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The role of ARABSAT in television program exchange in the Arab world

AlSaadon, Hezab T., Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1990

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THE ROLE OF ARABSAT IN TELEVISION PROGRAM EXCHANGE IN THE ARAB WORLD

DISSertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

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To Abdulrahman T. Al-Saadoun

for his principles
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

For better or for worse, the introduction of new technology will have its impact on a society that chooses to adopt it. In the case of satellite technology, the public may utilize its services without noticing its technical existence. However, those institutions which are directly involved in utilizing this new communication technology will undoubtedly be affected. Since these institutions cannot modify the satellite technology, they must modify their existing structure and organizational operations to benefit from this new technology. On February 8, 1985, the Arab states launched their first satellite for use in regional telecommunication. Hulten (1986) reported the dramatic change in the Arab countries' usage of INTELSAT since 1969. At that time, there was no satellite usage by any single Arab country. In 1982, 4 percent of the total occasional transmissions were from Arab countries and about one-third of the total reception time was received by ground stations in the region. According to Hulten, "the Arab countries were the single
most important receiver of INTELSAT occasional television traffic" (p. 33).

The nature of satellite technology as a transmission vehicle means that the satellite's basic technical operation cannot be modified, but institutions can develop their operation to utilize satellite technology for maximum benefit. ARABSAT, the subject under investigation, is a regional satellite. Therefore, exploration of the satellite technology role on the information and television program exchange in the Arab world is a legitimate concern.

In this research endeavor, international information and television program exchanges are examined by identifying the issues that have been discussed in literature. The theoretical framework which has been applied for understanding this phenomenon is explored, and alternatives for examining the issues surrounding the phenomenon are suggested.

Global Television Program Flow

There is overwhelming evidence of the imbalance of the flow of information and television programs between developed and developing countries. Media scholars (Varis, 1974; Varis, 1984; Read, 1976; Tunstall, 1977; Lee, 1980; Pavlic & Hamelink, 1985) concluded that a
one-way flow from the metropolitan to the periphery exists.

There are two important studies that dealt with the flow of television programs conducted by Varis (1974, and a follow-up study in 1984). These studies are significant because they cover almost all geographical parts of the world and they are widely cited by different scholars, as will be seen later. The first data collection started in 1971. The study sought to gather information about 50 countries' television program schedules, the sources of their programs, and the way they purchased these programs. The major finding of the study was that one-third of total television programs in many areas of the world are imported. The leading exporting countries of television programs are the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany. Another finding was that exporting companies try to enhance the image of the producing countries in order to receive financial support. Their governments subsidize companies that export programs, especially those programs intended for developing countries. This kind of practice implicitly indicates the developed countries' intentions to dominate the developing countries' mass media outlets. In other words, this observation answers the researcher's rhetorical questions (cultural exchange or invasion?) which he used as subtitle.
The study offered the solution of coproducing programs to help correct the existing imbalance of the television program and information flow. This would essentially reduce costs and improve quality.

Varis' (1984) follow-up study 10 years later provided more detailed information about specific regions of the world and program categories. The overall findings did not exhibit a major change in the television program one-way flow. The majority of imported television program material in many regions of the world still primarily comes from the United States, followed by Western Europe. Another important finding noted that most of the imported television programs were entertainment. Entertainment programs accounted for more than 70 percent of all imported programs in Latin America, Africa, and the Arab states. The importation of entertainment programs is a prevailing phenomenon in regions of the world except Asia and the Pacific region, where children's programs surpass the entertainment programs.

An interesting trend toward regional exchanges was observed by Varis, especially among Arab countries and Latin America. For Arab states, one-third of the imported programs came from their same region, and for Latin America, the interregional exchanges accounted for 10 percent in 1983.
Varis' study also encountered some difficulty in the collection of data on a global level, as exemplified by the Arab countries. The study included eight countries out of a total of 21 independent Arab countries. These countries were Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and the People's Republic of Yemen. There was no data in Varis' 1974 study for Algeria, Syria, and Tunisia. Data for Kuwait, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia were not included in the 1984 study. Thus, only two countries, Egypt and the People's Republic of Yemen, possess a complete set of data for the studies done in 1974 and 1984. This makes drawing any generalizations about the region a very difficult task.

Khalil (1983) reported on the types of imported television programs in two Arab countries, Egypt and Iraq, based on a UNESCO 1976 finding. Egypt imported more than 40 percent of its television programs, while Iraq imported more than 46 percent. The percentages and categories of imported programs for Iraq were: 50 percent of their current affairs, 50 percent of their shows and dramatic plays, 75 percent of their educational films, and 100 percent of their series. For Egypt, 50 percent of their documentaries, 90 percent of their series, and 50 percent of their dramatic plays.

Al-Najar's (1983) study of the trend in imported television programs in the Arab world indicated that Egypt
imports 34.9 percent of its total programs, of which 6.92 percent came from Arab countries and 27.98 percent were imported from outside the Arab world. The study suggested an increase of local production in comparison to the 1976 UNESCO figures, but the majority of imported television programs still came from outside the Arab region.

All these studies provided empirical evidence of the one-way direction of the television program flow, and that the content of imported television programs are primarily entertainment.

**Satellite Technology as a New Factor in the Flow Issue**

A few studies have been conducted to determine to what extent the utilization of satellite technology will influence the pattern of information and television program flow. Howell (1986) looked at the impact of the new information technology on the world broadcasting system with attention particularly focused on satellite technology. He suggested that,

Perhaps the overriding impact of the emerging technologies of mass telecommunication will be psychological, forcing humankind to rethink many time-honored concepts like nationalism, sovereignty, patriotism, independent cultural integrity, progress, education, and transportation. (p. 4)
Hulten (1986) conducted a study similar to Varis by measuring the flow of television programs through INTELSAT. The study analyzed the pattern of television traffic and changes in the utilization of the satellite system for television between 1969 and 1982. The major fact noted in the study was the replacement of North America by Europe as the dominant region of transmission. Although the developed countries still dominated, there was an expansion in regional transmission. The tremendous increase of multipoint transmission reflects the developing countries' augmented use of the INTELSAT system. This trend in regional transmission accounted for one-third of the point-to-point transmissions of INTELSAT projected for Europe, the Arab states, and Australia.

Hulten's study sought to support its underlying assumption that the new information technology reduced the total dependency of third world countries on developed countries' media products through the international program exchange. North America now has a domestic satellite system which reduces its utilization of the INTELSAT system. Hulten stated that in Europe, "the European news exchange and program cooperation has been and continues to be a very dynamic factor with respect to use of INTELSAT." A closer look taken at the regional program exchange reveals that in Latin America, 37 percent of all transmission was within the Latin American region itself. Their
overall utilization of INTELSAT accounted for only 8 percent of all transmitted hours of occasional television in 1982. The trend is toward "Latinization" of television programs. Varis (1985) acknowledged a trend toward regional cooperation in Latin America and the Arab world which needed further inquiries.

The same trend could be found within the Arab states according to Hulten's study. More than 50 percent of all transmissions from ground stations in the region return to the same region. The Arab states accounted for about 25 percent of all participation in the system in 1982. The developing countries' increased utilization of the INTELSAT system, especially the share of multipoint transmission, can be explained by the expansion of television usage and the economics of television. A growing need to fill program schedules plus the higher cost of production resulted in the logical solution to share the costs with other organizations.

Downing (1988) conducted a similar study dealing with the economic perspective of television program exchange among Socialist countries. This study focused more on the television program exchange via the Organization of International Radio and Television (OIRT), rather than via the Intersputnik system, an international satellite organization equivalent to INTELSAT. The major finding in this study observed that the USSR dominates the program
contribution to OIRT, with an average of 31 percent, followed by the German Democratic Republic's 16 percent. Though every individual country's hourly contribution to the system was reported, information was not provided on how much each country received from the OIRT or from which country it originated. The preponderance of a sports program exchange was noted, especially in 1980 during the Moscow Olympics. A documentation of the expansion of the program exchange from 1960 to 1984 reflected an increase from 170 hours to 2,233 hours. The small amount of third world program contribution in 1984 by countries like Vietnam (16 hours) and Afghanistan (17 hours) was attributed to the poor technical quality and the nature of programs which emphasized national development and economic achievement. Eastern European television is overwhelmed by this type of programming. The imbalance of television program flow between Socialist countries and Western Europe is due to the difference in production quality and the political values of Socialist countries. Western European countries represent the programs of the Socialist countries as merely propaganda. Although specific information was not provided, the majority of OIRT television program exchange has been carried via the Intersputnik system. Economically, the Intersputnik system is considered to be very competitive in comparison to the INTELSAT system. For example, Intersputnik can
provide an earth station for $800,000, while a comparable one with INTELSAT would cost at least $1 million. A boxing match that is transmitted from Nevada to Cuba would cost $50,000 via INTELSAT, while only $4,000 via Intersputnik. Downing's study emphasized that the Intersputnik system is a competitive alternative, especially for third world countries. This is important to the countries that find themselves under the United States trade embargo, namely Cuba and Nicaragua. One of the main distinctions between Intersputnik and INTELSAT is found in their voting system. Unlike INTELSAT, which weighs the vote according to financial contribution, each member country has an equal vote in Intersputnik. Intersputnik has the potential of providing third world countries access to an international data bank. This encourages the interdependence model of third world countries' communication development.

Satellite technology provides the opportunity for the developing countries to participate in international communication instead of being solely recipients of developed countries' television material.

What Constitutes Television Program Flow

Several scholars, Eugster (1983), Read (1976), Lee (1980), and Khalil (1983), isolated some factors that influence television news and program flow, which are
primarily political, economic, and cultural. Eugster (1983) looked at the issue of television program exchange from two perspectives: needs and control. For the program exchange needs, he identified three main motivations for countries to organize program exchanges:

1. The desire to understand other people.
2. The need for program variety.
3. The desire to maintain control over the reception of foreign programs. (p. 3)

The need for program variety seems to imply a lack of local production. This makes imported foreign programs an inevitable part of television due to the need to fulfill transmission time and offer the audience desirable program alternatives. Local authorities are always concerned about the control of imported materials, regardless of the volume and destination of the television news and program flow. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the Organization of International Radio and Television (OIRT) were probably created as mechanisms to control this program exchange. Eugster stated that "the exchange of programs and news across European boarders would be impossible if members did not first assume that they have complete control over incoming programs" (p. 18). Read (1976) identified four interacting factors operative in the international marketing of television programs. The political and economical factors dominate market entry,
while social and cultural conditions determine the success of particular media products. "Each market has a distinct, indeed unique, set of political, economic, social, and cultural factors that collectively act as gatekeepers regulating its intake and acceptance of American media" (p. 20).

In his work, Read offered a very good sociopolitical background about American mass media characteristics. Localism in the U.S. intertwines with the international aspect of migration from all corners of the world.

Lee (1980) regarded television program flow as a form of media imperialism. He developed an analytical framework to better understand and define the phenomenon. In this particular analysis, television program flow is one of four components which formulate the media imperialism issue. These four aspects are:

1. Television program exportation to foreign countries.

2. Foreign ownership and control of media outlets.

3. Transfer of the metropolitan broadcasting norms and institutionalization of media commercialism at the expense of "public" interest.

4. Invasion of capitalistic world views and infringement upon the indigenous way of life in the recipient nations. (p. 68)
This analytical framework was applied to Canada and Taiwan in his case studies. However, these levels of generality were not utilized as a measure of comparison between these two countries. Four "contributing factors," geography, cultural tradition, language, and market force, were included to account for the differences between Canada and Taiwan. These four factors explained his findings more thoroughly than his analytical framework, because the regulations of the Canadian government established to control or reduce Canadian media dependency were not working.

Khalil (1983) studied the imported television program issue in the Arab world. The importation of television programs appeared to be a natural result of the importation of television hardware "because of a lack of time, money, and technical experience." The lack of organized marketing for television programs produced by Arab countries, the lack of production coordination, and the lack of long-term policy also contributed to the importation of television programs. She stated:

Besides the lack of capital and organized marketing, there are other reasons that Arab program production is handicapped. There is a lack of continuity in the sense that responsible people do not remain in their positions long enough to execute their plans or demonstrate their full capacity. (p. 207)
In addition to the technical and financial problems, political differences are considered to be a major obstacle of mass media organization cooperation.

Not only political differences between the Arab countries handicap media cooperation, but the fact that the programs are highly politically oriented is also a hindrance. Arab programs carry the political message of the party or the government, as desired by the official local authorities. (p. 209)

Varis (1974) noted that ideology does not play a major role in the selection of entertainment programs, but importing countries exercise more restrictive criteria when it comes to information programs.

**Importance of the Study**

ARABSAT as a regional cooperation project designed to serve the telecommunication needs of the Arab world is the subject of this study.

The aim of this research endeavor was to investigate ARABSAT's role and communication technology in information and program exchange in the Arab world region.

Martinez (1985) described ARABSAT "as a regional satellite system that provides telecommunications and direct broadcasting television to the countries in its coverage area" (p. 1). He further suggested that ARABSAT would reduce the technological dependency of the Arab
states: "it offers these countries access to advanced technology and reduces their perceived dependency on INTELSAT, by providing domestic and regional services" (p. 1).

In a meeting held in Acapulco, Mexico in 1982, the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC) gave priority to the regional cooperation among developing countries to facilitate the balance of information exchange and promote technical cooperation. They also promoted the institutionalization and formation of a regional information exchange system, and suggested the necessity of training people in this area (Block, 1984).

The United Nations Development Program proposed a network that would link developing nations that already possessed access to satellite, and subregional areas that had terrestrial links to a country with access to satellite transmission service (East, 1983).

These proposals indicated the importance of regional cooperation in acquiring satellite technology in order to reach a balance of information flow and reduce dependency on western media products. The United Nations' proposals are actually the essence of ARABSAT. Martinez (1985) believed that developing countries consider the acquisition of satellite technology as "leap frogs" which transfers the society into the space age from the obsolete
information and communication technologies currently in their hands.

Mowlana (1977) viewed the media dependency issue as twofold: one which deals with hardware or the "distribution of messages," and software which is the "message." For a nation to reach "absolute sovereignty," a nation should control both the hardware and software. With this definition in mind, ARABSAT is the hardware controlled by Arab countries. It is hoped that this cooperation in controlling their communication distribution vehicle will engender a similar cooperative effort with the software. At the minimum this distribution vehicle will be utilized in such a way that the software will be under control.

Raghavan (1981) emphasized the creation of regional communication networks which would in themselves act as incentives for their own utilization. He stated: "In the long run, the creation of these regional infrastructures will stimulate their own traffic to make them economical" (p. 159).

Boyd-Barrett (1982) suggested that further studies were needed on the phenomenon of the resistance of cultural dependency and ideological control through regional cooperation. This regional cooperation took the form of news agencies and the regional broadcasting unions. The question was raised as to whether this
regional cooperation would reduce dependence or merely rationalize it.

The phenomenon of imported television programs became a major concern to developing countries. They believe the volume and content of imported television material goes beyond the mutual understanding and common interest of the people's well being. The issue of media dependency and cultural invasion has been addressed by many scholars (Varis, 1974, 1984; Schiller, 1976; Read, 1976; Lee, 1980; and Hulten, 1986) who have demonstrated the overwhelming predominance of western media products on these third world countries' television screens. The authors explained the phenomenon in two ways: either it is the nature of television as a medium which demands the fulfillment of its schedule regardless of lack of indigenous television program production; or it is a conspiracy of the American government in collaboration with the third world elite to serve their interests at the expense of the people's interest. Almost all of the scholars have dealt with this issue from a macro level analysis, which overlooks the internal dynamics of specific countries and regions of the world.

The Arab world, as a sector of the third world countries, is also subjected to the domination of western television material. However, efforts to counter media dependency have received little attention, especially in
the Arab states. Some scholars (Varis, 1984; Howell, 1988) believed that satellite technology offers the opportunity for a reciprocal flow of information, at least theoretically. This makes ARABSAT, as a regional satellite, an important organization for news and television program exchange.

Statement of the Problem

The study of ARABSAT deals with two major issues working together at the same time. First there is media cooperation effort on the regional level, and the second issue concerns the role of satellite technology in news and television program exchanges in this particular region of the world. Although several studies have suggested, as noted previously, that the two issues pose a potential alternative to the existing one-way flow of information, no major scholarly work has been conducted on the regional level outside Europe.

Melnik (1981) and Eugster (1983) both concentrated on Eurovision, European Broadcasting Union (EBU), and International Radio and Television Organization (OIRT).

The Arab region is the focus of this study as part of the developing countries. ARABSAT is the satellite technology which required some institutional arrangement in order to contribute to the television news and program
exchange. This will be seen in its relation to the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU).

Historical and political-socioeconomic factors within the Arab region specifically, were developed (see Chapter II) to examine the media cooperation effort. Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia provide good examples of Arab countries. These three countries, like the rest of the Arab states, have the same religion, language, and cultural heritage. They also exhibit tremendous differences in terms of their modern independent state formation, political system, economic structure, and their relation to the Arab regional system.

However, Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia have one thing in common which distinguishes them from the other Arab countries— their relation to ARABSAT. Saudi Arabia is the host of the ARABSAT headquarters and the largest contributor to its capital. Algeria is the host of the News and Television Program Exchange Center. The center is the coordinator for all news in the television program exchange in the Arab world. Tunisia is the host of the Arab States Broadcasting Union which is responsible for all electronic media cooperation in the Arab world. In addition, Tunisia has the back-up system of ARABSAT, if something were to disrupt the main system in Saudi Arabia.

The above factors are very important in the selection of these three countries in order to understand the
satellite technology in the news and television program exchange.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to study the impact of ARABSAT on the information and television program exchange in the Arab world, and to address the following questions:

1. What is the impact of ARABSAT on television program exchange among Arab countries?
2. What is the pattern of information flow via ARABSAT in the Arab world?
3. What is the impact of various political systems on television exchange?

**Theoretical Framework**

The flow of information has become one of the most important issues of international communication studies during the last two decades. The common denominator of most all of the studies that deal with this particular issue is the domination of the "center," the western media products over the "peripheries," developing countries' mass media outlets. This manifests itself, with few exceptions, in the volume of television programs that are transmitted over the air to the indigenous people in developing countries in an imbalanced flow of information.
The underlying assumption of this phenomenon is the media imperialism or the cultural invasion of these few very powerful countries on the developing countries' media outlet. The problem with the concept of media imperialism is that it is not well defined and not methodologically well operationalized. Fejes (1981) stated:

There is the danger of media imperialism becoming a pseudo-concept—something which can be used to explain everything in general about the media in developing countries and become nothing in particular. (p. 232)

The vagueness of interpreting this imbalanced flow as a phenomenon of media imperialism makes it very hard to reach a specific framework of analysis which can be applied with a certain level of consistency that is acceptable to the social scientist community.

Boyd-Barrett looked at media imperialism in terms of international media activities in very specific manifestations of media flow imbalance. He put it this way:

1. The unidimensional nature of international media flow.

2. A very small number of source countries accounting for a substantial share of all international media influences around the world. (p. 117)

These symptoms of media imperialism are empirically documented in the work of many scholars: Varis (1974,
Hulten (1986), Read (1976), Lee (1980), and many UNESCO documentations. The most difficult problem which cannot be supported empirically is the conspiracy theory, which Schiller (1976) defined as media imperialism:

The sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressed, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and structures of the dominating center of the system. (p. 9)

Schement, Gonzalez, Lum, and Valencia (1984) summarized the international flow of television programs issue as two competing schools of thought. The free flow paradigm looks at the issue from the free marketplace of ideas. Its economic root lies within the context of the dynamics of comparative advantage, in which a given country will provide a product for less than its international competitors. This approach justifies the existing imbalance of television news and programs' one-way flow from the most advanced countries to developing countries.

The other competing paradigm is called by a variety of names, but referred to here as American hegemony. This approach attempts to explain the American media domination of developing countries in terms of the role that transnational corporations play in the process which
serves the interest of American government's economic policy.

In describing the cultural synchronization process, Hamelink (1983) stated that "the process of cultural synchronization implies that a particular type of cultural development in the metropolitan country is persuasively communicated to the receiving countries" (p. 5). Read (1976) rejected the conspiracy theory of the collaboration between the U.S. government and the private American media. He stated:

One explanation that can be dispensed with fairly quickly is the assertion that private American media fully collaborated with post-World War II U.S. government to achieve this end. While there are shreds of evidence to suggest this near-conspiracy, the great body of information supports the opposite view. (p. 7)

All the underlying assumptions of these scholars' works are concerned with the impact of media products that are being produced by cultural values that are outside the recipient's culture, or in other words, foreign to a recipient country's own value system. Schiller (1979) emphasized the role that the Multi-national Corporations (MNC) play in all aspects of developing countries' growth and the pressure brought to bear on the indigenous values to correspond to western consumerism and profit making.
However, the relationship that Schiller tried to establish between MNC and developing countries did not work every time. One example can be seen in the INTELSAT response to the demands of developing countries in 1983. INTELSAT offered inexpensive high-powered satellite service which would meet the demands and needs of developing countries. As seen from Lee's (1980) analytical framework, the issue of foreign media products causes more concern than anything else, so information flow is the core of the media dependency perspective. This is what makes it the most important aspect of looking at the media dependency and media imperialism issue. The alternative is media cooperation. As Lee stated, "there has been growing cooperation in media production and news exchange to reduce dependence on dominant cultures" (p. 187). There is an urgency to develop an alternative understanding of media dependency, or at least to analyze this issue from a different perspective.

McPhail (1987) believed that the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) represents an alternative theoretical framework. The debate deals directly with media flow and cultural sovereignty. UNESCO, in MacBride's report (1980), described the NWICO as an open-ended conceptual framework which gives us some direction in studying the underlying causes that prevent a better-balanced international communication system.
ARABSAT is important as a distribution vehicle because one of its objectives is to promote information and television program exchange among Arab countries. The goal of this regional cooperation effort is to reduce the Arab countries' existing media dependency upon the developed countries' media products. Arab states will be able to pool their resources together, giving them a more competitive position in relation to the other geopolitical regions of the world. The information flow issue will be examined at the regional level. Attention will be focused on the Arab region and its internal dynamics which influence the media policy of the local authorities.

Methodology and Data Collection

This study's main focus is the utilization of ARABSAT in the news and television program exchange in the Arab world. The subject under investigation involves two components. One, the news and television program exchange between Arab states which was obtained from Arab States Broadcasting Union headquarters in Tunisia. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV. The second component is the media cooperation effort in the Arab world and the factors that influence media cooperation in general, and news and television programs in particular.

Three Arab countries (Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia) were selected for examination of the internal
dynamics influence on their media cooperation policies. The following data sources were utilized for the second component: unpublished documents, personal interviews with media officials, and library materials. The unpublished documents primarily, the media organization meetings and discussion of the television exchange programs, arrangements, and procedures. These meetings represent the Arab collective approach toward the television news and program exchange.

These meetings and position papers sponsored by ASBU were obtained from the ASBU headquarters in Tunis. The library materials primarily consisted of periodicals and journals which contained information about media policy in the Arab world. These journals were obtained from Gulfvision headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, ASBU headquarters in Tunis, and Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) in Tunis.

Personal interviews were conducted with several media officials in various media organizations: Faysal Zidan, Deputy Minister of Telegraph, Postal, and Telephone in Saudi Arabia and Chairman of ARABSAT Board of Directors; Abdulgader Al-Bayeary, General Director of ARABSAT; Jaser Al-Jaser, Satellite and News Exchange in Saudi television; Salem Al-Fahad, the Assistant Undersecretary for Television Affairs in Kuwait; Rawf Al-Basti, General Secretariat of Arab States Broadcasting Union, Mohammed
Bozaidee, the Television Program Director in Tunisian; Elias Belarabi, Deputy General Director of Algerian Television.

Data were obtained on a trip to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tunisia, and Algeria from November 1988 to February 1989. Visits were made to ARABSAT headquarters and Gulfvision headquarters in Riyadh, the Saudi Arabian television establishment, the Kuwait television establishment, ASBU headquarters and ALECSO headquarters in Tunis, the Tunisian television establishment, the Algerian television establishment, and the News and Television Program Exchange Center in Algeria, which is part of ASBU.
CHAPTER II
MEDIA COOPERATION ENVIRONMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD

Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to understand some factors that influence media cooperation efforts in the Arab world. These factors will be identified within the historical, political-socioeconomic development of the area. Then three Arab countries—Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia—will be examined in light of the influence these factors have on their media cooperation policies in general, with particular emphasis focused on the news and television program exchanges.

