning”, have alluded to this issue by saying , “ American popular culture travels the world with ease . Films , pop music , musicals , fast food , jeans , and American advertising have taken hold almost everywhere in spite of the objections of patriots of the indigenous heritage . Television stations everywhere have the same stories to tell , partly because the stories are the same - imported , as they are , from New York, Hollywood , and London - and partly because the formulae for the stories are the same - imported , as they are , from New York , Hollywood, and London. Jeremy Tunstall(1977) and others have documented in scholarly fashion what jetsetters know from experience - namely , that the television set in the hotel room will not help you decide whether you are in Lagos or Los Angeles . ” ( Libes and katz 1990:3 )

Nisbat argues that American television production in particular has its impact on the culture of peoples :

“ The potential possibilities of the internal TV and the great mass of the exported American TV programs will lead to the achievement of the common dominator in peoples’ culture and in unifying the type and nature of programming . Will all this threaten and destroy the differences that constitutes the unique traits of the various peoples ? Can this facilitate the task of great powers such the USA for imposing their values on the third world countries and others , or can this cause a hostile reaction?”  
( نيسبات ورفيقه نفسه ص 151 )

4. The civilization disparity between developed countries & developing countries will result in weaker counties to identifying with the stronger . In the famous Muqqudimah Ibn khaldon talked about the tendency of the defeated nations to imitate their defeater . Undoubtedly , the material , scientific, cultural , and technological possibilities offered by western civilization make the acceptance of western patterns a possibility. There is a need here for further discussion .

The twenty - first century - as we have frequently mentioned - will open the channels of communication not only for the elite but also for the public . I believe that the international communication media challenges facing the Arabs will increase in the 21st century. But these challenges will not call for the fear that will extend to bring about the closure of channels, as some are demanding, because it is very difficult to impede the communication process. Technological advancement has made it extremely difficult to block channels of communication. Sicne each society has its own values , ethics , and norms that can control the course of social life and help its advancement, this will help establish some kind of balance .

International communication offers a fertile ground for cultural invasion . The success of cultural invasion is dependent on several conditions :

1. The receivers' acceptance of, and tolerance towards, other cultures i.e. the receiving culture is tolerant towards the sending culture transmitting the message.
2. The ability of communication material to penetrate other cultures without affecting the identity of national cultures and without challenging their established values .
3. Reception and understanding of the information message in a manner that does not differ from the intended objective of its source .

Undoubtedly , the learned lessons and the deductions about the TV series , Dallas , presented by Libes ( et al ) offer us an understanding of why cultures don't respond similarly toward this series , and how the public explain it differently . Libes ( et al ) state : “ It follows that content analysis alone should not be a basis for international cultural policy . Audience decoding may surprise the content analyst and policy maker . We are not proposing to whitewash the export of industrial soap opera , but we do urge that the concern over cultural imperialism in the market of films and television be recontextualized . In the absence of the local soap opera - which is likely to be more popular than any import - program such as Dallas may have some value . The value comes not from the program but from what negotiation with it .” ( Libes & Katz 1990 : 154 )

In his attempt to predict future developments, an Arab researcher, Al - Hiti sees that foreign political Arabic satellite TV channels will have a powerful impact in the field of political communication . He suggests the following areas of impact :

- 1. Clarification of the Boundaries of Political Conformity and Disparity :**
- 2. Direction of Attention toward Certain Political Subjects :**
- 3. Creation of Political Doubt :**
- 4. Flooding of Political News :**
- 5. Abundance of Political Communication :**
- 6. Feeling the weakness of the Arab Political Role :**
- 7. The Prevalence of the Western Perspective in Political , Views :**

## **8. The Spread of shiny Political Terms and Generalizations :**

### **9. Formation of a Partial and Biased Image about the World's Political Status :**

### **10. Comparison and Political Expectation :**

These predicted effects, about whom the author has shown his worries, could be true if we suppose that Arab citizens are constant viewers of these incoming foreign channels and that they can understand their programs in the foreign languages and if we assume that Arab citizen has a hollow culture which creates a hollow man who can be an easy receiver. We know that most of the Arab public receive the news from the Arab satellite channels especially Al Jazeera, MBC, and LBC and Future . Only a few of them representing, the elite, view CNN and EBN . The dependence of obtaining the news on the Arab News Network (ANN) , which is at the experimental stage of transmission , will increase .

It is undoubtedly impossible to ignore the impact of international communication on national cultures. But such impact will never reach the degree of canceling differences and unifying local cultures with foreign cultures . This impact can only be prominent among the elite and will lead to interaction between the world elite groups. However , the direct impact of international communication on the public, as imagined by some, is impossible to realize .

## **7. Mass Media : Profit , Entertainment Industry, Promoting Consumption and Invasion of Privacy .**

During this century, forms of communication provided by mass media have developed to capture the attention of a great number of customers. It attracts the highest financial income as well. For that purpose, mass media promoted amusement consumption and invaded the individual's privacy as commodities of entertainment. This will be discussed as one of the challenges that confront and will continue to confront communication in the 21st century .

### **7.1. Profit and Entertainment Industry :**

It is possible to speculate about mass media in the forthcoming century through three dimensions. One of which provides new and serious information, another provides amusement and intends to promote it , and the last one attempts to include both .