State Formation in the Arab World

The emergence of independent states suggests an inherited structural problem when considering the cooperation efforts in the Arab world. A shared language, religion, and culture appear to be a sufficient departure point for the successful implementation of a cooperation effort. When it comes to practical experience, however, one encounters a different story. Kandil (1988), an Arab media expert and the former Director of the Division of
Free Flow of Information and Communication policies at UNESCO, stated that,

Arab communication was exposed by ARABSAT; it became evident that the media are not adequately prepared for it, not only in terms of planning and organizational structure, but also in terms of practical arrangement, appropriate equipment, specialized training, regulations and legislation relating to software. (p. 60)

The question arises as to why ARABSAT is facing all these problems. The Arab satellite idea is more than 20 years old, and nine years elapsed between the establishment of the Arab Satellite Communication Organization (ARABSAT) and the launching of the satellite into orbit. A look at the historical roots of the formation of Arab modern independent states may provide some explanation of the discrepancies between public discourse and practice. A turning point in Arab history which might have contributed to the existing gap between cooperation theory and practice is the fall of the Abbasid dynasty in 1258. In the mid-thirteenth century, the Mongolians occupied Baghdad, the capital of the Islamic state. This marked the end of the Arab-Islamic central authority and the beginning of a period of separatism and small central authorities (Tarbien, 1987; Ibrahim, 1988). Another historical fact which had tremendous impact on the shaping
of the Arab common experience is that most of the Arab countries had been, at one time or another in the period from 1517-1918, part of the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of Morocco and southern Arabia (Vatikiotis, 1971; Amain, 1978; Ibrahim, 1988). The transfer of the Arab-Islamic central authority to the outsider "Ottoman Empire" and the change in the trade routes when new routes opened to India around the African continent isolated the Arab world from the rest of the world's socioeconomic technological development.

Ibrahim (1988) pointed out that the Arab world was under Ottoman rule while Western Europe was reconstructing its institutions during the industrial revolution. This created an international super power, or an "international system." During this same period, the Arab world perpetuated a traditional relationship between society and political authorities. Although attempts were made to break these traditional relationships, none lead to an evolution of the existing institutions. "Nothing new evolved during this period, even though one would assume that some change would have taken place within the Arab society" (p. 108).

Hegemonic contact with Western Europe was another factor that had an impact on the shaping of the Arab world's polity, especially in the nineteenth century. Hudson (1977) put it this way:
For ten centuries the Islamic world and the West grappled, each threatening the territory and values of the other, until by the nineteenth century, Europe's power prevailed and much of the Middle East fell under its control. (p. 108)

Western European influence brought the Arab world into the capitalist system, as Amain (1978) viewed the process of colonialism:

> With the rise of imperialism at the end of the century (the nineteenth century) the whole Arab world was definitely brought into the capitalist system as a dominated periphery. (p. 24)

It also brought the introduction of the nation-state concept, which was foreign to Arab political culture. Kornay (1987) described the contradiction between the Arab political culture values and the imported nation-state concept:

> A contradiction existed between the indigenous grassroots political culture (which is either pan or particularistic-ethnic) and the imported elite political culture which emphasized the nation-state as the frame of reference. (p. 49).

Harik (1987) explained the process in which the nation-state started to emerge in the Arab world:

> The colonial powers inadvertently contributed to the emergence of the nationalism of the state system by
introducing a centralized system of administration in most of the countries under their control. The central administration, colonial or native, became the focus of political orientation and action by the emerging modern groups and classes, and contributed to the inception of a sense of identification with the state. (p. 39)

Hence, separatism without a clear definition of the state and its relation to the whole (one Arab nation), in addition to the oppression of the evolution of institutions within each individual state, contributed to Arab governments' seemingly contradictory public discourse. Each Arab government pursued its own interests while its public discourse emphasis was pan-Arab or pan-Islamic, these two paths of conduct not necessarily being identical.

**States' Policies Versus Arab Nationalism**

The organizational framework of Arab cooperation is the League of Arab States, which was established in 1945 as a compromise between two competing phenomena. One was Arab nationalism and its aspiration for Arab unity. The second phenomenon was that the Arab League contained 21 independent sovereign states who emphasized their national sovereignty. Matter and Helall (1980) emphasized that the concept of the Arab League by itself represents an Arab
national approach to interstate relations, even though the League's charter respects state national sovereignty. Salame (1988) described the contradiction between the concept of sovereign states and Arab nationalism (one nation) as part of the Arab culture as a whole and the way the Arab governments reconcile these two contradictory concepts:

Arab nationalism was clearly based on the utopian idea of a single Arab state, while the League is the embodiment of another cultural tradition, that of a grouping of mutually independent sovereign states. (p. 256)

This contradiction is reflected in the Arab cooperation effort, in spite of the cooperation and institutionalization of Arab League special agencies.

Perry (1984) stated:

The most important explanation is that the popular appeal of Arab Nationalism compels Arab rulers to pay lip service to cooperative schemes while their rivalries and some practical difficulties militate against the implementation of joint endeavors. (p. 348)

The Arab political dilemma resides in the discrepancy between what has been said and what is being done. Ibrahim (1982) pointed out this dilemma:
The Arab political systems, whatever differences they might have, all consider themselves as part of one Arab Nation, and there is no single Arab political system among those 20 independent states that dares to claim otherwise, at least publicly, despite their behavior which contradicts the essence of Arab unity. (p. 197)

There is no single explanation for the existing contradictory situation which manifests itself in all special agencies of the Arab league schemes. Helall (1983) and Abdulmmonem (1986) looked at localism vs. nationalism in the Arab world. The localism approach satisfied some local governments' needs of statehood and functions. Helall (1983) identified some of these factors:

1. The ruling elite's love of authority and the opportunity to exercise the independent state's function.
2. The rich countries' unwillingness to share their wealth with less fortunate countries.
3. The competition among the ruling elite for more influence in the region.
4. The foreign power intervention during the colonialism period and their creation of potential conflict. (p. 100)
The levels of political, economic, and social development led Vatikiotis (1971) and Perry (1984) to suggest the nonexistence of an Arab cooperation framework. Vatikiotis pointed out that "a presumed solidarity between all Arabs stifled policy-making over the past twenty-five years" (p. 89).

The media cooperation sections are subject to the overall political orientation of the Arab governments. Saab (1981), the Dean of Communication School at the University of Lebanon, described Arab media cooperation policy:

Since the establishment of the Arab League, the pursuit of the state policy of separatism rather than a unified Arab approach . . . with the overemphasis on separatism media policy, would necessitate that any Arab media cooperation scheme would be a blueprint project. (p. 2)

Even with careful media project planning, local "state" and the Arab rationalism concept still represent a major constraint on the implementation and performance of a particular project.

Labeab (1988), an Arab media expert, suggested that in order to evaluate ARABSAT performance, one should look at the timing of the ARABSAT project. The idea was conceived in the 1960s when the Arab nationalism ideology was dominant in the Arab world and the liberation
movements were very active. The implementation of the project began in the mid-1980s when "the Arab ambitions, dreams and nationalism were at their lowest point" (23).

This individual Arab state approach toward Arab nationalism or "pan-Arabism" is a very important factor in the successful implementation of any cooperation effort. It is especially significant when it comes to television broadcasting, which represents the local governments' official views on any given subject, since these governments own and operate their local media outlet.

**Arab Ethnic Groups and Religious Minorities**

The Arab world, in general, is a homogenous society. The majority of the Arab people share the Arabic language, practice the same religion (Islam), and share a common heritage. However, like any other large society, ethnic and religious minorities do exist. Arab governments regard minorities as a very sensitive issue and tend to ignore it in media policy, at least publicly.

According to Ibrahim (1988), more than 88 percent of the Arab world population considers the Arabic language their first language and accordingly, the Arabic culture as their culture. Arabic is not the first language for 11.6 percent of the Arab world population, even if they speak Arabic or at least know it. Ninety-two percent are
followers of the Islamic faith. Christians account for 5 percent, Jews account for 1.9 percent, and other Black-African religions in southern Sudan account for 2 percent of the total Arab population. Within Islam itself, there are two main sects. The majority, which is the Sunite, accounts for 84 percent of the total Arab population. The other major sect is the Shiite, which accounts for 8 percent of the total population of the Arab world.

Even though these minorities are concentrated in some parts of the Arab world (the Kurds in northern Iraq, the non-Arab population in southern Sudan, the Berber in Algeria, and various sectarian groups in Lebanon), the presence of minorities is not the greatest obstacle facing Arab unity, at least not to the extent that Perry (1984) suggested:

The non-Arab tends to oppose any union in which their importance would be reduced. This is a factor which, in particular, has inhibited Iraqi and Sudanese aspirations for unity with other Arab states. (p. 332)

As mentioned earlier, the minorities issue is very sensitive in the Arab world. With the authoritarian governments, the majority does not enjoy freedom of expression or any substantial political participation. Economic problems and social injustice sometimes take the shape of religious or sectarian wars, such as the one in
Lebanon since 1975. Hudson (1977) looked at the minorities case in Iraq and Sudan this way:

The political leadership in Sudan and Iraq looked upon their Black and Kurdish minorities respectively, as subverters of civil order and tools of foreign powers, and not without reason . . . on the other hand, the minority leaders regarded the central government as intolerant and repressive, again not without reason. (p. 57)

The minorities issue directly or indirectly influences media policy and sometimes may influence selecting a particular news item or television program over another.

Al-Alkim (1990) reported that the Arabian Gulf States (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait) took some preventive measures against the Iranian declaration of exporting their Islamic revolution to the Gulf States. One of these measures was a collective media policy for handling the Iranian news. The Gulf Information Ministers, in their meeting in Riyadh in December 1979, agreed to counter an Iranian-Islamic revolution by:

1. Reducing the importance of Iranian news.
2. Reducing the importance of the Iranian revolution, from an Islamic revolution to a Shia revolution, in order to profit from the sectarian differences.
3. To reduce the importance of the Iranian revolution not only as a Shia revolution, but as Persian Shia, in order to isolate it from Arab Shia in the Gulf States. (pp. 9-10)

The minorities issue in the Arab world is very complicated and very sensitive, and cannot be ignored as a factor in the media cooperation scheme.

**The Structure of Economic Diversity**

Arab people by and large speak the same language, share the same religion, and share the same culture. Notwithstanding these important commonalities, there are some fundamental differences in terms of the economic structure of Arab countries, which project themselves in their institutional evolution such as broadcasting. Consequently, cooperation in mass media has been a more difficult task than the Arab governments might like to admit.

There are only a few studies that deal with comparative Arab economies, because most studies deal with an individual state or compare special aspects of the economy (Stephens, 1971; Drysdale & Blake, 1985). Al-Hamssy (1980) dealt with economic planning in the Arab world and the trend of their integration or disintegration. Shogair (1986) dealt with the Arab unity experience and, to a lesser extent, Drysdale and Blake (1985) discussed some
economic integration aspects. Ibrahim (1988) divided Arab states into two economic camps. The first consisted of the rich oil-producing countries which witnessed economic growth, largely driven by conspicuous consumption and infrastructure building, with limited effort devoted towards revenue diversification. On the other hand, the Arab poor countries did not develop their existing economic resources. They neither increased their productivity nor diversified their economic base. Instead, "they financed expenditure by borrowing from foreign sources, accumulating more than $100 billion in debts by the mid-1980s" (p. 336). This division between the rich and the poor Arab countries provides a general picture of the economic differences in the Arab world.

Abdel-Fudil (1988) developed a model for the formation of socioeconomic structure in the Arab world. The primary categories of the model are as follows:

1. State capitalism. The state owns the means of production and controls the distribution of surplus-value. Within this category there are two distinctive groups. One is the oil-producing countries (Algeria and Iraq), and the other group is Syria and Egypt under Nasser's rule (1955-1972).

2. Countries under liberal capitalism. Their economies are similar to capitalist economies,
with one fundamental difference. The economic base of those countries is trade-services and real estate commissions, rather than a productive economy base. There are two different economic activities under this category: 1) countries which play the role of capital transfer between the world's capital and the Arab world in terms of money and trade transfer, like Lebanon and Bahrain, and 2) countries which reflect the capitalist system like Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt (1977-1985), and Jordan.

3. Tribe-Rentier state. Under this category of socioeconomic structure are Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf states. These societies' economies depend almost totally on oil revenue, and the state plays the role of money distributor. In this case, the dominant relation in these societies are traditional tribalism relations, rather than relations based on a process of economic production. As a byproduct of this peculiar situation a new mercantile sector emerged. This new mercantile sector functioned as a liaison with world capitals as agents of foreign products and goods, while also dealing with trade, real estate, subcontraction, and commissions.
4. Tribalism-pastoralism. This category easily applies to the Arab Yemen Republic [North Yemen before its reunification with South Yemen] whose precapitalism notions still exist, and where tribalism relations are still dominant. However, with Yemeni working in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, many transfers created secondary rentier economic relations, while in Sudan, nomadic-pastoralism relations are still dominant.

Libya represents a special case in the Arab world, because all four categories are present in Libyan society. There is state capitalism because the government manages the economy. The tribalism-nomadic pastoralism exists with its precapitalism relations, and the aspect of the rentier economy, is evident in their dependence on oil revenues.

The structural differences in the economic systems of the Arab world are an important and influential aspect in the overall political orientation of any given Arab country, and consequently, its media policy.

**Economic Cooperation**

Another aspect of the Arab cooperation effort can be seen in the economic sphere, which also provides an example of how the Arab decision-makers conduct and implement their policies.
Economic cooperation between the Arab states dates back to 1950. The Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty Between Members of the Arab League was signed five years after the establishment of the League of Arab States in 1945. Zelzalh (1983) pointed out that the connection of defense and economics in one treaty is a reaction to the Arab defeat in Palestine in 1948. By creating this treaty, the Arab states avoided an amendment to the Arab League Charter (p. 215). Out of this treaty, a Council For Arab Economic was formed to deal with economic situations. The Economic Council established several agreements between the Arab states, such as the Convention for Facilitating Trade Exchange and the Regulation of Transit Trade in 1953, and the Convention for the Settlement of Payments of Current Transactions and the Movement of Capital in 1956. The Political Committee of the Arab League formulated an expertise committee to prepare a project for the Economic Unity Agreement. The Economic Council agreed to the proposal of the Economic Unity Agreement and five Arab countries (Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Kuwait, and Jordan) signed this agreement in 1962. However, they did not ratify the agreement until 1964 (Perry, 1984, p. 339).

Zelzalh (1983) and Shogair (1986) used indicators in the relationship between Arab politics and their economic cooperation practices. Zelzalh (1983) examined certain
indicators to determine the level of seriousness on the part of the Arab governments toward the performance and accomplishment of these committees and agreements. By using the Economic Council as an example, he found:

1. Fourteen percent of the proposals and projects were submitted by Arab governments in comparison to the initiative taken by the General Secretariat of the Council, whose proposals exceeded 65 percent. Within a five-year period during the 1970s, 175 proposals were initiated by the General Secretariat of the Council, whereas only 15 proposals were submitted by the governments.

2. The reservations that the Arab governments projected toward some resolutions disclosed another indication of their attitude. Out of 904 resolutions, some governments indicated reservation toward 162 of them.

3. Ratification of the agreements: Five percent of the governments ratified the facilitation of trade exchange agreements, 15 percent agreed to the customs duties exemption agreement, and 60 percent of the Arab governments ratified the transit trade agreement. Another indication of their seriousness is the reluctance of the Arab governments to implement these agreements. Eight years elapsed
before the Economic Unity Agreement was implemented.

4. Although the Economic Ministers are supposed to represent their governments in the Council sessions, the actual level of authority represented is low. While the Deputy Minister or the permanent representative of the Arab League supposedly represent their governments, they do not have the same authority to conduct national policy (pp. 254-256).

The utilization of statistics may be not the best method to ascertain the level of Arab governments' commitment to economic cooperation, but at least it provides some indication of their seriousness.

Shogair (1986) pointed out the impact of political conflict on economic cooperation. He referred specifically to the Arab Economic Council meeting in January 1969, when the representatives had heated discussions and the President of the Council changed the open session discussion to a closed one, in order to avoid embarrassment. Libya did not attend the 1970s meeting and the reason given stated that the council meeting did not have any value and was a waste of time and resources. In this particular meeting, a handful of Arab Ministers condemned the reluctance to implement the resolutions that were made
in previous meetings and the delay in executing some projects for more than 15 years (p. 865).

Al-Hamssy (1980) pointed out the obstacles that prevent Arab economic cooperation: 1) the lack of political priority on the part of the Arab governments for economic integration, and 2) the absence of complete strategies for economic integration and the means by which these strategies may be implemented. He further stated:

There is a complete disparity between what Arab states ought to be implementing collectively and what every country is really executing in terms of this economic development. Thus these factors are very important when looking at media cooperation policies in the Arab world. (pp. 77-78)

**Tunisia**

Tunisia is the most integrated society in the Arab world, at least in the Arab-Maghrib, which includes Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, and recently, Libya and Mauritania. The country has witnessed a stable central authority (Al Makhzen) since the sixteenth century. "Even the most serious rebellion against the central authority in 1864 was only a reaction against what was considered to be an unfair increase in taxes and did not question the central authority itself" (Al-Hermassi, 1987, p. 31). This process of integration and harmony, due to
the central authority's stability, created a very strong sense of nation-hold among its people which has a strong impact on the modern Tunisian society. In addition, the sense of political organization goes back to the mid-nineteenth century, when a social contract between the king and the people was introduced. "On September 10th, 1857, the king publicly announced the trust-accord or the fundamental law between him and the people which he promised to follow or otherwise he would lose his legitimacy" (Awdah, 1978, p. 24).

The common law was systematized in 1861, and was introduced as the "constitution." According to Ziadeh, it "is the first constitution for an Ottoman territory" (cited in Hudson, 1977, p. 379). At this stage of political development, Tunisia became France's protectorate in 1881, which ended the natural evolution of the society until modern times.

Al Hermassi (1987) theorized that the interruption of the potential development of the governing institutions by the colonial power helped the creation of the authoritarian regime in the third world. The existing governments inherited the colonial government apparatus, but the authoritative mentality grew in the absence of public control. The continuity of the Western world and the discontinuity found in the third world government-people
interaction is what distinguishes them from each other. Tunisia is no exception.

One of its national movement leaders, Abd al-Aziz Al-Thaalibi, anonymously published a book (La Tunisic Martyre), asking for reform and the establishment of a constitution and elections (Awdah, 1978). Al-Thaalibi, who is of Islamic background, was one of the Destour Party founders in the early 1920s. Due to internal conflict among its leaders toward France's policy in 1934, Bourguiba restructured the New Destour Party and assumed the leadership of the National Independence Movement.

During the Tunisian struggle for independence against France, Bourguiba emerged as the sole leader of the National Movement, and Tunisia gained its independence in 1956. Bourguiba's French education had a tremendous impact on the way he perceived the development of his country, the domination of the New Destour Party, and all the aspects of Tunisian life. Secularism, rationalism, and the building of institutions were the goals of the Tunisian leadership after their independence.

The political leadership in Tunisia, mainly Bourguiba, did not base its legitimacy in Arabian or Islamic values like all other Arab states. Hudson (1978) pointed out how Bourguiba promoted the secular characteristics of Tunisia.
He promulgated a secular personal status legal code in 1956. He gave voting rights to women in 1957. He reformed the prestigious Islamic Zaytona University and the system of religious endowments in 1959. In 1961, he tried, but failed, to convert the month of religious fasting (Ramadan) into a period of mobilization for social development. Apart from Turkey under Ataturk, no contemporary Middle Eastern regime had challenged Islam's influence in social and political affairs as directly as Tunisia under Bourguiba. Not even the political systems that are otherwise considered quite secularized as in Egypt, or Marxist as in the PDRY (The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen), or Radical-Nationalist as in Syria and Iraq have matched Bourguiba in the effort to minimize religion. (p. 380)

However, it should be understood that Islamic religion has never been completely eliminated from the Tunisian political formula. The Islamic Fundamentalist Movement has played a major role as an opposition group in the shaping of Tunisian politics, both during and after Bourguiba. In November 1987, a reformist group from the Destour Party assumed power, led by the Interior Minister.

Secular Versus Traditionalist

Long before its independence, Tunisia witnessed a split between the religious group and the people who had a
secular orientation. Even within the Destour Party, which has been the ruling party since Tunisia's independence, there has been internal conflict. This internal conflict resulted in Bourguiba assuming the party leadership and changing the name from the Destour Party to the New Destour Party. Thus, the two competing socioeconomic-political thoughts materialized in different forms: political parties, labor unions, student organizations, and the Islamic Fundamentalist Movement.

Al Hermassi (1987) divided the political orientation of the Tunisian society into two main groups. First there was the secular orientation group, which can be divided into two subgroups:

1. One group believes in a secular society, with an emphasis on industrial development, democratization of institutions, political pluralism, and a market-oriented economy. This group might be called "the liberals."

2. The other secular group, while they agree in principle with the first group, differs in their emphasis on a centralized economy with government intervention and planning. They are what might be called "the socialist-oriented group."

The second main group consisted of the Islamic Fundamentalists, who emphasized Islamic values and laws as the basic approach to all society's problems. This group
leans toward the Arabic-Islamic culture in general. "The most important thing is that all these different groups, no matter their political or intellectual differences, prove that they are able to live in quiet harmony with the recognition that the country's well being is the ultimate objective" (Al Hermassi, 1987, p. 113).

Cooperation Orientation

Throughout history, the Maghrib region has had its own distinctive characteristic and has never been fully integrated to the Arab East, "Mashriq," at least in the political sense. This is before the Arab League headquarters was moved from Cairo to Tunisia after the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979. This distinctive characteristic could be partially explained by the long colonization period. The Maghrib was subjected to a settlement form of colonization which attempted to integrate the society with the colonial power. The geographical location could be an additional factor, since the Maghrib is closer to Europe than the Mashriq. A third reason for the distinctiveness may be the local economic, political, and social factors. Al Hermassi (1987) emphasized the basic differences in the way these societies look at the existing states:

There is nothing unusual in the fact that the state in the Maghrib has a different status from that in the Mashriq. In the Mashriq the state is considered
to be an artificial entity created by a colonial power that stands as an obstacle against Pan-Arab Nationalism. In the Maghrib, the state is an accomplishment of generations of struggle against foreign powers and a reflection of people's aspirations" (p. 38).

This distinctive characteristic made these states, "mainly Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, and only recently Libya and Mauritania, enter the picture in the Greater Arab Maghrib unification schema" closer to each other in terms of cooperation and integration, and even competition. There are various interpretations of the Maghrib unions and mergers. Some believe they are made in order to pursue Arab and Maghrib unity. Deeb (1989) believed the unions and mergers stemmed from rivalry relations and power balances that attempted to keep each small state, Tunisia and Libya, away from the pressure of the two larger states, Algeria and Morocco. "Contrary to accepted wisdom, union and mergers in the Maghrib are viewed here as nothing more or less than political alliances or bloc formations" (p. 21). The Maghrib states, to some extent, have their own historical development which influences their ability and willingness to cooperate.

Tunisia's Three-Year Economic Development Plan (1962-1964) did not indicate any intention to cooperate with Arab states' economic project, although it should
have been concerned with the aspects of economic cooperation. The introduction of the development plan clearly stated that "we [Tunisia] belong to Africa first and the Mediterranean second. These factors should be considered so that our economic planning is effective and practical" (cited in Al-Hamssy, 1980, p. 131).

In the second Four-Year Economic Development Plan (1964-1968), the Tunisian government reevaluated its orientation and emphasized the Maghrib economic integration with the Arab-Mashriq states and its intention to increase trade exchanges. The tone of Maghrib unity is also present: "Today we find that the strongest economies belong to the largest nations and the partition of the Great Maghrib is a great mistake" (cited in Al Hamssy, 1980, p. 123).

This is an Arab country that not only has a problem with its cooperative effort orientation, but also with economic planning itself. Because its economic plans were not based on long-term objectives, the first Three-Year Plan, which began as a liberal economy, was switched by the government to a socialism-oriented economy. During the second Economic Development Plan, the government returned to a more liberal economy orientation. These changes make economic cooperation with the Maghrib countries in particular, and Mashriq in general, more like wishful thinking rather than reality.
Mass Media Policy Implication

The mass media cooperation effort reflects the same pattern as found in the general political and economic spheres. Mass media cooperation was given priority by the Maghrib states (Algeria, Morocco, and Libya). According to Al-Najar (1984), the bilateral cooperation agreements between the Maghrib countries began in 1963 between Tunisia and Algeria, and Tunisia and Morocco in 1964. The idea of Maghribvision originated in 1966 on the occasion of the inauguration of Tunisian television on May 31, 1966. On this date, the radio and television directors of Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Libya met and discussed the possibility of encouraging cooperation in broadcasting. From this meeting, a joint communique was issued that emphasized the necessity of cooperative efforts to enable Maghrib television to play a major role in the Greater Maghrib Cooperation.

Furthermore, the Director General of Tunisia, who later became Prime Minister of Tunisia, stated, "I'm sure that we are able to achieve Maghrib television unity" (cited in Al Najar, 1984, p. 50). The trend toward Maghrib subregional cooperation within the Maghrib region later became the Arab cooperation effort through Arabvision, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The mass media in Tunisia reflected to some extent the liberalism of the ruling Destour Party's policies.
According to Arab standards, it also reflected the economic situation of a medium-sized country, as it only had a population of about seven million. As Browne (1982) pointed out, "yet this moderate-sized nation has won a considerable reputation for its resourceful approach to national development--an approach in which broadcasting plays an important, if not necessarily, a constant role" (p. 217).

Television and radio were owned and operated by the government, but due to limited economic resources, an annual license fee was imposed first on the owners of radio sets, and later on the television owner. These fees were necessary even though the annual income per capita was only $1,270 in comparison to neighboring Libya, which is $8,520, and Algeria, which is $2,410 (Ibrahim, 1988, p. 212). In September 1959, a law was established to allow the General Directorate of Radio and Television to collect these fees without specifying the main purpose for collection. Another similar law was established in February 1966. Three months later, with the inauguration of television, the Postal Service was mandated to collect the license fee, which was 2 dinar for radio and 5 dinar for television. The dinar was equivalent to one American dollar in 1989. In December 1979, a new law mandated that the fees would be added to the electricity bill. By the end of 1980, 2,200,000 dinar were collected (Elsbouy,
Elkhrobi, & Benmabrouk, 1981). These laws reveal the desperate effort of the Tunisian government to generate income for the radio and television budget.

The political domination of the Destourian Party is evident when reviewing the 1987 television program schedule. A five-minute daily program, called "The President's Directions," featured some of President Bourguiba's speeches—as mentioned earlier, he is now out of power. Browne (1982) pointed out that it was the opinion of Bourguiba that the majority of Tunisian citizens lacked "political awareness."

In the early years of television programming, there was an attempt to utilize television for national development by producing specific programs for family planning and adult education. But these efforts were not very successful, due to financial and administrative problems (Browne, 1982). In Tunisian television, as in any other, entertainment programs dominate the transmission time. In a team study about the Arab programming trend, headed by Al-Najar (1983), entertainment programs accounted for 48-59 percent, in comparison with educational programs, which accounted for 2.55 percent, and cultural programs, which accounted for 8.79 percent.

Although Al-Najar's television program study was based on a two-week period, a problem existed with Tunisian television scheduling in terms of program
regularity. In a study of the circumstances of television program production (Elsbouy, Elkhrobi, & Benmabrouk, 1981), out of seven cultural programs scheduled for January 1981, all of them were thirty minutes, except one, which was a forty-five minute episode. Four programs were shown every other week, two programs were scheduled once each month, and only one was a weekly program. This may indicate the lack of cultural material. To avoid material scarcity, the program producers used this kind of scheduling regardless of the audience's ability to remember the program. The same pattern could be seen with children's programs.

Regardless of Bourguiba's secular attitude, religious programs accounted for 5.43 percent of the programming according to Al-Najar's study. During 1987, while Bourguiba was still in power, religious programs aired during the holy month, "Ramadan," such as "Ramadan Quiz Show," "Ramadan in the Arab World," "Islam Enlightenment," and "Ramadan from Everywhere" are evidence that the programs were geared toward this special month in the Islamic faith. These examples are worth mentioning, because in the early days of his presidency, President Bourguiba called for abolishing the fasting month. Apparently no one in Tunisia listened to him.

After Bourguiba was thrown out of power on November 7, 1987, television transmission was increased on Friday
in order to telecast Friday's prayer. It even went one step further. Not only did they obtain Friday's prayer from the Saudi Arabian Information Center in Tunisia, but Saudi Arabian television telecast the Friday prayer live from the Grand Mosque in Makkah. Since the Saudi Information Center carried the Saudi television program live, "the Saudi Information Center had an arrangement with Tunisian television to tape the prayer so they could recast it from Makkah, the holiest place in the Islamic world" (Hamdi, personal communication, January 23, 1989). This kind of arrangement reflected a new approach in the new Tunisian leadership. In an interview with the General Secretary of the Destour Party, Abdulrahman Al Zawary, he stated that "among the options and orientations of the new leadership are the affirmation of Tunisian Arabic culture, the commitment to Islam and the Arabic language" (Al Majalah, 1988, p. 25)

Although the Tunisian government has tried to maintain a pluralistic society image that emphasizes a democratic approach toward cultural and political activities with the highly politicized elite, financial problems are the most difficult obstacle that faces television. Al Bozeadee, the Television Program Director, stated:

Tunisian television cannot produce a lot of programs, especially those that involve drama production which are associated with large amounts of capital
spending. This forces us to depend on Egyptian production. Money is a very important factor in the case of Tunisian television. When we started television broadcasting in 1966, this building was supposed to be temporary, but we are still here. It wasn't designed for "real" television production. One would ask, why don't we have more cultural and variety programs. This actually depends on the cultural environment. If, for example, a song is of low quality, how could television make it better? If there are no cultural events, is it the responsibility of television to create a cultural festival when we barely maintain our regular scheduling time? (Al Bozeadee, personal communication, January 25, 1989)

In order to solve the financial difficulty, television started airing commercials in the beginning of 1988. According to Al Bozeadee, "all the commercials are Tunisian productions, but we are still in the experimental stage and we don't know how it will turn out" (Al Bozeadee, personal communication, January 25, 1989).

Through following the development of television in Tunisia, one may conclude that television is a mirror of Tunisian society's openness to discuss the issues that they are facing and to try to look at them pragmatically.
Algeria

Although Algeria exhibits the same attributes as other Maghrib states which are based in the Arab-Islamic culture, in general, Algeria had a unique experience with foreign intervention that differs from the rest of the Arab world. As Hudson (1977) pointed out, "the French occupation of Algeria was far more disruptive of society and culture than any other colonial enterprise in the Arab world" (p. 365). Before looking at the French destruction of the Algerian society, it is important to examine the society in the precolonial period.

Al Hermassi (1987) explained why the Algerian society is less coherent than other Maghrib countries. He stated that "it is clear that the Ottoman Empire ruled Algeria without trying to integrate it into their empire, and their relation with the population was a beneficiary one. There was no attempt at political unification and this sort of rule explains the enormous autonomous or semi-autonomous entities in Algeria" (p. 24). The Turkish authority was nominal, even though it lasted for three centuries (1516-1830). The autonomous or semiautonomous entities are the basic sociopolitical and economic units in Algerian society. Information gathered by the French historian, Louis Ring, indicates that precolonial Algeria was divided into four types of sociopolitical units. The Makhzen, which was equivalent to the central authority,
was composed of 126 tribes, in addition to 104 "subject" tribes under their rule. These two types of tribes controlled 16 percent of the territory, with 86 semi-independent tribes controlling 15 percent of the territory, and 200 independent tribes controlling 69 percent of the territory (Bennoune, 1988).

The distinction between these tribes was due to the ability of the central authority to collect taxes. So even though these tribes appeared to be segmentary in nature, they had developed a social and economic network through a market exchange of their surplus. The geographical characteristics of Algeria played a major role in its societal segmentation. The central authority always settled in the coastal and fertile areas to the north because the mountainous areas were difficult to penetrate.

The French military occupation of Algeria started in 1930. According to Lassassi (1988), it took the French 21 days to control the coastal areas which were under Turkish authority and "it cost the French army more than 70 years of warfare before they could conquer Algeria" (p. 47). The French colonization of Algeria differs from any other in the Arab world because the goal of the colonization was to make Algeria part of France. "The 1848 constitution declared Algeria to be an integral part of the French territory" (Lazreg, 1976, p. 40). In order to make Algeria part of France, the French colonial power tried to
destroy whatever indigenous economic base existed by confiscating land. They attempted to destroy the national character by forcing people to substitute the French language for Arabic and they declared French the official language of Algeria.

The Emergence of National Entity

However contradictory it might appear, the destruction of the Algerian societal structure, a predominantly tribal society, paved the way for national aspiration. First, France was faced with a resistance led by a religious leader named Emir Abdelkader. According to Lassassi, Abdelkader organized tribes in western Algeria and forced the French to deal with him. Abdelkader launched a holy war in 1939 against France which lasted for approximately eight years, until he was forced to surrender. Abdelkader is described by Al Hermassi (1987) as "the first one who introduced the standard of establishing national unity, despite his short period of experience" (p. 30). The standard is the Arab Islamic symbolism of colonial resistance. "He [Abdelkader] became a symbol of the Arab-Islamic refusal to submit" (Hudson, 1976, p. 371).

Arab-Islamic cultural identity played a major role in the struggle against the French colony and is still an integral part of the political legitimacy formula in postindependent Algeria. Hudson (1976) and Lassassi
(1988) pointed out the different political groups that eventually led to the independence of Algeria from the French occupation. These political organizations are identified with different orientations. The political movement known as Etoile Nord Africinie was founded in 1924 and believed in using any means to free Algeria from France, including armed struggle. Their group was led by Messali Hajj. Hajj was originally communist, but he later rejected communism and based his ideology in the Arab-Islamic culture. His organization drew support from the urban-working class. This political movement went through different structural changes throughout its existence before the liberation war of 1954.

The second political group was the Democratic Union for the Algerian Manifesto, founded in 1927. This was a secular-Muslim group that promoted the assimilation with France, while demanding equal rights for Muslims. The leader of this group was Farhat Abhas, and the organizational base of this group consisted of middle-class Muslims with a French education.

The third political group was the Association of Ulama, a religious movement founded in 1931. They believed the independence of Algeria could be achieved peacefully through teaching the Arabic language and Islamic religion. They maintained that if the people remained committed to their Arab-Islamic culture and
rejected Western influence it would lead to the eventual withdrawal of the French. The leader of this group was Abdelhamid Ban Bads, who had an Islamic religious-background education. He studied at Zaytona University, the famous Islamic university in Tunisia.

Arab and Islamic culture as the base of societal identity was the common denominator between these political movements. Even the people who wanted assimilation with France demanded an equal rights status for Muslims so that they would have the freedom to choose their value system. The importance of these groups is that their orientation still plays a major factor in present-day Algeria's political formula. These political groups eventually joined the National Liberation Front (NLF). The NLF was essentially a fraction of Etoile Nord Africinine which went through an internal power struggle. The NLF led the war of liberation from 1954 until they gained total independence in 1962. Since then, the NLF has been the ruling party of Algeria.

**Political Legitimacy and National Identity**

The NLF inherited the aftermath of the liberation struggle of independence, with at least one million dead and complete economic destruction. It was a country without a very strong identity due to the discontinuity of the precolonization central authority. Even the National Movement, mentioned earlier, had different political
orientations. In addition to the extremely long period of colonization which lasted 130 years, the colonial power formed settlements. These settlements not only took economic advantage of the Arab people, but also destroyed the indigenous culture by imposing the French language. Hudson (1976) pointed out the extent of the impact of the colonial power on Algerian society:

The destruction of traditional society has been documented by French scholars such as Jacques Berque and Pierre Boumedienne. Among the more serious consequences were massive migration to the cities and widespread unemployment in both rural and urban Algeria—never closely integrated during the colonial period—society and community had broken down" (p. 365).

The Algerian government wasted no time in restoring the Arabic language and in nationalizing the land and industrial enterprises. The government was determined to take the path of socialism. However, a conflict arose within the elite between Ben Bella and Boumedienne. Ben Bella was eventually removed from power and Boumedienne assumed the leadership of Algeria. Hudson (1976) and Lazreg (1976) emphasized that the attitude toward Islam and its role in the Algerian national character played a decisive factor in the transition of power. "Ben Bella was open to socialist experiments, whereas Boumedienne was
keen on the 'specificity' of Algeria and her Islamic character" (Lazreg, 1976, p. 7). Many scholars have tried to look at Algerian politics without going through their ruling elite conflict, which is beyond the scope of this study (Lazreg, 1976; Hudson, 1976; Al-Hermassi, 1987; Bennoune, 1988; Lassassi, 1988). The problem with Algerian politics is that Algeria has, to some extent, a closed society with one dominant political party, although the party claims not to be involved in politics directly. "The party, according to the program was to be physically distinct from the state. Its role was to draw the guidelines of policy for the nation" (Lazreg, 1976, p. 124).

Generally speaking, Algerian society reflects many contradictory groups. Within the techno-bureaucracy there are smaller groups which are motivated by their own particular interests. At the cultural level, contradictions exist between the Francophone with their French education and secular orientation, and the group that favors Arab-Islamic cultural orientations and rejects Western influence. Because of the Berber-Arab linguistic difference, the Arabs do not recognize the Berber language. Even the military has its suspicions of the techno-bureaucracy. Mohamed Herrbi, a well-known Algerian intellectual, put it this way:
In the political culture of Algerian leadership, there is no place for the "others." This applies to both Arab and Berber, whose dominant thinking is authoritarian-oriented; therefore every group wants to exclude the other group from the state apparatus to serve its own interest. (cited in Al-Hermassi, 1987, p. 131)

Despite this segmented society, Hudson (1976) believed that the ideology of Algeria explained the "surprising stability" of the Algerian government more than the elite rivalry could possibly account for. He stated that "the values which make up the Algerian ideology—national liberation, Arabism, Islam, the third world, anti-imperialism, and socialism—each has their appeal to particular segments of the society" (p. 367). The risk of this kind of very strong political discourse is that it requires only a minimum of agreement without achieving a real integration of the different groups (Al Hermassi, 1987). This fragile legitimacy cannot be resolved without democratization of the society and allowing the opposing group to voice their position in a constructive way. This is far more preferable to experiencing riots from time to time. It appears that the Algerian government has begun its journey towards democracy by legally allowing different political parties to enter the political scene in 1989.
Cooperation Orientation

As mentioned earlier, the Maghrib has distinctive characteristics which Algeria also shares. Algeria is considered to be one of the dominant powers in the Arab Maghrib region primarily because the population is 21 million, which approaches Morocco's 22 million. Algeria, however, has many more natural resources, especially oil and gas, in comparison to other Maghrib states (Tunisia, 7 million; Libya, 3 million; Mauritania, 2 million) (Ibrahim, 1988).

More than any other country in the Maghrib region, Algeria, with its legacy of revolutionary struggle against French colonialism, played a very active political role in the Arab world. It has been especially strong in its support of the Palestinian movement. Because of its strong support, the Palestinian National Council held an historical meeting in November 1988 in Algiers to announce the establishment of the Independent Palestinian State (in exile) and to recognize Israel's right to exist. They wished to draw the parallel comparison of the liberation struggle of two people--the Palestinians and Algerians. Algeria is very well known both in the Arab world and at the international level because of their successful diplomacy. They brought the Iraq-Iran conflict over the Shat-ALARAB waterway in 1975 to an end with what is known as the Algerian agreement. They played an intermediary
role between Iran and the United States during the American Embassy hostage-taking in 1980, and they played a major role in the effort to end the civil war in Lebanon through the three-state committee with Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

Algeria is very active in Arab politics as Hudson (1976) pointed out,

Not perhaps since Nasser so brilliantly won the hearts and minds of Egyptians and other Arabs through his regional and international initiatives has an Arab regime been as successful as Algeria's in exploiting external conditions for internal legitimacy (p. 374)

The Algerian role in Arab politics is diplomatic rather than one of intervention or the initiation of unity projects like Abd-Al Nasser in Egypt. Thus, they project a distant image of respect in the Arab world. However, this image has not materialized into a political hegemony of Arab unity. Algeria was committed to Maghrib unity even before its independence, when representatives of different Maghrib national political parties held a meeting in Tanja in 1952. However, the idea of Maghrib unity did not develop into an actual project with the potential of implementation.

One of the obstacles is the rivalry relation between Algeria and Morocco over the West Sahara, and the Algerian
support of the plesario movement, which caused the two countries to cut their diplomatic relations in 1975. "The problem facing Maghrib unity is the competition of Algeria and Morocco which goes back a quarter of a century and the Sahara is just part of a long chain of events" (Al Hermassi, 1987, p. 135). However, in February 1989, the Maghrib leaders held their summit meeting in Morocco to sign the charter for the Arab Maghrib union which included Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and Mauritania.

The economic problems in the Maghrib are a very important factor in this latest unity scheme, according to Anozla (1989): "The trade exchange between the Maghrib states is minimal to nothing while it reached 60% with the European Common Market" (p. 24). This was another unification attempt to increase their own trade exchange and to generally promote their economic cooperation scheme. As mentioned earlier, the Algerian identity is based on Islamic values. This dates back to the emergence of the national movement against the French colonization. It is important to mention that the Maghrib people do not make any distinction between Arab and Islam. For them, Arab and Islam are the same unlike the Pan-Arabism notion, which associates Arabs with secular ideology, while Islam is the religion of the society. Labeab (1988) pointed out the distinction between how the Maghrib
and Mashriq look at Arabism. He stated: "the Arabism concept in the Maghrib has its own Islamic character that differs from the separation between Arabism and Islam that is found in Arab-Nationalism literature in Mashriq" (cited in Yosif, 1988, p. 136). This distinction may explain the Algerian emphasis of Arabism and the teaching of the Arabic language without giving any consideration to the Berber language, although the Berber compose a minority of 22 percent of the total population.

The conversion of political discourse into economic cooperation is a different story. After winning their independence, the Algerian government found itself encumbered with an almost collapsed economy. This was due not only to the war for liberation, but also to the French Secret Terrorist Organization's destruction of the economic infrastructure. Under these circumstances, the Algerian government started to run its economy without any long-term planning. In order to rebuild their economy they received economic aid from different countries. For example, in the fiscal year of 1963, one year after independence, "Kuwait, Egypt, and other countries provided about 552 million francs" (Bennoune, 1988, p. 99). There was no specific economic cooperation proposals or projects between Algeria and other Arab countries. According to Al-Hamssy (1980), the first real economic planning in Algeria started in 1966 with a general strategy. Then
they started to focus their strategy in a seven-year economic plan, which was divided into two short terms. The first three-year economic plan (1967-1969) had the main objective of controlling the national economy and the nationalization of foreign investment in the country. The second four-year economic plan gave emphasis to economic national development. "Economic integration or cooperation between Algeria and other Arab countries was not a part of the economic plan" (p. 156). Thus, Algerian economic development and planning does not correspond with the Algerian government's active political role in the Arab world.

Mass Media Policy Implication

Algeria inherited the colonial legacy after gaining national independence in 1962. One of the French colonial legacies was the broadcasting system. The French started radio service in Algeria in 1929 with a low-power transmitter. An official publication of Algerian radio and television, The Algerian Radio and Television Broadcasting Service, 1983, gives 1929 as the beginning of radio service, although Pilsworth in Boyd (1982) and Head (1985) reported that radio service in Algeria started in 1937. Whenever it started, the aim of radio broadcasting was to serve the one million French settlers in the coastal areas of Algeria. In 1940, the service was extended to other areas of the country, such as Constantine and Oran. After
World War II, the radio service started to reach the Algerian indigenous people, introducing an Arabic language service and other services for the Berber minority. The "Algerian Voice," which was NLF clandestine radio service, started in 1956, two years after the war for liberation began. The "Algerian Voice" played a major role in mobilizing the Algerian people against the French colonial power, and at the same time, supporting the NLF in their liberation war. After independence, the Algerian Radio Service went through tremendous development and expanded its service to include four channels. Channel 1 is the main channel and broadcasts in the Arabic language for 20 hours a day. Channel 2 broadcasts in the Berber language and popular culture nine hours a day. Channel 3 broadcasts in the French language for 18 hours a day, and Channel 4, which is the foreign service, broadcasts both in English and Spanish. It is important to point out the apologetic tone for the French service:

"Arabization is an essential foundation of the Algerian cultural environment . . . Channel 3 broadcasting in French is a kind of outlet for the opening, which allows dialogue between two civilizations, and provides all compositions with new creative forms, possibilities and facilities for information and to improve oneself within an Algerian frame. (RTA, 1983, p. 22)."
This emphasis in the Arabic language while describing the French channel indicates the conflict between the francophone, which is the French-oriented elite, and the fundamentalists, who do not want to have anything to do with France, especially in the cultural sphere.

Algeria, like any other Arab country, lacks audience research. Although the decision-makers do not know exactly what the audience thinks of their service, the people send their messages to the radio and television authorities through the local print media. Within this framework, there is a lot of criticism of the media policy in Algeria. One of these criticisms was directed to Channel 3, under the title "Open Letter to the Ministry of Information," published in Al Wahdah Magazine. The writer stated:

It is well known that the media service includes three channels. The first channel is directed to the general public in the national language (Arabic). The second channel is directed toward a specific local group of the Kabyle dialect, but channel three with the French language, to whom is it directed? Is it for the Algerian? If it is yes, then this is very shameful. This is an objection to our roots, because language is one of the basic elements of our national entity . . . I'm not criticizing the content of the program. I'm criticizing the language of this
channel, which uses the language of our enemy. This service is not for real Algerians. It is for those people who want to desert their national heritage and follow their master's language. This is not openness, because free men stay free in everything and slaves follow their master in everything. (Al Wahdah, 1989, p. 5)

This is an indication of the resentful feeling of some people toward the use of French in the mass media.

As mentioned earlier, television in Algeria began in 1956, two years after the liberation war. The service was designed for the French settlers in Algeria. The television programs were exclusively French, with no local productions except for some news in Arabic and Kabyle. The introduction of television service was timed in an attempt to isolate the NLF strength towards independence. When the Algerians gained their independence, the Algerian leadership was committed to continuing the radio and television service, despite the French Secret Terrorist Organization sabotage of the telephone network and radio and television transmissions.

The Algerian government spent large amounts of capital in building their communication network. They allocated 310 million dinars ($1.00 = 6.8 Algerian dinar in 1989) for radio and television equipment. This expenditure was allocated through their development plans
from 1967 to 1979. In 1982, the equipment was worth 560 million dinars. By 1977, Radio and Television Service covered the whole Algerian territory via a domestic satellite network. There is one television network in Algeria, which includes 17 transmission stations and 172 relay stations in the south, and 11 transmission stations and 172 relay stations in the north.

The Algerian government places tremendous value on the role of television in society. "Television has gradually become the key element in education, culture, and entertainment and has outclassed books, the theatre, and even the cinema" (RTA, 1983, p. 27). Thus in 1986, a government decree reorganized the administrative structure of radio and television. The new structure divided RTA into three legal entities: the National Radio Establishment, the National Television Establishment, and the National Audio-Visual Production Establishment.

The decree gave the Information Minister almost total control of the National Television Establishment. Article 2 clearly states that "the establishment is under the Minister of Information's supervision." In addition, according to Presidential decree, he is the one who would recommend a candidate when the position of General Director became vacant. The Information Minister also has the authority to appoint the Advisory Council, after its members are recommended by their respective ministries.
The Television Advisory Council is composed of a representative of the Presidency Office, a representative of the National Liberation Front Ruling Party, 15 members representing all government ministries (one member for each ministry), two representatives of the print media, and all the General Directors in the Ministry of Information, in addition to the General Director of the Television Establishment (Arab Broadcasting, 1988).

This new structure indicates the extent to which the government controls the Television Establishment. The Algerian techno-bureaucracy is involved in the decision-making processes of all aspects of Algerian life. The Advisory Council meets regularly every six months to discuss all aspects of television activities. This ranges from studying the general guidelines to the financial specificity of the Television Establishment activities.

Algeria tried very hard to remove itself from French influence, not only in terms of imported television programs, but also in hardware. Thus in 1963, Algerian RTA started a project of converting the 819-line standard to adopt the new 625-line standard, and they started replacing their equipment in 1967. Furthermore, the Algerians adopted the German PAL color television system in 1974.

In the software sphere, Algeria was determined to pursue its Arabization policy. Katz and Wedell (1977)
describe the Algerian determination of replacing the French language with the Arabic language. Since the official education was in French as a French colonization policy, the Algerian writers preferred to write in French, but because of the Arabization policy, their writing was translated to the Arabic language in order to be broadcast on Algerian television.

The same pattern could be found in program production. Algerian television increased its domestic production "whereas in 1969 only 25 percent of the programs were locally produced, by 1973 the proportion had increased to 49 percent" (Katz & Wedell, 1977, p. 30). This trend was reflected in President Boumedienne's orientation toward Arab-Islamic culture, which was the basic element of NLF legitimacy.

Thus the most important problem with Algerian television was how to reduce the French influence in their culture. According to Pilsworth, 53 percent of television programs were imported, and only 6 percent imported from France, compared to 14 percent from America. The same trend continued, according to Al-Najar's study (1983). American programs accounted for 31.33 percent of the Algerian television imported programs, while the French imported programs accounted for 20.81 percent, which is still high when compared to the television programs imported from other Arab countries. Kuwait accounted for
8.85 percent; United Arab Emirates, 4.94 percent; and Egypt accounted for only 2.25 percent of the total Algerian television imported programs.