There is no doubt that the goal of profit would always remain a basic aspect of mass on organizations because it supports and provides them with the motive to go on and develop . But we expect an increase in the capability of communication to provide home amusement for children , youngsters and adults altogether. That could be achieved by means of television entertainment programs, video games or what the internet provides. We should seriously consider the effect of this kind of entertainment programs on human lives and how they spend their time , and its effect on other activities and on social life in general. Accordingly; cinema, television and radio production studios are concerned with increasing productivity ( mass product ) almost in repeated patterns and they conceal their weaknesses in attractive ways . The contents of TV series , therefore , are mainly the same . They only attract the receiver through high directory and techniques. Concerning production , it must be acceptable by everybody and it must not be controversial .Mass media always initiates similar responses among a large number of people , ignoring their individual and personal differences . To have audiences as such , mass media makes sure to provide such an entertainment. It is not possible to fulfill the role leaders, reformers and developers expect of mass media through the goals of its owners who consider their audience as profitable customers .

To achieve this goal , their efforts to control the audience are not matched with insight and real responsibility towards the community. Therefore , we find that certain media institutions in the USA have issued a system of rating for films and programs . This categorization demonstrates the existence of a crisis and the feeling of social responsibility , which the communication media fails to pay attention to when dealing with under age children .

Home entertainment is no longer limited to television or radio or cinema. Many newspapers , especially weekly ones or daily tabloid , provide more entertainment than education . That is why they fabricate and publish stories of titillation. They greatly contribute to the invasion of the private lives of celebrities. the Internet, video games and computer games have a part in promoting home entertainment. If there is no control of the use of such home entertainment then Patricia M. Greenfield , predicts

**“The real danger may be in the very variety, complexity, and appeal of game worlds that are so responsive to the child’s input. As Karen Sheingold has speculated, too much control over the fantasy world of video games could bring about impatience with the messy , uncontrollable world of real life .”** Patricia M. Greenfield 1984 :125)

## **.7.2 Profit and promotion of consumption:**

The Communication media, with its concern for advertising, contribute to establish a reality which says, “(advertised products don’t separate from the consumers happiness)” . This means that advertising forces the spirit of consumption. Even more, this spirit is transforming into a sort of alienation. To this effect, Herbert Marcuse says: Here we face one of the most pitiful aspects of the developed industrial community; “The rational type of irrationality.” This civilization is productive, successful, and capable of transforming everything redundant into something needed as well as transforming destruction into construction. As much as the present civilization changes the world of matter to a human dimension for the body and soul, the idea of alienation becomes a problem. Therefore, people know who they are through their goods; and find the essence of their souls in their cars and in their television sets with their fine reception, and in their elegant homes with their modern cooking utensils.

### 7.3 Invasion of privacy :

Lady Diana Spencer as a victim of the media. At the dawn of the 31st of August 1997 those who were watching satellite channels saw the traffic accident which caused Lady Diana’s death and the death of her companion in a Parisian tunnel. No doubt, before Lady Diana’s brother raised a finger of accusation against the media, viewers saw that the cause of the accident was the escape of Diana’s chauffeur from the paparazzi. It has clearly been shown that the cause of this tragic accident was the invasion of privacy on the part of media paparazzi.

The pursuit of news about public figures: stars, politicians and leading personalities, is an exciting matter which enervates the appetite of media as well as that of the public, an audience who is always ready to know about the private lives of others. It is curiosity, to uncover secrets. This is what happened to Diana when she spoke in an interview about the fact that reporters make you see yourself as a commodity for the media.

In the 21st century, human rights and the right to privacy will remain one of the central issues that constitute some of the major moral challenges for the media. Undoubtedly, the available technology, which is continually thriving, becoming more efficient in infiltrating individuals’ lives and peeping at them, and becoming capable of getting more information, will make the issue of privacy part of a difficult question which is difficult to answer except with the logic of moral commitment.

## CONCLUSION

This study employing a critical and analytical style has aimed to explore the challenges facing communication in the Arab world in terms of profession , institution , society , and the international community . It also holds that these problems will continue into the next century .

This study highlights a series of communication challenges our global society will must face in the 21st century .So, I have surveyed the role of the New World Order and its influence on the democracy of communication.

I have also depected that the state of imbalance and inequality in the information and communication arena will persist as (symptoms) of the 21st century . I have demonstrated that the level of human Arab development in the human field is low , that it calls for more effort at this stage as we are approaching the 21st century , and that developing a course can for change only take place through recognizing the serious role of development communication in yielding constant progress .

This paper has considered the reality of the international communication , bringing into existence satellite stations available to the public . Taking the Arab and international competitions into account the paper presents McLuchan latest s' new hypothesis that the small global village would result in :

1. Tribes in the global village reinforcing national identity within globalism.
2. Communication and information revolution such as the internet brings into existence a global elite .

This paper argues that one of the challenge that mass media challenges that will experience in the 21st century is the search for profit by information institutions through promoting entertainment , consumption (publicity) , and enccoachment on individual's' privacy. This paper also demonstrates that the field of cultural invasion is conditioned by the recipient's readiness for it .

This paper does not attempt to investigate all of the challenges . It has stressed the most important ones . There is still a need for much more research .

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