In an interview with El Taib Shial, the Director of Statistics and Audience Studies in Algerian television, he stated that the image of Algerian television is that its programs are more dependent on French television, but our facts are contrary to this general belief. For example, in 1988, Algerian television telecast 340 imported feature films, of which 268 were American films, 53 were from France, 7 from Germany, 6 from Italy, and 2 from Spain. The same thing was found for series and serials. There were 37 series and serials acceptable to Algerian television criteria, 23 of which were American, 10 French, 2 Brazilian, and 2 German. Of the 20 variety programs accepted, 15 programs were from America, 3 from Britain, and 2 from France (personal communication, February 9, 1989). These are only an indication of how the Algerian officials tried to keep distance from France on the one hand, and on the other hand, the availability of the television programs which are acceptable by the majority of the third world countries are American television programs.

Due to the scarcity of local entertainment program production, Algerian television depends on feature films. According to Al-Najar's study in 1983, 52.20 percent of
Algerian television programs were devoted to entertainment and 21.74 percent of the total programs were feature films. The study did not specify feature film sources; however, according to the information provided to this writer for 1985, 7.66 percent of feature films were locally produced, 8.69 percent were of Arab production, and 83.65 percent were foreign. For series and serials, less than 1 percent were locally produced, 50.34 percent were of Arab production, and 48.89 percent were from outside the Arab world.

However, when it comes to the least amount of cost in producing programs, the local productions were dominant. For example, 58.18 percent of variety programs were locally produced, while Arab-produced variety programs accounted for 11.56 percent, and foreign production accounted for 30.25 percent. Because of the very high cost of drama production, Elias Belarabi, the Assistant General Director of Algerian television, explains this dilemma. He stated that:

There is a big difference in terms of quality between the television programs that we obtain through free exchanges and those we purchase from the market. The free programs are of less quality and mostly take the form of national events which do not have great appeal to the audience, but as television officials, we feel an obligation to include them in our program
schedules. The television establishment has to utilize its resources in a cost effective manner. Thus the trend now is toward less costly programs which are mainly variety and cultural programs. (personal communication, February 8, 1989)

In 1987, feature films accounted for 22.80 percent of the total programs and series and serials accounted for 16.20 percent, which indicates the continuity of feature films and series and serials to dominate the television programs in Algerian television. The imported feature films from outside the Arab world accounted for 85.40 percent, in comparison to series and serials, of which foreign production accounted for 52.87 percent.

The total transmission time for Algerian television in 1987 was 3,988 hours, with a daily average of 10.92 hours. Local production accounted for 41.37 percent, while Arabic production accounted for 22.01 percent, and 36.61 percent accounted for television production imported from outside the Arab world. Thus, the continuation of imported program domination of Algerian television has had a very negative reaction from local print media. In a report about television programs, several articles and interviews with the audience appeared in Al Wahdah Magazine, which indicated the writers' outrage by the imported programs. This is apparent, from just looking at the article titles: "Television is National Establishment for
Non-national Production," "Is This an Algerian TV?," "Is It Necessary to Pay Money for the Foreigners to Include Us?," "The TV: When We will Gain it Back?" (Al Wahdah, February 1989). All these articles project audience dissatisfaction of imported television programs, including Egyptian series and serials, which accounted for 97 percent of imported Arab television programs.

In terms of media cooperation since independence with the Algerian Arabization policy, Algeria moved closer to the Arab world in general, and the Maghrib subregion in particular. Katz and Wedell (1977) stated that "Algeria has moved closer to other Arab countries and has begun to exchange programs in the wake of its determined 'Arabizing' policy" (pp. 167-168).

Thus, after independence, the first step was taken toward Arab media cooperation by establishing Maghríbvision in 1966 with Morocco and Tunisia. The aim of Maghríbvision was to provide a television program exchange mechanism and to some extent to engage in joint production of television programs. However, Maghríbvision vanished after Algeria and Morocco cut their diplomatic relations in 1976 over the West Sahara problem. This was clear evidence that the deterioration of Maghríbvision was a result of a political justification, rather than a failure of the organizational arrangement itself. However, there have been improved relations among the Maghrib countries
in the last two years, especially between Morocco and Algeria, which started to improve rapidly after Saudi Arabia played an intermediary role in mid-1987 to bring the two rivalries together.

During 1988, Algerian television sent 1,308 minutes to Libyan television; 1,260 minutes to Tunisia; 1,260 minutes to Mauritania; and 1,489 minutes to Morocco. During the same period, they sent 100 minutes to Egypt, 156 minutes to Sudan, 148 minutes to Syria, 286 minutes to United Arab Emirates, 99 minutes to Qatar, 123 minutes to South Yemen, and 24 minutes to North Yemen (personal communication, February 9, 1989). These program exchanges were bilateral distribution and at least give an indication of how the television program exchange between Algerian television and other Maghrib countries is more than that with Mashriq states, even though both Maghrib and Mashriq are Arab countries, which reconfirms the concept of distinctive characteristics of Maghrib states.

Looking at the content of television programs being exchanged during 1988, it reflects the general policy of Algerian NLF ideology, which gave more emphasis to the role of NLF in liberation of the Algerian legacy. "The Algerian Challenge" is a documentary film dealing with the economic and social development of Algeria. "The Health During Liberation War" is another documentary film. "Sons of Algasba" is a film dealing with one residential area in
Algeria which resisted the French occupation. "Sons of November" is also another film dealing with the liberation war.

In addition, there were some variety programs, mainly songs or information films, which gave general information about one of Algeria's cities. The type of programs that Algeria produced reflects the trend toward less expensive production with mobilization type of television programs. They emphasize the independence of Algeria and its liberation war's legacy, and the distribution aspect. Even though Maghribvision no longer exists, priority is given to the Maghrib countries, which are closer both geographically and in their cultural specificity than the rest of the Arab world. Thus the media policy of Algeria reflects overall government policies.

**Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia is the most conservative Arab country in its sociopolitical conduct. When it comes to news and television programs exchange, two important factors influence Saudi decision-making. One is the emergence of a contemporary independent Saudi state which deals with the internal dynamics of the country. The second important factor lies in Saudi Arabian relations with other Arab countries or the concept of "nationalism," and to a lesser extent, its relation with Islamic states. In short, how the Saudi government deals with the concept of
"pan-Arabism or pan-Islamic" is an important factor in formulating Saudi Arabian media cooperation policy.

The state of Saudi Arabia began to emerge in 1902, when Abdulaziz Al-Saud captured the city of Riyadh in the heart of the Arabian Peninsula from his family rival, Al-Rashid, who had driven Al-Saud's family into exile in Kuwait. In 1891, Abdulaziz (later King Abdulaziz) was an ambitious young man of 22 years. The Al-Saud family had ruled the Arabian Peninsula, or at least central Arabia (Najed) through three realms. The first was from 1745-1818; the second, from 1824-1891; and the third, from 1902 to the present time.

Ibn Saud proved his leadership ability by mobilizing the Bedouin tribes and utilizing Islamic religious ideology as a common ground for all the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. The alliance between religion and politics was not a new phenomenon in the history of the Arabian Peninsula. The founder of the Al-Saud dynasty, Mohammed Ibn Saud, had based his political legitimacy on his adoption of the ideas of the Islamic reformist Mohamed Ibn Abdulwahab. This alliance resulted in the first Al-Saud Realm (1745-1818) (Habib, 1978; Al-Yassini, 1985). The unification scheme reflected this collation of religion and state and is a part of Ibn Saud's legacy.

The history of the formation of Saudi Arabia is beyond the scope of this particular study. However, some
historical events will be mentioned as explanations are required.

The concept of traditional and secular, or the demands of nation building and religious utopianism in Saudi Arabia, provides a useful explanation of the decision-making process, especially in the mass media sphere. The subject investigated here is other than that of Ulama vs. the royal family, which was suggested by some writers who discussed the media policy in Saudi Arabia (Shobaili, 1971; Boyd, 1973, 1982; Al-Usmani, 1984; Beayeyz, 1989). In Saudi Arabia the Ulama are government employees rather than an autonomous force which imposes its interpretation, as is usually the case in Islamic tradition. They are not a politically independent force like the "Brotherhood Movement" in Egypt, the Islamic movement in Tunisia, or other Islamic movements in various Arab countries. Al-Awaji (1971) explained the role of interest groups in Saudi Arabia this way: "Influential groups interact and exert their influences within the monarchial framework, but never as autonomous powerful groups" (p. 109). This kind of relationship does not allow political maneuvering or tangible pressure.

The nature of Saudi Arabian polity carries out the contradiction between secularism and Islamic tradition more than any pressure group. Samore (1983) pointed out this contradiction:
Hence the ethos of third Saudi realm like that of the second, contained the same mixture of dynastic principles and routinized Wahhabisme which made inheritance struggles more likely. (p. 37)

As early as 1921, even before the full unification of Saudi states (the official date of establishment of Saudi Arabia is 1932), the contradiction between Islamic tradition and secular practice began to emerge. As Renta (1972) stated:

In 1921 Abdulaziz took the secular title of Sultan in place of the religious title of Imam, borne by all his predecessors, and after the conquest of the Hijaz, he took in 1926 the even more secular title of King. (p. 33)

The Imam as a title originally came from the prayer, the person who led the people in prayer in Islamic religious practice. After the conquest of Hijaz, during the period of 1929-1930, a more serious secular step was taken, which Sallameh (1989) considered this the turning point in the Saudi state legitimacy formula "from solely dependent on the internal element (religion and tribe collation) to adaptation of foreign support (British economic aid, oil revenue, and welfare state services)" (p. 215). The turning point here is the conflict between the "Khwan," the tribal fighting forces of King Abdulaziz, and Abdulaziz himself over where to stop his state expansion.
As a statesman, King Abdulaziz based his calculations on political factors rather than religious zeal. His military endeavors were ended by the Khwan rebellion defeat in 1930. "He [Abdulaziz] cautiously avoided the reckless expansion which had provoked more powerful external powers to crush the first Saudi realm" (Samore, 1983, p. 37).

The importance of the breakdown of the collation is not because it stopped the expansion of the state to its existing boundaries and avoided the potential conflict with the neighboring countries under British protectorate, thereby jeopardizing the stability of the new state. It is important because it set the pattern of how the Saudi government deals with controversial issues regardless of influential opposition groups, including the Ulama. The government, and the king in particular, usually decide the final outcome of any specific controversial issue, whether it concerns the introduction of technology in the country, women's education, or women's photographs for passports. Sometimes issues are decided just by ignoring the issue as seen with the issue concerning bank interest. Islamic Sharia forbids usury.

Al-Yassini (1985) pointed to the role of the Ulama within this inherited contradiction:

The Ulama were given prominence when religious legitimization was needed and they assumed a
secondary position when their stance contradicted that of the ruler or when other sources of legitimacy were invoked. As the process of territorial shaping neared completion, the Ulama lost whatever limited autonomy they enjoyed. They became paid Civil Servants whose status, income, and general activities were governed by state regulation and objectives. (p. 67)

The introduction of public school for girls in 1960 was one of the most controversial issues with very important social implications. The decision was perceived by various segments of the population as a step toward women's corruption. However, the government took a very firm stand against any group who opposed the opening of the girls' schools.

The most famous of these occurred in Buraidah (very conservative city in the Central province) where certain elements of the population claimed that the planned establishment of a school for girls would produce demoralization and destroy the foundation of the family. A public demonstration erupted, and government troops were dispatched to restore order. At this time, the Amir Faisal was Prime Minister, and he was adamantly opposed to eliminating plans for the projected school. He insisted that the school would
open even if no one chose to attend. (Parssinen, 1980, p. 159)

Had the Amir Faisal (later King Faisal, 1964-1975) not taken this stand, women's education would have been further delayed. From the beginning, the decision to open girls' schools considered the magnitude of the social implication. Therefore, the government opted for segregated public girls' schools. This decision indicates that when the government is decisive in implementing its policy with a clear future vision, the Ulama follows suit simply because they are government employees and they do not enjoy any autonomous power. Ironically, the Ulama, who were suspicious about women's education, were placed in charge under specialized agencies called The General Presidency for Girls Education.

Not only does education have the problem of duality, but the legal system also prevents some contradictory practices. The basic law of the country is the Islamic law, Sharia, which is drawn from the Koran and Sunna. Sunna is what the prophet, Mohammed, said and practiced. The Sharia laws are strictly applied in all aspects of Saudi life, and the legal system of the Sharia courts is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice. However, the country's modernization schema promotes very sophisticated business practices that cannot be solved through the existing interpretation of Sharia laws. In
response, the government made a pragmatic decision to introduce another semi-independent legal system outside the structure of the Ministry of Justice.

In 1965 a de facto court structure began to appear when arbitration boards for commercial disputes were created in Jeddah, Riyadh, and Dammam under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Commerce. Since that time, an appeals board for commercial disputes has also been created. Arbitration committees for labor disputes were created in 1969 within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and Appeals Committees soon appeared. (Nyrop, 1982, p. 190)

One would assume that the Ulama would have opposed such a new court system because it encroached upon the essence of their specialty. Apparently they did not and the subject has never been brought to the public attention. Although the Ulama are highly qualified in the Sharia laws they may not be familiar with those laws that have international application. Rather than oppose these courts they prefer to ignore the existence of this legal system.

Beayeyz (1989) considered Abdulziz Ibn Baz's opinion on photography. Abdulaziz Ibn Baz is one of the most respected Saudi Ulamas and is well known in the Arab world for his conservative interpretation of Sharia law: "He [Ibn Baz] unquestionably argued that photography and the drawing of any live being is prohibited in Islam"
The Saudi government, however, cannot afford to prohibit photography. It is a necessary "evil" in a complex modern society which requires some kind of positive identification for internal security reasons. Had the Saudi government prohibited photography, would other governments have allowed Saudi citizens to enter their countries without passport photos? This is another of the contradictions with which the Saudi Arabian government has had to deal. Crown Prince Fahad (King Fahad), known for his moderate views, stated:

There are those who want us to be more severe and who are accusing us of negligence because we allow television and photography—which they also consider to be a sin. These people are demanding many other things which were illogical and unacceptable—particularly in our age. (cited in Samore, 1983, p. 446).

This indicates the firmness of the government in its stand toward television and photography regardless of what a certain conservative group believes or thinks.

Despite all these contradictions the question of legitimacy was not raised.

The Saudi solution to the legitimacy problems posed by modernity has on the whole proved more successful than expected. Islamic and customary values have been harmonized with modern nationalism and secular
values of progress and development. (Hudson, 1976, p. 180)

Throughout its history, the Saudi government has been very successful in the management of whatever contradictions have existed. This has been accomplished through various tactics. It has been able to present the issue with a less threatening tone to the religious establishment and the timing of the presentation of particular issues is considered. Sometimes issues are handled as a de facto which will take gradual adaptation and acceptance by the society. The issue of bank interest, although forbidden by Islamic Sharia law is now accepted as a part of commercial bank practice.

Demographic and Social Fabrics

Saudi Arabia is the most homogeneous country in the Arab world. Its population is 100 percent Arab Muslim and almost all the population follow the Sunni sect of Islam. A few Shia Muslims live in the Eastern Province of the country. The population is estimated at around 9 million (Ibrahim, 1988). There is always a problem when dealing with the general census of Saudi Arabia due to the difficulty of collecting data as indicated by Nyrop (1982). Because of their mobility and crossing of national boundaries the Bedouin have no clear citizenship. The Saudi government does not use the low population figure because the population estimate is perceived as
part of the national security issue within the Arab regional powers. For this reason, the population estimate is between 5 and 10 million depending on the source. There is no reliable official number.

Saudi Arabia is composed of five major provinces: the Central Province (Najed), the Eastern Province (Al-Ahsal), the Western Province (Al-Hejaz), the Southern Province (Asir), and the Northern Province. Each province is divided into districts and subdistricts, all of which are under the jurisdiction of the Interior Ministry. The renaming of the provinces to East, West, South, and North was part of the unification process and a gradual erosion of the "tribes" associated with certain territorial claims. Al-Hejaz, the Western Province, was under the Ottoman Empire rule, and enjoyed more social and political development than the rest of the country. This development was also a result of the pilgrim visits to the holiest Islamic cities, Makkah and Medina. These pilgrimages generated revenue for the Hejaz Province, while the interior Najed suffered a subsistence economy. Al-Nageeb (1987) discussed the social, economic, and political structure of the Arabian Peninsula with an in-depth analysis. With the two holy cities and one of the most important seaports, Jeddah, located in its territory, Hejaz experienced a difference in its social development
from the contemporary Saudi Arabian main provinces, the Western Province (Hejaz) and the Central Province (Najed).

In 1908, Hejaz witnessed the birth of its first newspaper, *Hejaz*, in Makkah. The newspaper was published in two languages, Arabic and Turkish. "The paper was an official publication of the state, published through the governor's office" (Al-Tounsi, 1985, p. 16). According to Al-Tounsi, five newspapers followed the *Hejaz*'s publication in the province of Hejaz in 1909. These newspapers illustrate the level of social development achieved in Hejaz in comparison to Najed, the Central Province during the pre-Saudi era. Al-Jaser (1982), a Saudi historian and the founder of the first print media in Riyadh, stated that "in the early 1350s A.H. in the back yard of the King's Palace there were piles of newspapers to be burned before reading these papers because nobody was interested in reading them" (p. 483). It can be assumed that if no one was interested in reading newspapers, there were probably very few people who could even read. With such an illiteracy rate one would not expect to find someone interested in publishing a newspaper. Al-Jaser attempted to privately publish his *Al-Yamama Weekly Magazine* in 1953, and later the *Al-Riyadh*, a daily newspaper in 1965. The establishment of newspapers is an important factor when examining the establishment of electronic media in Saudi Arabia. This will be discussed later in this
chapter. The difference in social development between the two provinces has been tremendously reduced. The Saudi Arabian society is more integrated today than at any point in its contemporary historical development. This societal integration is the result of a stable central authority on the one hand, and the tremendous oil revenue on the other. Societal integration was aided when the Arab oil-producing countries raised their oil prices on October 16, 1973, from $3.01 to $5.119 per barrel, which is equal to a 70 percent increase. Shogair (1986) described this increase as an oil price correction and a result of the long-term exploitation by Western oil companies.

The Saudi Arabian economy is described by many scholars (Abdel-fudil, 1988; Beblawi, 1989; Al-Nageeb, 1987) as a rentier economy which depends totally on the oil exportation revenue, and lacks a productive economic base. The state does not actually depend on the oil production per se. It is better described as the distributor of the oil revenues. The government indirectly controls the people's economic, social, and political lives through income distribution and public expenditures (Al-Nageeb, 1987).

Income distribution has created a high level of social mobility. Beayeyz (1989) stated:

With these revenues, the government commenced an ambitious development effort. In addition to
building the basic infrastructure (e.g., communication, telecommunication, and electricity), the government has greatly improved health and educational services over the last fifteen years. These improvements, particularly in education, have been immense. The total student enrollment increased from 537,759 in 1970 to 1,909,328 in 1983, an increase of 255 percent. (p. 76)

During the fifth development plan (1990-1995), student enrollment in general public education will increase from 2,528,000 to 3,556,000 by the end of 1995. Student enrollment in higher education college and graduate schools will increase from 122,000 in 1990 to 135,000 in 1995 (Saudi News Agency, 1990). The importance of education is seen in its impact on the social structure of the Saudi society.

Al-Rumaihi (1977), Ibrahim (1982, 1988), Heller and Safran (1985) and Al-Sultan (1988) discussed the social economic structure of Saudi Arabia. Al-Rumaihi and Ibrahim looked at this issue within the context of the Arabian Gulf oil economy. Although Al-Sultan provided a more in-depth analysis of the class structure in Saudi Arabia, the most important issue for this particular study is the emerging new middle class. The oil revenue public expenditure, especially in education, allowed great social mobility in recent years in spite of the tribal aspects
of the social structure. Al-Sultan (1988) divided the Saudi middle class of 255,249 Saudi individuals into five categories. The categories are:

Military officers; college graduates and those completing advanced studies, in addition to government middle employees who, because of their special qualifications, occupy positions equal to college graduates; senior oil employees; small entrepreneurs and shopkeepers; real estate brokers and others; and small farm owners. (p. 261)

Education appears to be the common denominator of the new emerging middle class and the most important factor of social mobility within the tribal social structure. Beayeyz (1989) suggested the inauguration of a Saudi television Second Channel (English language) in August 1983. As a response to the middle class desire for an alternative, it would consist of less conservative television programs than that of the main television channel.

Abuzinada's (1988) study of video usage in Saudi Arabia provided another example of their desire for alternative programming, especially in the emerging middle class. "The study provides a good example of the middle class with only two subjects who could not afford a video cassette player." More than half of the people included in the sample had watched the Second Channel on a regular
basis. They also indicated a very high degree of satisfaction in comparison to the people who watched the First Channel, 70.3 percent and 39.5 percent, respectively. However, the lack of exclusive empirical data makes it difficult to determine the size of the Second Channel audience and what segment of the middle class it actually represents.

State Versus Arab Nationalism

Saudi Arabia's cooperation effort with other Arab countries is influenced by its national sovereignty and political stability. During the discussion of the Arab League charter in November 1945, Saudi Arabian delegations indicated some reservation toward the proposed charter. They presented several points to protect their interests and to prevent any disadvantage to the Saudi Arabian government if they joined the Arab League. Out of seven general points reported by Mahafadh (1983), there are two points which are very important:

1. Saudi Arabia will not participate in any effort of cultural or legislation unification in an Arab state if it was not in accordance with Islamic law.

2. The Arab cooperation in the economic field should guarantee the right of every individual state to choose any economic system that it desires.

(p. 51)
These points are important because they reflect the Saudi government's overemphasis of its national sovereignty. It also allows the government more leeway in interpreting what kind of Arab culture is or is not in accordance with Islam. Consequently, media cooperation and especially television programs, are subject to cultural interpretation. Each Arab country has its own political philosophy even though they all consider Islam the state-religion, with the exception of Lebanon. Saudi Arabia demonstrates more responsibility toward the Islamic religion for one important reason. The country is the origin of Islam and the government political legitimacy formula is based on the conservative interpretation of Islamic law. In regard to the Arab League, Zamzami (1978) put it this way:

Indeed a great deal of political wisdom was necessary for the newly united kingdom of Najd, Asir, Shammar, and the Hijaz—which depended for its success on the alignment of Islamic system less than on Pan-Arabism to prove a viable political concept, and developed into a prosperous venture. (p. 100)

This reemphasis of its national sovereignty is demonstrated by the alignment and realignment of its regional Arab political behavior. It was first seen in the Saudi-Egyptian alignment against what was known as the Baghdad Pact in 1955. The Arabs were outraged by the Baghdad Pact (Perry, 1984) signed by Turkey and Iraq. They
perceived it as a threat of foreign intervention to the Arab-regional system. As a preventative measure the Saudi Arabian government countered Egypt intervention in North Yemen after the military coup in 1962. The coup precipitated a civil war between the Royalist forces and the revolutionaries. Kerr (1972) states:

The Saudi regime opposed the Yemeni revolution for precisely the reasons that led Egypt to support it. It was a test of Saudi ability to protect their back yard, and more than that, to demonstrate that the revolution was not the wave of the future, especially from Cairo. (p. 50).

After the power transfer from King Saud to King Faisal in 1964, Saudi Arabia became more aggressive in countering Nasser's Pan-Arabism and socialistic reform, which was very popular all over the Arab world. King Faisal campaigned for an Islamic Pact, which would include all Islamic countries. This would provide a broader political base than that of the Arab Summit of 1964, in which Nasser of Egypt maintained undisputable leadership. However, an Islamic Pact was not agreed upon during that specific period (Kerr, 1972).

These are examples of the Arab rivalry which took place during the late 1950s and 1960s which had, what will be seen later, an impact on the Saudi Arabian electronic media development. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war and the
defeat of Nasser were a turning point in the entire Arab regional system. The Egyptian defeat and Nasser's subsequent death and the transferral of power was then followed by the October Arab-Israeli War of 1973. This led to an increase in oil prices and paved the way for Saudi Arabia to play a major role in Arab international politics (Matter & Helali, 1980). They called for Arab solidarity and played an intermediary role in many Arab conflicts including Syria and Iraq, the Lebanon Civil War, and Morocco and Algeria. Saudi Arabia then joined the Arab States Broadcasting Union in 1974, five years after its establishment. In contrast to its delay in joining the ASBU, Saudi Arabia became one of ARABSAT's most important founders in 1976 and its headquarters host.

Saudi Arabia was the leading advocate of the establishment of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (G.C.C.) in 1981. The Gulf Cooperation Council includes United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. In addition to sharing Arabic and Islamic culture with the other Arab states they have some distinctive characteristics. They share a society based on a tribal structure and a political system of "ruling families." Although there were various proposals and an effort to integrate these two areas (Etaibi, 1984), there is still no legal political unification or any sign of progress in this direction.
When Crown Prince Fahad (now King Fahad) was questioned if the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council would lead to a true political unity, he replied:

We call things by their name. We as Arab Gulf states took a step which expressed exactly what we meant, which was to accomplish coordination and integration and increase our ties in all fields. (QNA, 1983, p. 114)

This clearly indicates the Saudi Arabian emphasis on its national sovereignty and its reluctance to engage in any Arab unity scheme other than cooperation and coordination.

**Economic Cooperation**

Saudi Arabia's economic development plans did not indicate any integration projects with other Arab countries. This is partly due to the nature of Saudi economy, which depends on oil revenues and government expenditure. Industrialization in the second development plan (1975-1980) is based on hydrocarbon materials which require large investments of energy and capital. This industry integrates Saudi economy more with the Western industrial countries than with the economy of the other Arab states (Al-Hamssy, 1980). However, Saudi Arabia contributes more capital to the Arab economic joint project than other Arab countries. Saudi Arabia contributes 17.4 percent of the total followed by Kuwait, which contributes 13.64 percent of the total Arab economic joint project capital (Matter &
Saudi Arabia's diversified economic objectives have not been accomplished.

Saudi Arabia is one of the countries which started development plans covering a long period of time. It is now in the middle of its third development plan and economic diversification is considered one of its fundamental issues. However, the country is still dependent on oil revenue. The third development plan might end and the fourth development plan may start and everything could remain the same (Abdulrahman, 1982, p. 66).

Not only did the fourth development plan start without accomplishing diversification, but the fifth development plan (1990-1995) has also started. Economic diversification ranks as the first item in the fifth plan's fundamental strategy (Saudi Arabia News Agency, 1990).

The Unified Economic Agreement was signed in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on November 11, 1981 by the Gulf Cooperation Council members. Its introduction reflects the Saudi government's attitude towards economic cooperation and integration within the Arab world. The introduction of the agreement reads, "intending [G.C.C.] to coordinate and unify their economic, financial, and monetary policies, as well as their commercial and industrial legislation and customs regulations" (Etaibi, 1984, p. 210). Thus, one of
the main objectives of the Saudi fifth development plan (1990-1995) is the economic and social integration with the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (Saudi News Agency, 1990). This priority on economic cooperation and integration is reflected in Saudi mass communication policy.

Mass Media Policy Implication

Most of the studies that deal with the Saudi Arabian media establishment and its media policy examine the issue within the context of its government. They are specifically concerned with the Royal family versus the religious establishment as exemplified by the Ulama (Shobaili, 1971; Boyd, 1972, 1982; Al-Usmani, 1984; Beayeyz, 1989). Boyd is the exception and he considered their media development within the context of the Egypt-Saudi political conflict. This may be due to his cultural background. There is an Islamic tradition of understanding the decision-making process within the concept of "Ahl Al-agd wal-hall." This translates into the people who ultimately have the final say in any given issue regardless of general public opinion.

This aspect of the media policy in Saudi Arabia can be misleading because of the nature of Arab political interaction. Saudi Arabia is the origin of Arabism and the birthplace of Islam. This implied leadership role and the Arab people's self-perception complicates the
political interaction between the Arab states. Ibrahim (1982) explained this uniqueness by looking at the Arab identity which causes problems within the Arab state relations.

The Arab world's social and cultural aspects stand in the middle between Western Europe and the United States; in the cultural sphere the Arabs are more homogenous than Western Europe and when it comes to the political sphere, they are less unified than the United States. (p. 200)

The interaction between the internal dynamics and the Arab political complexity gives the Arab media its unique characteristics. Shobaili (1971) and Beayeyz (1989) studied how the Saudi government tried to avoid the Ulama rejection of radio service, by carefully choosing the place and time for the introduction of radio broadcasting. The government chose Makkah, which is the holiest Islamic city in the world, instead of Riyadh, the capital of the country. Radio broadcasting began on the most important day of the Hajj.

Even though these are very important factors, other factors should be considered first, as mentioned earlier. The level of educational and social development in Hejaz at the time of the introduction of radio service, 1947, was more advanced than that of Najed, the Central Province where the capital is located. Makkah witnessed the first
newspaper in 1908, when only a handful of people could read and write in Riyadh. Much later Al-Jaser (1982) noted how the newspapers were burned in Riyadh because of the scarcity of people who were able to read them. So it was more convenient to find people who could handle radio equipment in Makkah than in Riyadh.

All the government ministries were established first in Jeddah and were later transferred to Riyadh. Radio was no exception. As Nyrop (1982) pointed out:

In the late to mid-1950s most government ministries were transferred from Jeddah to Riyadh, signifying a final move in the consolidation of governmental institutions in Saudi dynasty's traditional homeland in Najed. (p. 174)

The transfer of ministries from Jeddah to Riyadh corresponds to the same period when the government started radio broadcasting in Riyadh in 1957. Thus the idea of starting Saudi Arabia's radio service in a holy city rather than in the capital was a combination of several factors instead of religious appeasement alone. In addition, the development of radio service in Saudi Arabia was influenced by Egyptian radio hostility. This hostility toward the Saudi Royal family is described by Boyd (1982) as: "Probably the single factor most responsible for the expansion that took place in Saudi Arabian radio in that decade" (p. 122).
National television service was introduced on July 17, 1965, with both Riyadh and Jeddah chosen as broadcasting sites. Because there was no religious appeasement involved, another side of the Saudi government's decision-making policies was revealed.

The government's avoidance of regular government channels indicated the urgency of acquiring the television equipment. The Saudi government had assigned this issue high priority. Boyd (1982) reported that in order to avoid any delay, the Saudi government went to the U.S. ambassador directly to ask for help:

The Crown Prince Faisal, who later became King, made a visit to American Ambassador Parker T. Hart. He asked for American help in solving the problem of contracting for a reliable television system, believing that the United States could build stations for him quickly. (p. 128)

The question was raised as to the urgency of introducing television service and the reluctance of dealing with radio broadcasting, while television involved pictures of live beings, which is prohibited by conservative interpretation of Islam.

This major decision should be understood within the context of inter-Arab political rivalry. The Radio Cairo attack in Saudi Arabia compares with the Egyptian involvement in the Yemeni September 1962 revolution on the
southern border of Saudi Arabia. This political development coincided with the Royal family's split over the Saudi Arabian internal policy toward the modernization of the country. Hudson (1976) stated:

One involved the family itself (Royal family). Prince Talal demanded a partial democratization of the regime, then went into exile in Cairo during the Yemeni War and was subsequently reconciled with the Royal establishment. (p. 180)

This is not to reduce the significance of the conservative element of the society represented by the Ulama, but also within the Royal family. Boyd (1982) and Samore (1983) reported the death of Khalid Ibn Musad, when he led a group of religious Zealots to destroy the television equipment in September 1965. However, King Faisal's strong personality and his firm stand reconciled all these conflicts and led the country along the road of modernization. The accommodation of conservative-liberal groups is evidenced in the Saudi television programming policy.

Saudi television programming is subject to a very restrictive censorship policy. Shobaili (1971), Boyd (1982), Abuzinada (1988), and Beayeyz (1989) pointed out the censorship guidelines in Saudi television. When reading the censorship guidelines, one should bear in mind that there is neither separation between politics and
religion, nor between religious ritual practice and social moral conduct in the Islamic society. At the risk of overlapping, censorship in Saudi television could be divided into two main categories:

A. Censorship which is based on social and religious consideration, which includes:

1. The elimination of all scenes that arouse sexual excitement, which may include kissing, hugging, dancing, women dressing indecently, women participating in athletic activities wearing sports clothing or while putting on or taking off their sports clothing.

2. The elimination of all scenes that feature alcoholic beverages, including places where it is sold or consumed. Also any scene of drug use, gambling, betting, or the places that are associated with these activities.

3. The elimination of all scenes picturing churches, synagogues, temples, crosses, or any of their religious rituals or activities.

4. Scenes which have derogatory reference to any of the heavenly religions.

5. Scenes which include directly or indirectly preaching for other religions.

6. Scenes which explicitly show the planning of theft or robbery, or any detailed planning of
crimes, or scenes that contain excessive violence.

B. Censorship based on political consideration:

1. The elimination of all scenes that degrade Saudi Arabia and its legitimate authority or that degrade Arab, Islamic, or friendly countries.

2. The elimination of all scenes that instigate revolutions or encourage class struggle or class conflict.

3. The elimination of all scenes that propagate Zionism and its ideas.

4. The elimination of all scenes that condone Naziism or encourage apartheid policies.

5. The elimination of all scenes that contain propaganda for other countries or companion products. (Censorship Guidelines obtained from Saudi Television, 1989)

These guidelines, especially those concerning social and religious mores, are generally accepted by all Arab society as a moral code. However, Arab governments vary in the degree to which they apply this code, with Saudi Arabia being the most restrictive. Even in Saudi Arabia, the second channel is less restricted than that of the main channel in applying the censorship rules in regard to the social aspects of the censorship guidelines.
Although Arab countries subscribe to the same principle, some are more ambiguous in their program selection criteria than that of Saudi Arabia. Mohammed (1987) stated some criteria for program acceptance in the Yemen Arab Republic Television (North Yemen):

1. Respect of the general taste of the society.
2. Respect of the customs and the tradition of the society, within the Islamic values.
3. Avoidance of anything that promotes factionalism or fanaticism.
4. Avoidance of scenes of obscenity or crime commitment. (p. 106)

This is an example of how the degree of censorship varies in the application of the criteria, but not in the principle of Islamic value.

What distinguishes Saudi Arabian television programs from the rest of the Arab world is the percentage of transmission time devoted to religious programs. The reports and studies done by Gulfvision (1979, 1982), Kattab (1980), Al-Abdeli (1987), and Beayeyz (1989) all dealt with Saudi television programs during different short periods of time, with the exception of Beayeyz' study. It is the most comprehensive and looks at television program trends over a period of ten years. Beayeyz' study indicated that the Makkah incident of 1979, when a group of religious fanatics occupied the Grand Mosque in
Makkah, the holiest Islamic place, was an important factor in the increase of religious programming in Saudi television. Beayeyz (1989) stated that "In 1980 the amount of time Saudi television allocated to religious content increased by 80 percent, from 354 hours in 1978 to 636 hours in 1980. With this addition, the share of religious content increased to 19 percent, compared to 11 percent in 1978" (p. 157).

The trend toward religious programs continues. Al-Abdeli (1987) reported that the percentage of religious programs during the regular scheduling period is 20.5 percent, and during Ramadan and the Hajj, it is 45.7 percent and 41.05 percent, respectively. However, when looking at Saudi television religious programs, a distinction should be made between the actual television program, which requires some production involvement, and that of daily religious practice, such as prayer call and prayer carried live from the holy mosques of Makkah or Medina, or even the daily reading of the Quran, which does not involve production. A detailed local program production provided by a local program department for the 1988 cycle indicated that there are 61 weekly programs locally produced. Out of the 61 programs, only 9 programs are religious and account for 215 minutes out of 1,845 for the whole weekly program schedule, which is equivalent to 11.6 percent of local programs devoted to religion.
However, when it comes to daily transmission time, which includes the daily reading of the Quran for the opening and closing of the transmission with the live prayer call, including the two prayers of Maghrib and Isha, and Friday prayer at noon, the air broadcasting time increases to about 643 minutes a week. This distinction should be considered when dealing with Saudi television religious program calculation, because most Arab countries transmit Friday prayer live, but not the evening daily prayers.

The increase of religious programs in Saudi Arabian television since 1980 led Abuzinada (1988) and Beayeyz (1989) to suggest that the Makkah incident of 1979 was a turning point in the Saudi television policy toward religious television programs. The continuation of this trend might suggest another factor—the regional political rivalry not only within the Arab world, but also within the Islamic world as evidenced by the Iranian-Islamic revolution propaganda against the Saudi government. These two factors are important as Boyd (1982) stated,

There is some evidence to suggest that the Kingdom's commitment to religious television will increase. The revolution in Iran and the attempted mosque takeover in Makkah in 1979 were reminders that the country should move cautiously toward modernization. (p. 135)
The Iranian propaganda war against Saudi Arabia and the concept of exporting the Iranian-Islamic revolution to the Arab states in general, and the Arabian Gulf States in particular, began shortly after the Iranian revolution in 1978. The Iranian involvement in sabotage activities in the Grand Mosque in Makkah during the Hajj ritual of 1986 prompted King Fahad to change his title from "His Majesty the King" to "Custodian of the Two Holy Places." This is an indication of how regional factors in general influence internal government policy. Events during the 1980s had similar effects to those of the 1960s. The difference, however, is that the events of the 1960s were motivated by the pan-Arabism ideology of Nasser of Egypt, while the 1980s' events were motivated by Islamic revolutionary ideas from Iran.

When it comes to entertainment programs, Saudi Arabia follows the same pattern as other Arab countries. The majority of local entertainment programs are variety programs which do not involve sophisticated production requirements. According to the Director of Television Administrative Services, Al-Abdeli, calculation of Saudi television programs in 1987 indicated that 46.5 percent of Saudi television transmission time was devoted to entertainment programs. He combined variety, films, and series to account for 23.7 percent of the total transmission time. Beayeyz' (1989) study, with a more
sophisticated analysis, indicated that for the year 1986, 48 percent of the total transmission time was devoted to entertainment programs, which were divided into four major categories. Films accounted for 7 percent; series, 38 percent; variety, 21 percent; sports, 2 percent; and cartoons accounted for 20 percent.

The majority of entertainment programs that are locally produced are the variety program. This follows the same trend as found in the rest of the Arab countries. For example, Saudi Arabia and Algeria show the same pattern, but for different reasons. For Algerian television, as mentioned earlier, the main obstacle of drama production is its high cost, while in Saudi Arabia the problem is the lack of local talent, due to sociocultural factors. Beayeyz (1989) stated that "there is very little series production because this type of production needs talent which Saudi society does not have; television in Saudi Arabia is a novel medium that came to a society that does not have an artistic tradition, on which TV production depends" (p. 197). However, Saudi television encourages local production by paying higher prices for Saudi production companies.

There are three categories for Saudi local production:
A. Available production, which Saudi television will pay 30,000 Saudi riyals ($8,000) for an hour of Saudi
production and 14,000 Saudi riyals ($3,700) for an hour of non-Saudi production with the same quality.

B. Distinguished production, which is of better quality and which Saudi television has a prior knowledge of the story line and the main actors. Saudi television will pay 40,000 Saudi riyals ($10,600) per hour for distinguished production.

C. Special production, which requires that the story be written by a Saudi author and that Saudi actors should participate in some roles. In this case, Saudi television will pay 60,000 Saudi riyals ($16,000) per hour. (obtained from Local Programs Department, December 1989)

It is clear that Saudi television decision-makers encourage local production, but it takes time to create talent in a conservative society with no artistic tradition.

In an interview with Al-Jaser, the Director of News Exchange and Satellite Department of Saudi Television, he explained,

It is difficult to determine the exact percentage of Arabian television programming in Saudi television. However, it is almost an established fact that all television programs that are not locally produced account for 45 percent of transmission time. The Arabian programs are mostly drama production, and like any other commodity, are subject to supply and
demand. Saudi television has its well-known censorship policy and most of the Arabian television production companies try to conform to Saudi television rules. However, when it comes to television programs for exchange, Saudi television officials feel obligated to broadcast Arabian countries' national events, especially their national days. This is a reflection of the Saudi Arabian governmental policy to inform its people about other Arab and Islamic countries. (Personal communication, December 4, 1988)

Beayeyz' (1989) study confirms the accuracy of Saudi Arabian officials' account of their program sources. His results indicated that 45 percent of Saudi television's air time on the main channel is devoted to nonlocal production. Thirty percent of this total consists of Arabian entertainment programs which are largely soap operas. The remaining 15 percent consists of foreign programs, which are primarily wildlife and children's cartoons.

The Saudi problem with local drama production is not an exceptional one. Tunisian and Algerian television officials also voice the same complaint about the lack of local drama production. This translates into a heavy dependence on Egyptian production.
Mass Media Cooperation Orientation

Saudi Arabia's media cooperation effort reflects its government's political priorities. As noted previously, Saudi Arabia joined the Arab States Broadcasting Union in 1974, five years after its establishment. Boyd (1975) believes that the main reason for Saudi Arabia's reluctance to join ASBU was the Egyptian-Saudi conflict and Radio Cairo's attack of the Saudi Arabian royal family. In addition, the whole Arab political formula was changed as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Although the Arabs in general were defeated, the prestige of Nasser of Egypt was impaired. Saudi Arabia and Egypt began to reconcile their differences and normalize their relations. Media cooperation was not the Saudis' first priority, simply because it takes time for attacks and counterattacks to fade from the public's memory. Saudi Arabia became a dominant power in the Arab world after the Arab-Israeli 1973 War, and the oil price increase, which was a result of the Arab oil embargo. These changes affected the political atmosphere and explain the Saudis' more aggressive role in setting the Arab political agenda instead of reacting to it. In 1969, the Saudi government delayed its decision to become an ASBU member. It not only joined ASBU in 1974, but also became very enthusiastic toward establishing ARABSAT in 1976. Saudi Arabia
became the largest shareholder of ARABSAT capital, as well as its headquarter host.

Saudi Arabia has special status in the Islamic world, due to the location of Islam's holiest places, Makkah and Medina. Therefore, since 1975, the Saudi government has felt it obligatory to transmit live coverage of the most important Islamic religious events, which are the Ramadan late prayers (Tarawech) and the pilgrimage rituals (Hajj) (Gulfvision, 1982).

In 1988, Saudi television transmitted the Hajj rituals through satellite to every country that was interested in receiving them. These events included 1) 270 minutes, mid-day and early afternoon, congregational prayers from Arafat, 2) 100 minutes of the descent in haste from Arafat to Muzdaleza, and 3) 200 minutes of the Hajj feast prayers (Satellite and News Exchange Department, 1988).

Saudi television pays for all expenses that are incurred for this live transmission. This service gives its media policy an international dimension. The Saudi government must always consider the Islamic factor when dealing with Arab media cooperation in general. In spite of this, Saudi priority regarding media cooperation is given to the Arabian Gulf States. The first conference of the Gulf States Information Ministers, held in Abuodabi, United Arab Emirates in January 1976, resulted in the
founding of the Arabian Gulf States Joint Program Production Establishment (Al-Noies, 1981). The Joint Program Production Establishment members include Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Qatar, and Kuwait. Its main purpose is to produce high-quality radio and television programs. The Establishment defined its objectives as follows:

1. To revive Arabic and Islamic history.
2. To revive the Gulf heritage, especially the development of folk and popular arts.
3. To raise the standard of radio and television production quality and to disseminate the Gulf people's cultural production.
4. To inform about the Gulf area and the aspects of geography, population, and tourism.
5. To encourage young talent.
6. To give the people who work in radio and television stations the opportunity to work together and benefit from each other's experience. (Al-Noies, 1981; Elewainy, 1984)

To overcome the lack of drama production in Gulf television, several series were produced: "Fathers and Sons," 13 episodes at one hour each; "Abu Khalid's House," 13 episodes at one hour each; and "Gulf Stories," a drama production written by different authors from the Gulf states, containing 15 episodes at one hour each (Al-Noies,
The Joint Program Production Establishment does not concentrate only on drama production. Developmental programs are also a very important part of its production effort. For example, "Your Health," which contains 52 episodes at 30 minutes each, in addition to 260 short messages at about 3 minutes each, encourages the people's awareness of health and safety (Arab Broadcasting, 1983).

The cooperation effort of the Joint Program Production Establishment among the Gulf states has proved successful when the programs that have been produced are considered. The Arabian version of "Sesame Street" is one example, and contains 260 episodes, at 30 minutes each. The program is divided into two parts: the first 130 episodes are geared toward preschool children, and the second 130 episodes are tailored for children between 3 and 9 years of age (Al-Malleh, 1986). Six documentary films about wildlife were produced under the title of "Gulf Treasures," and were 30 minutes each (Arab Broadcasting, 1984).

It is clear that when Arabian Gulf states work together they are able to overcome their differences and produce high-quality programs, and at the same time reduce the production cost for each individual state.

To better coordinate the cooperation effort among the Arabian Gulf states, the Information Ministers agreed to
establish the Gulf Television Corporation (Gulfvision) in their second conference held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in February 1977. The main objective of Gulfvision is to coordinate the cooperation effort among the television authorities, especially the news and program exchange. Section 3 of Article 3 summarizes the Gulfvision objectives: "Increase the exchange of news, programs, data, expertise, personnel, and television material which will be of general benefit to all member states" (Gulfvision, 1979, p. 5).

The television coordination effort of the Arabian Gulf States is demonstrated by a regular exchange of three monthly programs. Each Gulf country prepares one program to be received by other Gulf television stations. These three programs are "Gulf Soiree," a variety program; a drama production program; and a sports report program. The television stations also exchange their television announcers for a 10-day period. For example, Saudi television sends one of its well-known announcers to Kuwait for 10 days and in return, Kuwait television does the same (Gulf TV, 1987).

The cooperation effort of the Arabian Gulf states in both television production, through the Joint Program Production Establishment, and television program exchange coordination, through Gulfvision, is described by Boyd
(1982) as the best cooperation effort example within the Arab countries subregional cooperation. He stated:

Efforts have increased among smaller groups of Arab countries. Probably the best example of this is the continuing effort among Gulf states to cooperate in many facets of broadcasting. This region has achieved what no other area has been able to do: undertake joint television production projects."

(p. 275)

The Arabian Gulf states' cooperation effort should be understood within the context of Arab politics. First there is an overemphasis on the cooperation between Gulfvision and the Arab States Broadcasting Union, or at least there is an attempt to convince other Arab states that Gulfvision is not against the idea of Arab cooperation. The introduction of the Gulfvision agreement states: "consolidate [Gulfvision] the aims and activities of the Arab States Broadcasting Union in this region" (Gulfvision, 1979, p. 4). One of the Gulfvision objectives is to "work toward achieving the aims of the Arab States Broadcasting Union and consolidate cooperation within its framework" (p. 5).

Second, the cooperation efforts were intensified in the late 1970s and early 1980s as a reaction to the Egyptian policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Camp David Accord in 1978 and finally, the Egyptian-Israeli
Peace Treaty in 1979. The introduction of the Television Operation Charter in the Gulf states specifically refers to the extraordinary meeting of the Arab Information Ministers Council, in Baghdad in 1979, whose primary purpose was to take some action against Egypt. It is clear that the Gulf states were looking for an alternative to compensate for the Egyptian boycott and to establish a consensus policy toward the Arabs' new political situation. Even though the charter did not single out the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, a careful reading of the diplomatic wording gives this impression. Article 2 of Chapter 4 concerning news and information programs states:

> News staff should abide in their selection, editing, and presentation of news by objectivity, truth, and impartiality, except in those subjects toward which the states in the region, within the common Arab framework, hold a specific position whether from the political, social, or human point of view. (Gulfvision, 1979; Beayeyz, Appendix C)

During that specific period the only subject that the Arab states maintained a specific position toward was the Camp David Accord which led to the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty.

Saudi Arabian media cooperation is a reflection of its general cooperation policies, which give priority to the Arabian Gulf states. With the exception of Iraq, the
Saudis share almost the same social characteristics with the Gulf states. They also participate in the trend toward more cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council States, of which Iraq is not a member. Cooperation exists with the rest of the Arab countries through the Arab States Broadcasting Union and ARABSAT. Because of the Saudis' unique position as protector of Islam's holiest places, the government cannot afford to exclude the Islamic world as part of its media policies consideration.
CHAPTER III
PAST AND PRESENT MEDIA COOPERATION EFFORTS

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the news and television program exchange projects and arrangements before the introduction of ARABSAT as a new distribution vehicle of television program exchange in the Arab world. An understanding of the cooperation attempt of the news and television program exchanges may shed some light on the constraints facing the previous projects and arrangements. At the same time, it will provide a better understanding of ARABSAT structure regarding its role as a new technological exchange vehicle.

Media Cooperation

A mass media cooperation effort among the Arab states was organized in 1952, in accordance with a recommendation by the Arab League Council meeting held in May 1951. The Arab League established a special organ called The Administration for Information and Publication. The goal of this administrative body was to promote the Arab cause at the international level (Al-Atyah, 1983). The
cooperation effort was a reaction to the Palestinian problem after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The Arab governments believed that in order to gain international support and understanding they needed to unify their efforts through the Arab League regardless of their internal differences.

Al-Atyah (1983), Mosalaha (1983), and Al-Jammal (1985) provided a detailed historical development of various committees. Two important committees need to be mentioned in order to understand ARABSAT. The Permanent Committee for Arab Media was formed in 1960 by a group of experts who were responsible for Arab media joint programs and proposals. The aim of the programs and proposals were to improve the Arab image and promote understanding in the outside world.

The activities of this committee were mainly performed by Arab League offices outside the Arab world. These kinds of coordinated activities were not enough. Apparently, higher decision-makers were needed in order to be more effective. In 1964 the highest Arab media authority within the Arab League, the Council of Arab Information Ministers, held its first meeting. This organization was responsible for establishing strategies and guidelines for Arab national objectives. Mosalaha (1983) summarized these objectives as follows:

1. To counter Zionism propaganda
2. To correct the Arab image in the Western media
3. To inform the world of Arab civilization
4. To disseminate Arab culture
5. To inform people all over the world of Arab contribution to third world development. (p. 39)

These objectives reflect more of a concern with their international image than a well-defined policy to accomplish specific cooperation goals. Giving foreign affairs priority is one way of dealing with the decolonization attempt to be an equal partner rather than a former colony.

**ASBU Establishment**

With the development of media technologies, and especially the establishment of television stations in most Arab countries, the Arab governments started to reevaluate their media approach and policies. The turning point in this direction was the Arab Ministers of Information Conference, which was held in Tunisia in 1967. According to Shagroon (1980) the former ASBU General Secretary, in that conference,

In honest self-criticism about the Arab media shortcomings, the Arab media conduct was considered to be a major reason for the Arab defeat in the 1967 war. Therefore, a fundamental change should be taken
at three levels: local, national, and international. (p. 33)

The new attitude attempted to provide a balance between the reaction to external influence and the demand for improving local media through national cooperation. This Pan-Arabism came to fruition in 1969 with the establishment of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), a specialized agency of the League of Arab States. The purpose of ASBU is to coordinate the Arab states' efforts in the area of radio and television, specifically, by sharing expertise, training employees, and coordinating activities (Al-Arnoti, 1981; Rushty, 1983).

**News Exchange**

Shortly after the establishment of the ASBU, news exchange between Arab countries became an issue. The first study by ASBU was conducted in 1970 to determine the value of news items that every Arab television station carried about other Arab countries. The study found that a given television station carried an average number of five news items per week. According to Al-Arnoti (1981), the study concluded the low-volume exchange was due to several reasons:

1. Lack of bilateral agreement
2. Low technical standards in news film production
3. Delay in shipment because of flight schedules, customer checkpoints, and political approval of the news items

4. Lack of a specialized agency for coordination

The news content and sources of five Arab countries' television station broadcasts were analyzed (Tunisia, Morocco, Kuwait, Qatar, and Abu Dabi) for two weeks, October 15-28, 1983. The study found that the average daily news items that dealt with Arab news were U.S. news items. However, the source of the news was 56.28 percent from Eurovision, 32.93 percent Visenews, and only 10.77 percent from Arab sources (Labeab, 1984). In comparison to the study that ASBU conducted in 1970, there was an increase of news items broadcast by Arab television stations, from five news items per week to four and a half every day. The two studies were conducted differently. The first dealt with direct exchange while the second study included the sources of the news, of which Arab sources counted for only 10.77 percent.

Because of the ASBU studies arrangements were made that would allow Arab television stations to exchange news items among themselves. Three subregional centers for television news exchange were established. Gandeel (1985), Rushty (1983), and Khalil (1983) believed that the decision was based on the criteria that every subregional center would have access to satellite services, which
would enable each center to exchange its news items with the other two centers. Although having satellite access between subregions is extremely important, other socio-political factors should be considered. The historical emergence of the states in each subregion differs and the social structure of the Maghrib states is different from those in the Gulf states. Even the governments tend to give more priority to economic cooperation within the subregion as opposed to the larger Arab region. The three subregional centers were:

1. Maghribvision, which included Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. The exchange center was located in Al-Rybat, Morocco.

2. El-Mashregvision, which included Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. The exchange center was in Amman, Jordan.

3. Gulf and Arabian Peninsula, which included Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, North and South Yemen. The exchange center was in Kuwait.

Maghribvision started in 1966, before the establishment of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (Al-Najar, 1984). This is another example of how the Arab governments gave higher priority to subregional cooperation instead of to Arab media cooperation in general. According to Gandeel (1985):
The agreement was to use every available means for news exchange, microwave network, planes between Tunisia and Libya, car or motorcycle between Damascus and Amman. One country could even record another country's news and use it later for its news bulletins. (pp. 31-32)

This situation continued until 1978 when the Arab countries realized that they were becoming more dependent on Eurovision Service. According to Rushty (1983) and Gandeel (1985), almost all Arab countries received foreign news services. For example, Jordan received a daily news package from Eurovision via satellite; Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia received Eurovision Service as active members of Eurovision; the Gulf area received a daily news package from French Television and Eurovision. It was apparent that instead of exchanging news among themselves Arab television stations were receiving foreign news services.

Rushty (1983) and Gandeel (1985) pointed out that the utilization of Eurovision by satellite and other news services provided better service than what was available within the Arab world in three aspects:

1. The news being received from foreign services was same day news, unlike the news from the Arab world, which was relatively old.

2. The quality of foreign news services was better, because it was well edited and in color.
3. Lack of trained personnel in the Arab television stations and lack of coordination between the television stations in terms of financial arrangement.

To evaluate this experience, an ASBU (1985) report stated that:

We cannot claim that the exchange through the three subregions was a waste, it provided the Arab television stations with what was possible within the existing circumstances. However, the most important aspect of the exchange arrangement was that it proved that a permanent television news exchange is feasible and necessary in the future. (p. 6)

As most of the Arab countries became more dependent on Eurovision Service, the three subregional centers became practically obsolete. ASBU then began to look at another alternative, which was to establish a regular news exchange network via INTELSAT. The General Secretariat of ASBU formed a working group to study the possibility of establishing a permanent Arab news exchange network. The working group submitted its findings to ASBU's General Assembly's Eighth Annual Meeting in 1976. Accordingly, ASBU's General Assembly formed another committee, the Expertise Committee, in addition to the Working Committee, to carry the recommendations into the operational stage. After several meetings, the two committees presented their final proposal, which was the establishment of Arabvision.
This project was adopted by the Commission of Organization and Coordination of News Exchange at its meeting in December 1977 (ASBU, 1985, p. 7).

This new news exchange project, Arabvision, was scheduled to begin in 1978. However, this project never took place for the reasons mentioned in the 1985 ASBU report, which were the lack of adequate technical and organizational infrastructure, and the Arab states' boycott of Egypt after the Camp David agreement.

This exemplifies the typical Arab dilemma. Two committees conducted field studies and found that the Arab states were ready to start a news exchange network. When they presented their findings, the decision-makers found reasons not to implement the Committees' recommendations. As Abu Audah, the former Minister of Information in Jordan, clearly stated, "the follow up, which is part of the execution, is one of the third world's major problems. Most decisions and resolutions remain in a blueprint form" (Arab Broadcasting, 1983, p. 151).

Television Program Exchange

There is apparently only one study on television program exchange, which was conducted by Khalil in 1983. The study emphasized media organization in the Arab world, including news agencies and print media, rather than concentrating on an empirical study of the program
exchange. Even the comparative program studies are very few because of the difficulty of obtaining accurate empirical data. This is mainly due to the lack of standard measurement that all countries, or at least the majority of them, follow. Al-Najar (1983) conducted a comparative television program study for seven Arab countries with a team of members representing each country. However, he dropped two of these countries because they did not follow the same measurement procedure even though they had agreed in advance to a measurement standard. Television authorities in the Arab world are more geared to their daily operation, and subsequently do not pay much attention to the bookkeeping of their programming exchange. Algeria proved to be an exception as seen in their very detailed program exchange record. However, the General Secretariat for ASBU developed two directories for program exchange: one for radio and another for television. These two directories depended mainly on what radio and television authorities provided them. In an ASBU report (1985), it was stated that "the directories contain accurate information about programs that are available for exchange" (p. 34). Looking at the television program directory, it included four categories: program name, program type, the duration of the program, and a list of all Arab countries. Under the list of countries category, indication was made as to whether a
particular country was the producer of the program or the receiver of the program.

The problem with the television program directory exchange was that it was far from accurate. The type and duration of program categories were not completed by the countries who received programs. It was very difficult to utilize the available information from the directory itself. Utilizing additional sources was an important procedure to compensate for this missing information of the television program directory. Thus, Arab Broadcasting, which is a journal published by ASBU, was used for the description of program content to substitute for the type of program category in the television program directory. The Information Bulletin, which is published by Gulfvision, was utilized for the Arabian Gulf. From all the available information for the year 1981, a reasonable example of television program exchange was represented. ASBU headquarters was moved to Tunisia after Egypt was expelled from the Arab League in 1979, and it took the ASBU General Secretariat some time to reestablish itself. The Arab states were also preparing for the launching of ARABSAT, with the expectation of solving the television exchange deficit in the Arab world.

Algeria and Kuwait provide an example of television programs exchange before the utilization of ARABSAT because they are very active in providing the ASBU General
Secretariat with their program productions and activities. For this reason they were chosen as indicators of the types and volume of television programs that were offered for exchange through the ASBU television exchange arrangement. These two countries represent two different sociopolitical systems: Algeria is a Socialist country, and Kuwait is a small monarchy in the Arabian Gulf.

A. Algeria

Algerian television offered a considerable amount of programs for exchange in 1981. By following the UNESCO classification of programs, Algerian television programs could be classified as follows:

1. **Information**
   - 300 minutes - political subjects
   - 30 minutes - cultural information
   - 330 minutes total

2. **Cultural Programs**
   - 1,250 minutes - episodes about different countries, entitled "Greater Investigation"
   - 220 minutes - series about different cities, entitled "Great Cities"
   - 390 minutes - dealing with history, mainly Islamic history in Africa
   - 75 minutes - literature and poetry
   - 40 minutes - wildlife
   - 170 minutes - opera
   - 82 minutes - ballet
   - 45 minutes - visual art
   - 2,272 minutes total
3. **Entertainment**

- 93 minutes - film
- 500 minutes - serials
- 990 minutes - varieties
- 50 minutes - songs
- 1,633 minutes total

4. **Religious**

- 30 minutes total

**B. Kuwait**

Kuwait television in 1981 offered the following programs for exchange:

1. **Information**

- 216 minutes - information about development in Kuwait
- 110 minutes - information about sports
- 326 minutes total

2. **Cultural Programs**

- 171 minutes - opera
- 171 minutes total

3. **Entertainment**

- 1,537 minutes - series and serials
- 332 minutes - television plays
- 1,305 minutes - varieties
- 1,360 minutes - sports
- 695 minutes - songs and music
- 5,229 minutes total

4. **Religious**

- 46 minutes total

It is clear that Algerian television offered more cultural programming than Kuwait television. On the other hand, Kuwait television offered more entertainment programs. This is due to the cost of production
associated with entertainment programs, which Kuwait television can afford. The political system was also reflected in the production orientation. Algeria, as a Socialist country controlled by the National Liberation Front, was more lenient toward political mobilization: out of 2,272 minutes of its cultural programming, there are 1,250 minutes devoted to other countries' sociopolitical systems.

The problem with television program exchange in the Arab world is seen not only in the quantity of television program production, but is also reflected in the low quality of this production. In a symposium about the problem of production and distribution of television programs in the Arab world, a handful of prominent producers stated that:

One of the major problems producers face is the censorship practice in the Arab world. A producer is subjected to a very long list of forbiddens, which force him to modify his original transcript constantly to the extent that the work loses its originality. Or for the producer to be on the safe side, he will choose the traditional stories of love, individual heroism, or at best will draw some storyline from historical events that are not relative to existing societies. (Arab Broadcasting, 1983, p. 25)
ARABSAT Structure

The idea of ARABSAT originated in 1967 during a Ministry of Information meeting that was held in Tunisia. The original idea was to seek a satisfactory communication system to connect all Arab countries in terms of television coverage in order to exchange cultural and educational programs among Arab states (Gandeel, 1985).

After the establishment of Arab States' Broadcasting Union (ASBU) in 1969, the initiative was taken. Thus the ASBU Engineering Committee studied the technological alternatives that best fit the Arab states' objectives. In 1970, the Arab States' Broadcasting Union adopted its Engineering Committee's recommendations that space telecommunication technology was the most advanced available technology and must be considered as the best means to connect the Arab world (Al-Jaber, 1984; Al-Galayyni, 1984).

At the beginning of the project, Arab Telecommunication Union was hesitant in accepting the idea of ARABSAT. This situation continued until 1974, when the Arab Telecommunication Union formed a joint committee with ASBU. The joint committee recommended the establishment of an independent entity to transfer the project from merely an idea to a practical plan (Al-Gaysee, 1986).

Bullock (1985) believed the shift that took place in 1974 when the Arab Telecommunication Union became involved
in the ARABSAT project was a result of the increased foreign-exchange revenues after the Arab oil embargo in 1973. The increase in oil prices consequently introduced Arab oil-producing countries to truly big business on an international scale.

From 1970 until 1976, there were many meetings and committees that followed the project planning stages. The main players during this period were the Arab States Broadcasting Union, which was responsible for the mass media aspect of ARABSAT, and the Arab Telecommunication Union, which was in charge of the technical part (Dahlawi, 1982).

These committee meetings and proposals produced fruit during the Arab Ministers of Transportation and Telecommunication's third conference, held in Cairo, April 12-14, 1976. The Ministers signed the ARABSAT agreement (ARABSAT, 1976).

Article II of the agreement states and authorizes the establishment of an independent entity called the "Arab Satellite Communication Organization" within the Arab League jurisdiction. The organization is a fully autonomous legal entity (ARABSAT, 1976).

ARABSAT Objectives

The objectives of ARABSAT are to provide an Arab space segment for public service, which specializes in the field of wire and wireless communications for all
members of the League of the Arab States in accordance with technical and economic international standards. These objectives are:

1. The organization will achieve the above objectives by:
   a. Assisting Arab states "technically and financially" in establishing their earth stations.
   b. Conducting studies that are related to space technology.
   c. Encouraging the industry of space technology and related industries.
   d. Transmitting television and radio signals between Arab states by means of ARABSAT, and by regulating the usage of radio and television channels according to individual domestic country needs.
   e. Other activities that will serve the organization's objectives whenever that might be suggested by one or more of ARABSAT members, after obtaining the approval of the General Assembly. (ARABSAT, 1976, p. 6-7)

After the establishment of ARABSAT, the organization started to conduct studies about satellite traffic and usage. ARABSAT distributed two surveys for all members. The first was sent in June 1978, and its results were released in "The Preliminary Traffic Analysis Report" in
September 1978. The second survey was sent in July 1979 with another report following in February 1980. These surveys found that telephone services needed about 8,741 half circuit for local and regional use, and between 8 and 9 transponders for local, regional, and community television. All these studies were conducted under the supervision of COMSAT, which served as the ARABSAT technical advisor (ARABSAT, 1981).

In November 1979, ARABSAT began accepting bids from competitive western companies to manufacture the satellite, but only one company was able to submit its bid due to Arab sanctions against companies that dealt with Israel. As a result of the lack of bidding companies, the Arab League made exceptional rules and waived the sanction for those companies interested in participating in manufacturing ARABSAT (ARABSAT, 1984).

According to Bullock (1985), five companies submitted their bids on July 19, 1980. These companies were: Hughes Aircraft and RCA Astro-Electronics of the U.S.A., Spar Aerospace of Canada, and an Anglo-French consortium of British Aerospace Dynamics and Matra, Aerospace of France, closely teamed with Ford Aerospace and Communications.

In April 1981, the ARABSAT General Assembly selected Aerospatial of France to be the prime contender for the development and production of the satellites, with Ford
Aerospace as subcontender. Three communication satellites were built—two to be launched, and the third as a ground spare. The contract worth was approximately $134 million (Al-Gaysee, 1986).

The first serious problem that confronted ARABSAT occurred when a U.S. Congressman raised the question that some governments participating in ARABSAT were unfriendly toward the United States. Those governments were Libya, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. However, the State Department approved the deal, on the grounds that ARABSAT was an international organization. Dealing with this entity did not constitute recognition or imply endorsement of its constituent members (Broad, 1985).

The second problem that faced ARABSAT concerned coordination with INTELSAT, which maintains a monopoly over international communication via satellite. According to INTELSAT bylaws every INTELSAT member must coordinate with INTELSAT authorities before utilizing an independent satellite service. To overcome this legal problem, Saudi Arabia represented ARABSAT and explained to INTELSAT that the economic impact of ARABSAT would not exceed .028 percent of INTELSAT's operation.

As for the technical part, ARABSAT provided higher downlink power, which reduced the size and cost of the
earth stations. So INTELSAT approved the establishment of the new system in April 1980.

These were the major problems ARABSAT faced in acquiring technology from the United States.

The first ARABSAT satellite was launched by French Ariane Rocket on February 8, 1985, and the model was located at 19 degrees east longitude (Aviation Week and Space Technology, 1985).

Some technical problems occurred when the satellite deviated from its designated orbit position more than what was allowed. This encouraged ARABSAT to sue the insurance company for some compensation (Abu-Khatwa, 1985).

The second satellite was launched by the space shuttle, Discovery, which was owned by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The launch on June 18, 1985 was very successful, because ARABSAT went through several changes and last-minute measurements to avoid the first launch problems (Broad, 1985).

The model was stationed 26 degrees longitude east. The ground control stations, the main one in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and the support station in Tunisia, were then completed. Accordingly, after the launching of the operational satellite ARABSAT declared that August 22, 1985 was the first day of ARABSAT in operation. The first ARABSAT transmission was the Hajj ritual from Makkah (Labeab, 1985).
The Organizational Structure of ARABSAT

According to the ARABSAT agreement (1976), the organization contains three parts: General Assembly, Board of Directors, and Executive Organ.

General Assembly. The General Assembly is the highest authority of the organization. It establishes the general policy of ARABSAT. Its responsibilities include the planning of ARABSAT activities and assuring that the organization accomplishes its objectives. The General Assembly contains all Arab States' Ministers of Telecommunications and others who may be included by "written authorization." The chairman of the General Assembly's regular meeting is selected according to the alphabetical order of ARABSAT members, and each representative has one vote. The General Director of ARABSAT acts as a general secretary for the General Assembly's meeting, and he is the one who calls for the meeting. The General Assembly has observer members who are not qualified to vote. These include the Arab League, Arab States' Broadcasting Union, Arab Telecommunication Union, and Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science. Also, some related agencies may attend the assembly meeting as observers after receiving the General Assembly's approval. According to Article #7 of Section 7 of the General Assembly's bylaws, all the discussion and the session's documentation are classified (ARABSAT, 1976).
Board of Directors. The Board of Directors contains nine members. From those nine members, the highest five investors are considered to be permanent members, and the remaining four are to be elected by the General Assembly for a two-year period without renewal. The five permanent members are Saudi Arabia, Libya, Egypt (now suspended), Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. Representatives from the Arab League, Telecommunication Union, Arab States' Broadcasting Union, and Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science are observer members in the open session only. The General Director also attends the meeting, but he does not have the right to vote. The Board of Directors are responsible for implementing the general policy of the General Assembly. They appoint the General Director after the General Assembly's approval, and prepare the annual report of ARABSAT activities and its financial status (ARABSAT, 1978).

The Executive Organ. This part of the organization contains administrative and managerial units under the General Director of ARABSAT. There are enough employees and technicians to run the organization. They are to be changed according to their qualifications with as much consideration given to geographical distribution as possible (ARABSAT, 1976).
ARABSAT Services

There are five kinds of services that ARABSAT is capable of offering to its users.

1. Program and news exchange. This service aims to provide direct program exchanges among Arab countries. It also establishes a network for news exchange to supplant dependence on the international news agencies for news coverage in the Arab world. The basic rule for Arab program and news exchange is that each individual country may transmit whatever program it deems acceptable for other countries' stations, and each country will receive whatever it thinks suitable for its domestic audience according to local government media policies.

2. Educational Broadcasting. From the beginning, the Arab States' Broadcasting Union emphasized the utilization of ARABSAT for educational purposes, especially for those in rural areas who lack the basic facilities for conventional education due to teacher shortages. In addition, those people cannot afford to move to metropolitan areas, so functional literacy, new farming methods, and vocational education are most important for them. In 1979, Gulfvision administrators approved a plan to utilize ARABSAT for daily educational and developmental programs to be broadcast simultaneously to Arabian Gulf States, emphasizing nonconventional education. However, this project is still in the planning
stage. In addition, there is a cooperative effort among many special organizations to utilize ARABSAT services for educational purposes. Among those are the Arab States' Broadcasting Union, Arab Organization for Science, Education, and Culture, and Gulfvision. However, nothing concrete has come out of these recommendations or committees.

3. **Data transmission.** This service includes electronic mail, teleconferences, telegraph, telefacsimile, and newspaper publications from different geographical locations. These kinds of services deal with all aspects of information societies from banking services to airline reservations.

4. **Emergency communication.** This service is designed for rescue missions during disaster events. In case of communication interruption, this special agency will utilize mobile transmission and receiver service in the location where it is needed. This kind of service also includes tele-medicine, which will connect the metropolitan physicians with physicians in small towns when consultations or supervision in critical situations are needed.

5. **Domestic telecommunication.** One of ARABSAT's purposes is to provide its members with all their domestic communication needs. ARABSAT was designed to have 50 percent of its capacity available for individual states in
order to utilize their domestic communications. In this manner, the local authorities use the ground stations for both regional program exchange and local television broadcasting, which increases the cost effectiveness for local governments and ARABSAT at the same time.

**ARABSAT Accomplishment**

ARABSAT submitted a report for the Arab Information Ministries Council at its 22nd annual meeting. This meeting coincided with the second anniversary of ARABSAT's operational existence. The report summarized ARABSAT's activities during the first two years as relates to communication, mainly broadcasting. These existing services include the following.

1. **Regional television exchange.** In cooperation with Arab States' Broadcasting Union and Arab television stations, there is a daily news package exchange via ARABSAT. It is prepared by television stations that participate in ARABSAT and sent to the Arab Center for News and Program Exchanges (a specialized agency of ASBU) in Algiers. The center rearranges the news package and transmits it back to all Arab countries via ARABSAT. ARABSAT uses channel 23, which is devoted to regional television transmission.

The same procedure is applied to an Arab variety program called "Arabian Night." This program is prepared weekly by one of the Arab television stations and is
transmitted via ARABSAT to the 15 Arab countries who have
ground stations capable of receiving the ARABSAT signal.

2. **Mutual exchange and multipoint.** With the
coordination between ARABSAT and two ground stations, two
countries can exchange their news or transmit it for
multipoint. These activities include official visits and
sports events.

3. **Joint regional and international programs.**
These programs appeal to the majority of the Arab audi­
cence. Examples include the pilgrim event in Makkah, World
Cup and Gold Cup, and Gulf Culture Week in Japan.

4. **Teleconferencing.** Saudi Arabia uses one-fourth
transponder for teleconferencing between three cities
within its exclusive network. This service could be
extended for other countries who may need it.

5. **Radio service.** There is a weekly radio program
broadcast via ARABSAT for all Arab countries.

6. **Domestic networking.** There are three countries
who use ARABSAT for their domestic network. These
countries are Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Mauritania. The
network is utilized for television and telephone services.
Tunisia uses one-fourth transponder for data services.
Libya, Morocco, and Sudan are on their way to using
ARABSAT for their local network.

7. **International news agencies.** There is some
cooperation between ARABSAT and international news
agencies, allowing some news agencies to utilize ARABSAT for their services.

8. Community television. This service is technically available. Its main goal is to reach rural areas in the Arab world. This service was supposed to be a cost effective operation because it was designed to be received by very small ground stations. The group viewers service costs ARABSAT 20 percent of its original cost on S-Band, but it has yet to be utilized. In an interview with Faisal Zidan, the ARABSAT Chairman of the Board of Directors, he indicated that:

The S-Band service was designed to carry developmental television programs concerning health, agriculture, and general and informal education to reach the vast majority of people in rural areas, but unfortunately, Arab governments have not agreed on a single policy to utilize it yet. We in ARABSAT are still hopeful that these governments will find one way or another to use this service, since these governments insisted on including S-Band with the extra 20 percent of the satellite's total cost. (personal communication, November 28, 1988)

The Utilization of ARABSAT

According to the ARABSAT official estimate, the actual utilization of the total transponders' capacity are as follows:
1. 17.2 percent of the total transponders' capacity that is allocated for regional telephone traffic
2. 41 percent of the total capacity that is allocated for domestic networks
3. Regional television service
   A. Daily transmission, 86 minutes
   B. Daily reception, 306 minutes

The official estimate that was provided to this researcher in December 1988 did not include the percentage of the regional television service, although Labeab (1988), an Arab media consultant who worked for ASBU until the end of 1987, reported that the regional television service was equal to 10.4 percent of the transponders' total capacity allocated to the regional television program exchange. Al-Baiery, the General Director of ARABSAT, projected an increase in the use of regional television service in the future.

The Investment in ARABSAT

Article 5 of the ARABSAT agreement specifies the organizational capital, which is $100 million divided into one thousand shares. Each share is worth $100,000, and this is subject to increase at the suggestion of the Board of Directors and the approval of the General Assembly. When ARABSAT increased its capital to two thousand shares, it reflected a doubling of its capital, as shown in Table 1.
Table 1

Shares of the Arab Countries in ARABSAT Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Shares</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>North Yemen</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>South Yemen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Unsold shares</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 2,000 100.0

Obtained from ARABSAT Headquarters in Riyadh.
Collective Approach

The utilization of ARABSAT for news and television programs exchange contains a collective element in the decision-making process. The Arab states formed a committee in 1977 to coordinate the utilization of ARABSAT. It is called the Arab Joint Committee for the Utilization of ARABSAT for Communication, Culture, and Development. The committee includes the following organizations: Arab League; Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU); Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO); ARABSAT; Arab Union for Telecommunication; Arab Union for News Agencies; Gulfvision; and the Union of Arab Universities.

The importance of this committee is seen in the collective approach toward the utilization of ARABSAT with nationalistic objectives. Every organization member is in charge of its special area with the coordination of all other organizations. For example, ALECSO is responsible for the coordination of the educational and cultural television programs which are produced specifically for the exchange via ARABSAT, while ASBU is in charge of the exchange mechanism. Another important aspect of news and television programs exchange is the Arab nationalistic appeal. In an ASBU meeting on April 15, 1985, television programs exchange plans were discussed. The participant
members adopted the following criteria as guidelines for the television programs exchange via ARABSAT:

1. The television program should maintain the highest technical quality within the capability of the producing country.

2. The language of the television program should be classical Arabic unless the artistic nature of the program requires some sort of local dialect, and then local dialogue should be kept to a minimum.

3. The content of the television program should not, by any means, suggest the degrading of recipient countries' religious beliefs or moral values, local customs, tradition, or common behavior.

4. The content of the television program should not include anything that might be interpreted as propaganda (advocate or opposition) for certain Arab political or social systems.

5. The television program should accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

   A. Provide information about a certain aspect of the producing country's artistic, cultural, social, or geographic elements, or any event that has not been covered appropriately.

   B. Concentrate on the shared element of Arab culture, historical or contemporary.
C. Concentrate on the positive interaction between the Arab culture and other human civilizations and cultures.

D. Insure balance between information, culture, and entertainment.

All these criteria emphasize the Arab common culture which indicates the nationalistic aspect of the ARABSAT project. In ALECSO's (1987) study of Arab media, it emphasized the role of ARABSAT in relation to Arab nationalism. "The most important criteria of ARABSAT success must be whether it would accomplish its nationalistic objectives which the media [cooperation] ranks as one of the main objectives" (p. 166).

The collective approach taken by Arab countries was a significant factor in shaping the television program exchange via ARABSAT.
CHAPTER IV
NEWS AND TELEVISION PROGRAM EXCHANGE VIA ARABSAT

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the pattern of news and television programs exchange utilizing ARABSAT within the context of the Arab world's sociopolitical culture. Arab countries exhibit different policies toward media cooperation. The three countries which were examined in the study, Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia, indicated that their television cooperation policy priority is toward subregional cooperation—Maghrib subregion (Maghribvision) for Tunisia and Algeria, and Arabian Gulf subregion (Gulfvision) in the case of Saudi Arabia. The introduction of satellite technology in the Arab world, however, lead Arab countries to adopt a collective approach in utilizing the new information technology for news and television programs exchange. The establishment of the Arab Joint Committee for the Utilization of ARABSAT and the adoption of specific criteria for news and television programs exchange helped to reduce the differences between these countries and maximized the
level of television programs acceptance by their various political economic systems.

Data Collection and Analysis

For this particular study, 20 months of news and television programs exchange via ARABSAT were examined. While gathering data for research, the ARABSAT headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia were visited from November-December, 1988, to January-February, 1989. The ARABSAT headquarters officials refused to release any specific information regarding news and television programs exchange on the grounds that they were classified. After many visits to the ARABSAT headquarters during November and December, 1988, the General Director requested that a petition be obtained that was signed by 21 independent Arab states, in addition to the Palestine Liberation Organization (the owners of ARABSAT). The petition was to specifically ask permission to release this information, which was considered an onerous task, at best. During the writing of the study’s proposal in the United States, the General Director indicated through telephone contact that ARABSAT was willing to provide this information. However, ARABSAT made available only the general information, not the specific information. For example, they provided a list of the total minutes of news and television programs exchanged on a monthly basis.
During frequent visits to the Saudi Arabian television station, the Director of News and Satellite exchange provided the Saudi television news and programs exchanged via ARABSAT. However, not all the Arab countries who participated in the exchange were included. The same situation arose with the Kuwait television station, which only provided information about their own television programs exchanges. The General Secretariat of the Arab States Broadcasting Union in Tunis provided a duplicate printout of the ARABSAT Computer Center which included the news and television programs exchange between Arab countries from January 1, 1986 to September 23, 1987, with the exception of April 1986, which were missing. The computer printout included the date of television program that was exchanged, the number of the program to avoid accounting the program more than once, the country that originated the program, the length of the program, the country that received the program, the exact length of the program that was received by a given country, and the subject of the program. These are the data which were summarized for the present study.

Population

The data utilized in the present study included almost 20 months of news and television programs exchange, or 538 days. The entire population was included for two reasons: 1) some countries contributed very little news
or television programs on a specific day, and 2) the available data dealt with a relatively short period of time (less than two years). It appeared to be more appropriate to utilize the entire population rather than take a sample in order to ensure that all Arab countries who contributed to the television programs exchange scheme in these early months of operation were included.

Content Analysis

Bookkeeping accuracy is necessary when charging for ARABSAT news and television programs exchange services. Seven important variables were included in the bookkeeping which were utilized for the analysis of the television programs exchange between Arab countries: date of the exchange, number of programs, country originating the program, length of originated program, recipient country, length of received program, and type of program. All these variables were operationalized by ARABSAT and their schemes were utilized.

The program type was also listed without any confusion. This was mainly due to the limited number of program types. Instead of listing the name of the program, the program content was listed. For example, the program types were listed in this way: Football match between team X and team Y; Country X independent day; Cultural program about poetry from country Y; "Sahra Arabia" (Arabian Soiree) from country Z; or news. The
program types were coded into six categories: information, religious, variety, cultural, news, and sport. In order to present specific types of programs, the general category of entertainment programs was divided into variety and sport. These represented the only entertainment programs that were exchanged. Due to the predominance of news, it was separated from the information category. The news and sport programs were heavily represented in the exchange listings.

The study dealt with television programs exchanged between Arab countries. Therefore, the country which participated in the programs exchange and utilized ARABSAT became the unit of analysis, although there may have been some bilateral exchanges through other means such as microwave or tape exchange. The study does not claim to include all television programs exchanges between Arab countries, but only presents the ones that utilized ARABSAT.

Institutional Arrangement

ARABSAT provided Arab countries with a six-month experimental period which was free of charge. The experimental period began October 1, 1985 and lasted through the end of March 1986. However, only the second half of the free experimental period was available for study (January through March, 1986). This period was treated separately on the basis of the economic factor,
because ARABSAT charged $8.00 for the uplink segment, $8.00 for the point-to-point downlink, and $4.00 for the multi-point downlink (Omar Shotar, Marketing Director of ARABSAT, personal communication, November 20, 1988). One would assume that the free exchange pattern would be different from the exchanges requiring expenditure.

The exchange scheme began by utilizing Tunisian television equipment with the supervision of the Arab States Broadcasting Union. This institutional arrangement continued until the establishment of the Arab Center of News and Television Programs Exchange in Algeria. The center began coordinating the programs exchange on March 11, 1987 from Algeria. Although the center is part of Arab States Broadcasting Union, it is headquartered in Tunisia. All these institutional arrangements were considered when examining the television programs exchange.

The Exchange During the Free Experimental Period

There were 16,306 minutes of television programs available for the exchange during the second half of the free experimental period, which included January through March, 1986. The distribution of minutes used are presented in Table 2. The largest amount of television programs exchanged consisted of news, which accounted for 46.9 percent of the total minutes that were available for the exchange, or 7,647 minutes. Sports programs accounted for 33 percent, or 5,390 minutes of the total television
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>News</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,382</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>199</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>319</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>195</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Yemen</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Many countries did not have ground stations.
programs. The third largest amount of television programs were the variety programs, which accounted for 14 percent, or 2,337 minutes. The information programs accounted for 3.7 percent of the total Arab originated television programs. Cultural programs accounted for 1.7 percent and religious programs accounted for less than 1 percent, which was the lowest percentage of television programs exchanged during the free exchange period.

The volume of television program types suggests that the nature of the distribution vehicle, in this case satellite technology, has a relationship to the types of television programs. In other words, when a television program is sports, it is more likely to be exchanged via ARABSAT. News and sports programs accounted for 79.9 percent of the total television programs that were exchanged during the three month period.

Table 2 indicates that 10 Arab countries contributed directly to the ARABSAT television programs exchange. Other Arab countries may have participated in the exchange indirectly through some kind of institutional arrangement. Some countries sent their television programs to Tunisian television to be recast via ARABSAT with the coordination of the General Secretariat of ASBU. Other countries utilized their microwave networks to transmit programs to the most convenient satellite ground stations: Iraq utilized the Jordanian satellite ground station; Qatar and
United Arab Emirates utilized the Kuwait ground station; Libya and Morocco utilized the Tunisia ground station through microwave network.

Table 2 also shows that Tunisia contributed the highest volume of television programs (4,632 minutes or 28.4 percent) of the total television programs exchanged via ARABSAT. Although these programs may have originated from Tunisia, they are not necessarily Tunisian productions. This is due to the institutional arrangement whereby Arab countries without satellite ground stations have the opportunity to tape their programs and send them to Tunis to be transmitted at a later date. This is done in the case of "Sahra Arabia" (Arabian Soiree), which is scheduled on a weekly basis.

Each Arab country is scheduled to provide one variety program which is rotated between 22 countries. Therefore, each country produces one variety program every 22 weeks. This arrangement becomes clear when looking at the types of programs shown in Table 2.

Tunisia contributed 59.1 percent of the total variety programs and 68.2 percent of the total cultural programs that were exchanged via ARABSAT. These two types of programs are more likely to be taped and sent to Tunisia by Arab countries that do not have ground stations. Table 2 also indicates that Tunisia originated 29.1 percent of the news, which is the highest among the Arab
countries. The high amount of news (2,225 minutes) is due to the Arab daily news package. Each Arab country sends its news to Tunisia via ARABSAT or microwave from Morocco, Algeria, and Libya. Tunisian television then recovers the news with the coordination of the ASBU General Secretariat and resends it to participant countries as one news package.

Bahrain is the second largest contributor to the television programs exchanged, which accounted for 20.9 percent of the total minutes available for the exchange. Bahrain's substantial contribution to the exchange (3,409 minutes) is due to the large amount of sports (3,056 minutes or 56.7 percent). The sports programs originated from Bahrain had their own nationalistic element, because they were not local productions, but involved the Arabian Gulf states. The sports programs that originated from Bahrain were the Gulf Football Tournaments which included Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Iraq.

The third largest contributor to the program exchange is Saudi Arabia which accounted for 13.3 percent, followed by Kuwait with 12.3 percent. The least contributed to the television program exchange is Mauritania, which accounted for less than 1 percent as shown in Table 2. The television programs exchanged during this particular period suggest that the Arabian Gulf states are more likely to
utilize ARABSAT for television programs exchanged among themselves than with other Arab subregions such as Maghrib, simply because of the economic factor.

Program Reception During the Free Exchange

During the free exchange period, Table 3 shows that Kuwait received the highest amount of television programs, 8,199 minutes or 50.3 percent of the total television programs available for exchange. This is due to the Kuwaiti satellite ground station acting as a double hop for Qatar and United Arab Emirates when television programs were retransmitted via INTELSAT satellite above the Indian Ocean. The second largest recipient of television programs is Saudi Arabia, which received 7,376 minutes (45.2 percent) of the total minutes available for exchange. Saudi Arabia received the highest proportion of sports programs (55.1 percent).

Table 3 indicates that, overall, Arab countries exhibited slight differences in terms of the amount of television programs received via ARABSAT. This may be due to the free exchange experiment—as far as receiving a program as long as it does not cost anything. Eventually, each individual country had the ultimate decision of whether or not to broadcast the program. Algeria received the least amount of television programs (2,454 minutes or 15.0 percent) of the total television programs transmitted via ARABSAT. The reason for the low amount of reception
Table 3

Television Program Types Received by Arab Countries During the Free Exchange Period (1-1-86 to 3-31-86)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Information Total (610)</th>
<th>Religious Total (30)</th>
<th>Variety Total (2,337)</th>
<th>Cultural Total (292)</th>
<th>News Total (7,647)</th>
<th>Sport Total (5,390)</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
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in comparison to other Arab countries is that Algerians may have used the microwave network for receiving television programs from Tunisia, the originated transmission point of most of Arab television programs as shown in Table 2. Also, both Algeria and Tunisia received the lowest amount of sports programs. This may be due to the majority of sports programs involving the Gulf States Football Tournament and television authorities in both countries believing that these Arabian Gulf sports were not appealing to their audience.

Table 4 reveals that almost all Arab countries who participated in the exchange scheme had the highest percentage of programs exchange with Tunisia. Tunisia also received the highest percentages from other Arab countries: 99.8 percent of transmitted television program time from Algeria, 59.4 percent from Kuwait, 87.5 percent from Jordan, 100 percent from North Yemen, and 100 percent from Mauritania. The reason for the high rate of exchange with Tunisia, as mentioned earlier, is due to the institutional arrangement, as most Arab countries sent their television programs to Tunisia in order to be transmitted via ARABSAT.

Table 4 also indicates a tendency among the Arabian Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman, toward high percentages of programs exchanged between themselves than with the rest of the Arab
Table 4

Percentages of Total News and Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries During the Free Exchange Period (1-1-86 to 3-31-86)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Receiving Programs</th>
<th>Country Originating Program</th>
<th>Algeria</th>
<th>Tunisia</th>
<th>Saudi Arabia</th>
<th>Kuwait</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
<th>Bahrain</th>
<th>Oman</th>
<th>Iraq</th>
<th>North Yemen</th>
<th>Diibouti</th>
<th>Total Minutes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<td>--</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>37.7</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>536</td>
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<td>82.5</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>4,632</td>
<td>28.4</td>
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<td>12.0</td>
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<td>61.6</td>
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<td>10.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.1</td>
<td>32.0</td>
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<td>2,002</td>
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<td>20.6</td>
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<td>64.1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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countries. Saudi Arabia received 30.3 percent of Kuwait's total transmission program time, 59.8 percent from Bahrain, and 64.1 percent from Oman. Kuwait received 61.6 percent of Saudi Arabia's total television program transmission time, 71.6 percent from Bahrain, and 66.1 percent from Oman. Bahrain received 38.5 percent from Oman's total television program transmission time, 36.5 percent from Saudi Arabia, and 32.0 percent from Kuwait.

The data indicate that the institutional arrangement between Arab countries influenced the direction of the exchange, with Tunisia being the center because of its association with the General Secretariat of the Arab States Broadcasting Union. There were few major differences among most of the Arab countries in terms of the amount of received television programs. There was a tendency among the Arabian Gulf states toward exchanging more television program transmission time within this particular subregion than with the rest of the Arab world.

Program Exchange Involving Expense

This programs exchange period included 10 months and 10 days, beginning May 1986 through the first 10 days of March 1987. It is separate because ARABSAT began to charge for its service. The same institutional arrangement was used with the coordination of the General Secretariat of ASBU whereby Tunisia was the center for
television programs exchanged via ARABSAT. The total exchange for this period was 25,079 minutes, as shown in Table 5. News accounted for 56.7 percent of the total television programs transmission time available; sports programs accounted for 32.5 percent; information programs accounted for 5.3 percent; variety programs accounted for 3.8 percent; and religious programs accounted for 1.4 percent.

During this exchange period, 15 Arab countries originated television programs for the exchange via ARABSAT. Table 5 shows that Algeria was the largest contributor to the exchange, originating 28.3 percent of the total transmission television program time. Algeria's high contribution to the exchange mainly consisted of sports programs. Its proportion of sports transmission time accounted for 81.5 percent of the total sports programs exchanged via ARABSAT. The sports programs that were exchanged included the World Football Cup which not only had regional appeal, but was also of international interest.

Algeria was one of the lowest contributors to the total news time exchanged via ARABSAT, with 2.4 percent. It ranked ninth among the Arab countries who participated in the exchange.

Tunisia contributed the highest amount of news time which accounted for 32.8 percent, due to the arrangement
Table 5

Television Program Types Originated by Arab Countries (5-1-86 to 3-10-87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Information Total (1,349)</th>
<th>Religious Total (372)</th>
<th>Variety Total (968)</th>
<th>Cultural Total (---)</th>
<th>News Total (14,234)</th>
<th>Sport Total (8,156)</th>
<th>Total (25,079)</th>
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<td>Total (372)</td>
<td>Total (968)</td>
<td>Total (--)</td>
<td>Total (14,234)</td>
<td>Total (8,156)</td>
<td>Total (25,079)</td>
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</table>
between the General Secretariat of ASBU and Tunisian Television to produce an Arab daily news package. This arrangement involved each participating Arab country in the exchange sending its news items to Tunisia. Tunisian television and a coordinator from ASBU then reproduced these news items in one news package which was transmitted back to those Arab countries participating in the exchange. Kuwait contributed 17.4 percent of the total transmission television program time exchanged. Of the total news exchanged via ARABSAT, 20.7 percent originated from Kuwait. This high news volume, 2,953 minutes, may be attributed to Kuwait hosting the 45 member countries of the Islamic Summit during that particular period of the exchange. Iran objected to Kuwait hosting this conference. The resulting conflict between Iran and Islamic countries over the issues of the conference gave it much publicity and consequently high news coverage.

Among the Arab countries, Kuwait contributed the highest amount of the total information programs, with 55.2 percent. This may be due to the large amount of information reported on the Islamic Conference and its issues.

Table 5 also shows that Kuwait contributed 27.5 percent of the total variety programs. This high percentage reflects Kuwait's local production which is recognized by
most Arab countries and Gulf states for its high quality programs.

Iraq contributed 12.4 percent of the total news exchange. This is the only program type contributed by Iraq to the exchange as shown in Table 5. It is interesting to note that even though Iraq only originated news programs, it ranks fourth after Algeria, Tunisia, and Kuwait in terms of its contribution to the total television programs exchange. This high amount of news transmission time may be due to the Iraq-Iran war and the Iraqi interest to gain Arab public support for its war with Iran.

Table 5 also indicates that Saudi Arabia ranks fifth in terms of its contribution to the total program exchange, although it contributed only 5.3 percent. Saudi Arabia is also the only country that contributed religious programs to the exchange, which is understandable. This is because of the location of holy places which got live coverage. Consequently, the utilization of ARABSAT was the logical thing to use. The Hajj ritual appeals not only to the Arab world, but also to all Islamic countries.

There was an impact during the 10 month period when ARABSAT began to charge for the television programs exchange service. The participant countries, however, increased from 10 during the free exchange period to 15 during the period when ARABSAT began to charge for the
exchange service. There is an increase of 53 percent when compared to the second half of the free exchange period. This does not correspond to the increased countries participating in the exchange or the overall time period (three months of free exchange in comparison to 10 months when each country had to pay for its own program exchange).

Omar Shotar, the Marketing Director of ARABSAT, stated:

During the free exchange period Arab countries took the opportunity to exchange what they had, regardless if the television programs were worth exchanging. When ARABSAT began to charge for the service, Arab countries appeared to be more selective in sending and receiving television programs. (Personal communication, November 21, 1988)

This fact is clear when looking at Saudi Arabia, which originated 2,171 minutes during the three months of the free exchange period. During the 10 month exchange period when ARABSAT charged for its services, Saudi Arabia only originated 1,318 minutes. Bahrain's program exchange decreased from 3,409 minutes to only 264 minutes; Jordan's exchange decreased from 1,699 minutes to 1,060 minutes; and Djibouti's exchange decreased from 1,180 minutes to only 65 minutes.
Countries Receiving Television Programs

Table 6 indicates the 16 Arab countries that received transmission time exchanged via ARABSAT. Seven Arab countries accounted for more than 35 percent of the total transmission time and six of these countries were Arabian Gulf states: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, United Arab Emirates, and Iraq. These Arab oil-producing countries receiving the highest amount of television exchange time suggests a relationship between the country's economy and its tendency to utilize satellite for program exchange. Table 6 shows that Qatar received the highest amount of ARABSAT transmission time (53.8 percent), followed by Oman which received 50.8 percent of the total exchanged transmission time.

Table 6 also shows that both Qatar and Oman received very high percentages for all program types. The World Cup appears to have influenced this particular exchange period. The Arab States Broadcasting Union purchased the right to carry the 1986 World Cup football games for $3,722,222. The following active Arab country members of the European Broadcasting Union previously received the World Cup through EBU: Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Lebanon. This arrangement influenced the total time received for these countries.

This discrepancy becomes very clear when examining the total television time received by Saudi Arabia and
Table 6

Television Program Types Received by Arab Countries (5-1-86 to 3-10-87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>News</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total (1,349)</td>
<td>Total (372)</td>
<td>Total (968)</td>
<td>Total (--)</td>
<td>Total (14,234)</td>
<td>Total (8,156)</td>
<td>Total (25,079)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
<td>Min. Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>827 61.3</td>
<td>135 36.3</td>
<td>260 26.9</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,084 28.7</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>5,306 21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>1,048 77.7</td>
<td>232 62.4</td>
<td>842 87.0</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>6,268 43.9</td>
<td>269 3.3</td>
<td>8,639 34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>1,013 75.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>369 38.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>2,009 14.1</td>
<td>7,141 87.6</td>
<td>10,532 42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>313 23.2</td>
<td>267 71.8</td>
<td>301 31.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,764 33.5</td>
<td>6,649 81.5</td>
<td>12,294 49.0</td>
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<td>Jordan</td>
<td>1,035 76.7</td>
<td>370 99.5</td>
<td>838 86.6</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,532 31.8</td>
<td>559 6.9</td>
<td>7,334 29.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>1,060 78.6</td>
<td>262 70.4</td>
<td>566 58.5</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>5,133 36.1</td>
<td>513 6.3</td>
<td>7,534 30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>990 73.4</td>
<td>368 98.9</td>
<td>540 55.8</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,728 33.2</td>
<td>6,860 84.1</td>
<td>13,486 53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>920 68.2</td>
<td>260 69.9</td>
<td>475 49.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,390 30.8</td>
<td>6,697 82.1</td>
<td>12,742 50.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>357 26.5</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>463 3.3</td>
<td>6,467 79.3</td>
<td>7,287 39.1</td>
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<td>Morocco</td>
<td>365 27.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>215 22.2</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,152 29.2</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,732 18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>197 14.6</td>
<td>370 99.5</td>
<td>181 18.7</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,053 28.5</td>
<td>5,757 70.6</td>
<td>10,558 42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yemen</td>
<td>931 69.0</td>
<td>370 99.5</td>
<td>225 23.2</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>4,141 29.1</td>
<td>6,470 79.3</td>
<td>12,137 48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yemen</td>
<td>673 49.0</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>160 1.1</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>833 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Information Total (1,349)</td>
<td>Religious Total (372)</td>
<td>Variety Total (968)</td>
<td>Cultural Total (--)</td>
<td>News Total (14,234)</td>
<td>Sport Total (8,156)</td>
<td>Total (25,079)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>695 51.5</td>
<td>370 99.5</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>179 1.3</td>
<td>4,595 56.3</td>
<td>5,839 23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>905 67.1</td>
<td>102 27.4</td>
<td>400 41.3</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>188 1.3</td>
<td>3,465 42.5</td>
<td>5,060 20.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>141 10.5</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>118 0.8</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>259 1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jordan. Saudi Arabia received 42 percent of the total television programs exchanged, while Jordan received 29.2 percent. With the exception of the sports program category (mainly the World Football Cup), Jordan received higher percentages in all program categories than Saudi Arabia.

It was the same situation with Tunisia, which received 34.4 percent of the total television program exchange time. Tunisia actually received higher percentages than Saudi Arabia in all program types, with the exception of sports. Tunisia received the World Cup games as an active member of the European Broadcasting Union.

Arab countries vary in their television program policy regarding a variety of elements. Saudi Arabia follows very restricted television program guidelines. Mauritania and Djibouti received very high percentages of television program time in comparison to their contribution exchange. They received 23.3 percent and 20.2 percent, respectively, of the total transmission time available for exchange, while they contributed less than 1 percent. This may be due to two basic reasons. First is the lack of local production up to quality of the program exchange standard. The second reason is that the downlink with multi-point transmission is less expensive than the uplink which is a fixed price ($4.00 for the downlink and $8.00 for the uplink).
Reception of Programs

Two important factors appear to influence the decision to receive television programs via ARABSAT. Economic factors determine whether a country is more likely to receive high percentages of programs. This is clear in the case of the Arabian Gulf states. The second factor is the type of television program, whether it appeals to the audience or not. When a television program appeals to the vast majority of the audience, countries tend to receive it regardless of the cost. This is the case for Mauritania and Djibouti with sports programs.

Table 7 indicates that most Arab countries received a very high percentage of television program time from Algeria. Saudi Arabia received 95.2 percent of Algeria's total television time contributed to the exchange; Qatar received 92.6 percent; United Arab Emirates received 92.6 percent; North Yemen received 92.6 percent; Oman received 88.2 percent; Kuwait received 85.3 percent; Iraq received 77.6 percent; Mauritania received 64.7 percent; and Djibouti received 48.8 percent. These high percentages of television programs received from Algeria are mainly due to the Algerian television retransmission of the 1986 World Cup games.

Algeria received programs from only six countries. It received 72.9 percent from Tunisia. This represents the highest percentage due to Tunisian television
Table 7

Percentages of Total News and Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries (5-1-86 to 3-10-87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Alg</th>
<th>Tun</th>
<th>SAR</th>
<th>Kuw</th>
<th>Jor</th>
<th>Bah</th>
<th>Qat</th>
<th>Oma</th>
<th>UAE</th>
<th>Hor</th>
<th>Ira</th>
<th>NYe</th>
<th>SYe</th>
<th>Mau</th>
<th>Djí</th>
<th>Syr</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alg 7,103</td>
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<td>Tun 5,304</td>
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<td>SAR 1,318</td>
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<td>Kuw 4,363</td>
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<td>Jor 1,060</td>
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<td>Bah 264</td>
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<td>Qat 1,094</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oma 1,218</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAE 90</td>
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</table>
Table 7 (continued)

Percentages of Total News and Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries (5-1-86 to 3-10-87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Country Receiving Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alg</td>
<td>Tun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ira</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mau</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djib</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syr</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; Djib: Djibouti; Syr: Syria.
originating the Arab daily news package with the supervision of the General Secretariat of ASBU. The next highest percentage was from Kuwait which contributed 21.8 percent of its total television program exchange time. Algeria also received 14.4 percent from Qatar, 12.3 percent from North Yemen, 10.2 percent from Saudi Arabia, and 9.2 percent from Jordan.

Table 7 also shows that Tunisia received a much higher percentage of television program time available for the exchange via ARABSAT than the vast majority of Arab countries. At the same time, Tunisia ranked second to Algeria in terms of other Arab countries receiving programs that originated from Tunisian television. The high percentage of Tunisia's television exchange with the majority of Arab countries should not project an impression that it dominated the Arab television program exchange. Rather, it reflects the institutional arrangement between Arab countries through the Arab States Broadcasting Union General Secretariat. This is essentially a consolidation between the local policies of individual Arab states.

The Arab Center for News and Program Exchange

ASBU relocated the center of television programs exchange by establishing the Arab Center for News and Television Programs Exchange in Algeria. The idea of
establishing an exchange center for news and television programs goes back to the tenth meeting of the ASBU General Assembly held in Kuwait in 1981. The Algerian delegation proposed that they would provide substantial assistance in establishing an Arab center for news and television programs exchange in Algeria which would still belong to ASBU. The establishment of the center was discussed at all ASBU meetings for the next five years. The decision to establish the center was made during the 36th ASBU Administrative Council in March 1986. Despite the Arab countries' delay in making the decision, the Algerian Radio and Television Establishment appeared to have kept insisting on establishing the center in Algeria. They provided two floors of the Ministry of Transportation building to host the center. Algeria also contributed more than half ($1,400,000) of the center's initial cost which was estimated at $2,400,000. ASBU contributed the remaining $1,000,000 in gradual installments (Arab Broadcasting, 1986).

The hesitancy of ASBU to establish the exchange center in Algeria and Algeria's enthusiasm to found the center suggests that sometimes decisions made by Arab countries are motivated by rivalry rather than pure cooperation. The ASBU headquarters are located in Tunisia. It was more logical to continue the exchange from Tunisia than to establish a new organization that
still belonged to ASBU. The establishment of the center in Algeria created more bureaucracy and financial problems. Algeria's argument for hosting the center was their Intersputnik membership, which could be arranged either by Tunisia joining the Intersputnik or the ASBU sharing the cost, which would be much easier than establishing a separate program exchange entity. Finally, the Exchange Center was established in January 1987 and began the exchange on March 11, 1987.

Contribution of Arab Countries to the Exchange

This section deals with the television programs exchange from the Arab Center for News and Television Programs Exchange in Algeria during the period from March 11 through September 23, 1987. The total program time available for exchange during this six month period was 18,797 minutes. The programs included were 69.0 percent news, 18.5 percent sports, 6.2 percent variety, 2.7 percent information, 1.5 percent religious, and 1.3 percent cultural. It is clear that news dominated the exchange because it does not involve production and fits the distribution vehicle (satellite) spontaneously required. Arab countries may find it difficult to produce high quality television programs acceptable to the majority of the Arab people. Al Basti, the Secretary General of ASBU stated:
The key issue for television programs exchange is program production. Arab governments tend to spend a tremendous amount of money for hardware, from the satellite to very sophisticated television equipment. When it comes to program production one cannot find the financial generosity for software. (Personal communication, January 17, 1989).

Thus the two dominant television programs in the exchange, news and sports, accounted for 87.5 percent of the total television program transmission time. These two program types do not involve sophisticated production, compared to the variety of cultural programs.

Table 8 indicates that Saudi Arabia contributed the highest percentage of the total television program exchange time, which accounted for 19.3 percent. Saudi Arabia also contributed the highest proportion of news, 21.1 percent, which is almost equal to the transmission time contributed by the ASBU daily news package (21.9 percent). The ASBU news package is originated by all Arab countries including Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia also contributed the highest percentage of the total information program transmission time via ARABSAT during this exchange period (48 percent).

Table 8 shows that Saudi Arabia was the only country in the Arab world that originated religious programs, mainly like the coverage of the Hajj ritual. This is most
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>18.7</td>
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<td>221</td>
<td>18.7</td>
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<td>91</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,854</td>
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<td>287</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>11.3</td>
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<td>226</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3,630</td>
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<td>Kuwait</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,464</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>21.0</td>
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<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Jordan</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>12.0</td>
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Note. ASBU is the Arab State Broadcasting Union which originated the Arab news daily package.
likely because the two holiest Islamic places, Makkah and Medina, are located within Saudi Arabia. There was thought to be great interest in programs of this topic. During the exchange from the Arab Exchange Center Saudi Arabia contributed a very high percentage of variety programs (11.3 percent), which is the second highest next to Morocco. Morocco contributed the highest percentage of variety programs (13.6 percent). Thus it appears that Saudi Arabia became more involved in the television programs exchange during the third period than the previous period when the country had experienced some problems with its budget after the oil prices dropped sharply.

The second highest contributor to the television program exchange was ASBU, which contributed 15.4 percent of the total transmission time available via ARABSAT as shown in Table 8. The ASBU contribution was essentially the Arab daily news package. Each individual Arab country participating in the exchange scheme sent its news to the Arab Center for News and Television Programs Exchange in Algeria to be edited and included in the package and sent back to individual Arab countries. Thus during the six months of the exchange period from the Arab Center, ASBU contributed 2,846 minutes in the exchange, which is equal to 98 percent of its total contribution of 2,904 minutes. The only program contribution other than news as shown in
Table 8 is one variety program (58 minutes). This particular variety program comes from Palestine and is entitled "Sahra Arabia." Since Palestine is not yet an independent state, the variety program, as well as all Palestinian television programs, are produced by the Department of Information and Culture of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Palestinian contribution to the exchange was included within the television programs originated from Tunisia. Since the Exchange Center became a semi-independent entity, it became much easier to identify the source of programs because the center did not participate in any production. The importance of the PLO contribution to the exchange provides more evidence of the nationalistic characteristic of the Arab world television program exchange. It also shows how much Arab politics intertwine with media policy, because Palestine is not yet an independent country, but it is part of the television exchange scheme in the Arab world.

The third highest contributor to the exchange was Kuwait which contributed 11.7 percent of the total television program time exchanged via ARABSAT. Table 8 shows that Kuwait contributed two television program types: sports, which accounted for 21.0 percent, and news, which accounted for 11.3 percent. Neither of these program types originated by Kuwait involved sophisticated production requirements. Even Kuwait television, which
was known for its television program production, began to show a scarcity in contributing television programs other than news and sports, compared to its contribution in the previous two periods (Tables 2 and 4).

Tunisia contributed 9.9 percent of the total television program time available for exchange. Table 8 shows that Tunisia was the second highest contributor next to Saudi Arabia in contributing 13.6 percent of the total news program time. This high percentage of news may be due to Arab League activities since most Arab official meetings took place in Tunisia, the host of the Arab League and its specialized agencies. Tunisia contributed 7.7 percent of the total variety program transmission time via ARABSAT. This is the only other program type that was originated by Tunisia during this particular exchange period. Tunisia's decreased contribution to the exchange scheme in comparison to the previous period is due to the relocation of the program exchange point of origin from Tunisia to the Arab Center for News and Program Exchange in Algeria.

Table 8 shows that Iraq contributed the highest percentage of the total cultural programs with 80.7 percent. Iraq's contribution also included information, variety, cultural, and news which, to some extent, was a more balanced contribution in comparison to other Arab countries. Algeria also contributed all types of
programs, with the exception of religious programs. Both Iraq and Algeria have the potential of contributing more television programs to the exchange via ARABSAT due to their level of social development and economic resources.

Syria contributed 5.7 percent of the total television time transmitted via ARABSAT during the third exchange period. This was the first time that Syria contributed directly to the Arab program exchange scheme. Syria only originated sports programs which accounted for 30.8 percent of the total sports transmission time via ARABSAT. It appears that Syria was not as involved in the television program exchange via ARABSAT as other Arab countries. This reflects Syria's Arab regional policy in general, and the Iraq-Iran war in particular. Syria supported Iran against Iraq. Even though Syria had the same advantage as Iraq in utilizing the microwave network with Jordan, Syria chose not to use this communication network.

The same situation applies to Libya. Table 8 shows that Libya contributed less than 1 percent (55 minutes) of the total television program time available for exchange. Libya ranked third among Arab countries concerning its number of shares in ARABSAT capital. Its low contribution to the television program exchange, however, suggests that Libya's inconsistent policy toward Arab regional issues is the main constraint of its participation.
South Yemen contributed 0.2 percent of the total transmission television program time available for exchange (44 minutes of news). South Yemen contributed even less than Libya. Since South Yemen was at this time the only Marxist system in the Arab world, this may explain its lack of enthusiasm toward the television program exchange scheme. Presently, South Yemen is unified with North Yemen, which would change the whole picture in the future.

Mauritania was the only Arab country that did not contribute anything to the exchange. This lack of contribution may be due to its economic situation, since it is one of the poorest Arab countries.

**Television Program Reception**

Table 9 indicates that all Arab countries that participated in the exchange during the six month period from March 11 through September 23, 1987 received some television program time, with the exception of Libya. Algeria received the highest percentage of television programs available for exchange (46.2 percent). This tremendous increase in Algeria's amount of program reception in comparison with the previous two periods is due to the establishment of the Arab Center for News and Programs Exchange in Algeria. The center utilized the Algerian satellite ground station. Table 9 also shows that Algeria received the highest proportion of the total
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</table>
news transmission time available for exchange via ARABSAT (53.9 percent). Algeria received 29.0 percent of the total information program time and 48.3 percent of the total variety program time. This represents one of the lowest percentages when compared to the majority of Arab countries. Only four countries received less than Algeria: South Yemen, Mauritania, Djibouti, and Syria. This may indicate their high selectivity of television programs. The Algerian officials indicated that most television programs offered for exchange are of inferior quality, compared to what they purchase from the market. Consequently, only those television programs which they feel obligated to broadcast will be scheduled in the local media, such as an Arab country national day or those programs that have political messages. Again, this is part of the Arab political system which is sometimes peculiar to outsiders.

Saudi Arabia received the second highest percentage of the total transmission time via ARABSAT (35.1 percent). Table 9 shows that Saudi Arabia received a very high percentage of all television program types: 99.7 percent of the cultural programs; 80.1 percent of the variety programs; 42.0 percent of the sports programs; 40.5 percent of the information programs. Saudi Arabia's economic situation may be an important factor in the high amount of television program reception. The country ultimately
decides whether or not to rebroadcast a particular program. Saudi Arabia exercises the most restrictive television program guideline policy in the Arab world. In addition to receiving the highest amount of program time among Arab countries, Saudi Arabia is the highest investor in ARABSAT, contributing almost one-third of its capital. Saudi Arabia eventually benefits from whatever it pays for the exchange in commercial charges, because the ARABSAT revenue goes back to the investors.

The Arabian Gulf states enjoy the same economic advantage as Saudi Arabia, with one major difference. They are less restrictive in their television program policy. Kuwait received 32.2 percent of the total television transmission time; Oman received 31.8 percent; Qatar received 29.8 percent; Bahrain received 26.2 percent; and United Arab Emirates received 18.8 percent. All Gulf states, with the exception of United Arab Emirates, received a high percentage of the television programs available. United Arab Emirates began to receive the ASBU daily news package on June 1, 1987. This influenced the proportion of news that United Arab Emirates received during this exchange period, which accounted for 14.1 percent of the total news time transmission via ARABSAT.

Table 9 shows that Tunisia was one of the highest recipients of the total television program time available for exchange by receiving 25.9 percent. It ranked eighth
among Arab countries in terms of the amount of programs received during this exchange period. The establishment of the Arab Center for News and Television Programs in Algeria did not have a major impact on Tunisia's total program reception. As shown in Table 9, the proportion of news reception declined in comparison to the two previous exchange periods (Table 3 and Table 6). This is understandable when considering that ASBU originated news television programs almost exclusively during this period (Table 8).

Morocco received a high percentage of the total television program time (31.2 percent). This represented more in total percentage than Tunisia and more than Algeria in all program types, with the exception of news. This increased program reception may be a result of Morocco's improved relations with Algeria in 1987 after 10 years of conflict over the polisario issue. This consequently reduced the attention between the Maghrib states.

Four Arab countries received very low percentages of total program transmission time via ARABSAT: South Yemen received 1.6 percent; Mauritania received 2.4 percent; Djibouti received 1.3 percent; and Syria received 0.3 percent.

Table 10 indicates that 11 countries received the Arab news package which was originated by the Arab Center for News and Television Programs Exchange. The package
Table 10

Total Percentages of News and Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Alg</th>
<th>Tun</th>
<th>SAR</th>
<th>Kuw</th>
<th>Jor</th>
<th>Bah</th>
<th>Qat</th>
<th>Oma</th>
<th>UAE</th>
<th>Mor</th>
<th>NYe</th>
<th>SYe</th>
<th>Mau</th>
<th>Djib</th>
<th>Syr</th>
<th>Lib</th>
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<tr>
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<td>12.2</td>
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<td>29.1</td>
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<td>10.1</td>
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</table>
Table 10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Country Receiving Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alg</td>
<td>Tun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mor</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>592</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ira</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
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<td>1,576</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYe</td>
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<tr>
<td>471</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYe</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Djibuti</td>
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</tr>
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<td>41</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>63.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,073</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASBU</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,904</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; Djibuti: Djibouti; Syr: Syria; Lib: Libya; ASBU: ARAB State Broadcasting Union.
included all Arab countries participating in the television program exchange. Each individual country sends its news to the Exchange Center in Algeria which is then edited and sent back as a package to participant countries. Table 10 also shows that a very high percentage of the news package was received by participating Arab countries. Nearly all Arab countries received the total daily news package, with the exception of the United Arab Emirates. This country received 51.2 percent because it only began to receive the package on June 1, 1987. This is approximately half of the exchange period. Tunisia received 84.0 percent. This comparatively lower percentage may be attributed to Tunisia not receiving the daily news package for 17 days after the program exchange began from the Exchange Center in Algeria.

The high percentages of daily news package reception may be due to the characteristic of the news items themselves. They should not just pertain to local news, which may not concern the Arab audience as a whole, but should pertain to the Arab region as a whole. Table 10 shows that the highest percentages of television program exchange during this six month period was between Algeria and most of the other Arab countries. Algeria also received the highest percentage of television program time offered by the vast majority of Arab countries as shown in Table 10.
It appears that two factors played an important role in the high percentages of television programs exchanged between Algeria and most other Arab countries. The first factor is the types of television programs. Algeria contributed one of the highest percentages of information programs, 18.7 percent; 18.7 percent of variety programs; 19.3 percent of cultural programs; 6.4 percent of sports programs; and only 2.7 percent of news (Table 8). Thus Algeria's contribution of all program types, with the exception of religious programs and a very low proportion of news programs, makes it more likely to appeal to other Arab countries.

The second factor is that the Arab Center for News and Television Programs Exchange utilized the Algerian satellite ground station. This resulted in Algeria's reception of a high percentage of the television program exchange. Hosting the Exchange Center was an advantage to Algeria which ultimately received television programs being originated from the center with no space-segment charges, because the ASBU pays for all received programs from other countries.

Table 10 shows that television programs offered for exchange from Qatar, Morocco, and Iraq were received in high percentages by the majority of Arab countries. This seems to indicate a relationship between the types of television programs and the interest of other countries to
receive these particular programs when they are dominant, such as variety or cultural programs. This issue will become clearer during the discussion of program types later in this chapter.

Table 10 also shows that Syria contributed a high percentage to several Arab countries. Algeria received 87.0 percent of Syria's total program transmission time, Tunisia received 63.7 percent, Saudi Arabia received 88.1 percent, Kuwait received 84.1 percent, Morocco received 84.6 percent, and North Yemen received 16.2 percent. Syria received a very low percentage from three Arab countries: 10.4 percent from Algeria, 1.4 percent from Saudi Arabia, and 5.2 percent from Kuwait. The fact that Syria only originated sports programs (Table 8) should be taken into consideration.

Television Program Types

There were six television program types exchanged via ARABSAT during the period between March 11 - September 23, 1987. This is the period when the television program exchange began from Algeria with the establishment of the permanent Arab Center for News and Television Program Exchange.

Information Programs

Five Arab countries contributed information television programs to the exchange via ARABSAT during this
exchange period. The total information program transmission time was 513 minutes. Saudi Arabia contributed 48 percent, which is almost half of the total information program time. This high percentage is mainly due to the riots of the Iranian pilgrims in Makkah during the 1987 Hajj ritual, and Saudi officials attempting to explain the implications of the Iranians' behavior in Makkah to the rest of the Arab world.

As shown in Table 11, two Arab countries received nearly all of the total information program transmission time that Saudi Arabia contributed to the exchange via ARABSAT: Jordan received 99.6 percent and Morocco received 97.6 percent. The majority of Arab countries received less than 30 percent of the total information television program transmission time provided by Saudi Arabia.

This represents an example of the regional politics of Arab countries. The two Arab countries with monarchies, Jordan and Morocco, enjoyed very special political ties with Saudi Arabia. In addition, these two countries did not have a significant Shia minority. Jordan and Morocco received nearly all the information programs, especially those concerning the riots by the Iranian pilgrims in Makkah. The Arabian Gulf States also enjoyed special political and economic ties with Saudi Arabia. They, however, possessed a high concentration of Shia
Table 11

Television Information Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Alg 96</th>
<th>Tun</th>
<th>SAR</th>
<th>Kuw</th>
<th>Jor</th>
<th>Bah</th>
<th>Qat</th>
<th>Oma</th>
<th>UAE</th>
<th>Mor</th>
<th>Ira</th>
<th>NYe</th>
<th>SYe</th>
<th>MAU</th>
<th>DJI</th>
<th>SYR</th>
<th>LIB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alg</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>99.0</td>
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<td>97.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAR</td>
<td>11.0</td>
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<td>99.6</td>
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<td>27.6</td>
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<td>Bah</td>
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<td>97.9</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</table>

Note. Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; MAU: Mauritania; DJI: Djibouti; SYR: Syria; Lib: Libya.
minorities with Iranian origin. The Arabian Gulf States did not receive all the information programs regarding this specific subject which may have offended their Shia population.

Table 11 indicates that most Arab countries contributed little time to information programs, which were most likely to be one information program about their independence day or national day. This is the case with Qatar, Iraq, and North Yemen. As indicated previously by the Director of the News and Satellite Exchange Department of the Saudi television station and the Deputy Director of the Algerian Television Establishment, these information programs were probably received by other Arab countries as an obligation of Arab "brethren."

Algeria contributed the second highest percentage of the total information programs (18.7 percent). There were 62 minutes pertaining to Algeria's independence day. This was received by the vast majority of Arab countries, with the exception of Kuwait. Since Kuwait has a good relationship with Algeria, its reason for not receiving the program was probably a technical issue rather than a policy issue. There is no evidence to suggest that Kuwait would single out Algeria's independence day and choose not to receive it.

The information television program type suggests that Arab countries tended to receive those programs which were
perceived to have diplomatic implications. Other infor-

mation program reception depended on the local interests

of the Arab governments and whether or not they would

appeal to their audience. This is clear concerning

Algeria's information programs. The vast majority of Arab
countries received their independence day program. In the

case of Saudi Arabia, only two countries receiving

information programs received the Iranian Hajj incident.

As indicated in Table 11, Kuwait, Qatar, and United Arab

Emirates received Bahrain's information program which

pertained to the navigation in the Arabian Gulf.

Variety Programs

The variety television program type mainly consisted

of a program entitled "Sahra Arabia" ("Arabian Soiree").

This program contained songs, folk dancing, comedy

situations, and interviews with celebrities. The initial

variety program project was proposed in the April 1985

meeting of ASBU. This meeting was devoted to the planning

of the television program exchange via ARABSAT. The

representatives of the Arab television authorities agreed

that each Arab country would contribute one weekly variety

program consisting of 60 to 75 minutes. The General

Secretariat of ASBU scheduled the Arab countries alpha-

betically for 22 weeks, after which they rotated accord-

ingly.
Apparently not all Arab countries were committed to the schedule or had the capability of producing a variety program. Table 12 indicates that only 10 Arab countries contributed variety programs during this exchange period.

The length of the variety program varies from one country to another. Qatar contributed one variety program consisting of 114 minutes; Tunisia contributed one variety program consisting of 91 minutes; Bahrain contributed one variety program consisting of 80 minutes; Palestine contributed one variety program consisting of 58 minutes.

Table 12 also shows that most Arab countries participating in the Arab television program exchange scheme received the variety programs. As a general trend, however, when an Arab country provided more than one variety program, some Arab countries received one, but not all the variety programs from the same source. This trend is exhibited in the case of Algeria, which contributed the highest percentage of variety programs (18.7 percent). Tunisia, Oman, and North Yemen received only two out of three variety programs; Mauritania received only one. The same situation existed in the case of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Iraq. Some Arab countries did not receive all the variety programs that were available.

The variety programs became a symbol of the television program exchange between Arab countries since they
Table 12

Television Variety Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Originating in</th>
<th>Alg</th>
<th>Tun</th>
<th>SAR</th>
<th>Kuw</th>
<th>Jor</th>
<th>Bah</th>
<th>Qat</th>
<th>Oma</th>
<th>UAE</th>
<th>Mor</th>
<th>Ira</th>
<th>NYe</th>
<th>SYe</th>
<th>Mau</th>
<th>DJI</th>
<th>SYR</th>
<th>Lib</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Minutes</td>
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Note. Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; DJI: Djibouti; SYR: Syria; Lib: Libya.
were based on a collective effort. In an interview with ARABSAT's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Dr. Faisal Zidan stated:

ARABSAT caused Arab countries to become closer to each other through the information that it provided to the Arab public about the Arab world. The best example is the 'Sahra Arabia' which is produced by each Arab country and transmitted via ARABSAT. (1988, p. 14)

The variety programs became almost as important as independence day or national day. Arab countries felt obligated to receive them, regardless of their quality. Unlike national day, which is only one day a year, Arab countries could produce more than one variety program. This is the reason why some Arab countries tended to receive only one variety program.

Cultural Programs

Table 13 indicates that only two Arab countries contributed cultural television programs during this exchange period. Algeria contributed one program consisting of 68 minutes. It was received by the vast majority of Arab countries participating in the program exchange scheme.

Iraq contributed 285 minutes to the program exchange. It is interesting to note that Iraq contributed only one television program consisting of approximately 4 hours and
Table 13

Cultural Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
<th>Country Receiving Programs</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Alg</td>
<td>Tun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ira</td>
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</table>

Note. Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; Dji: Djibouti; Syr: Syria; Lib: Libya.
45 minutes. This program was about Babylon and the cultural festival which took place in this ancient city. The countries which received Iraq's cultural program included Gulfvision members. The Arabian Gulf states are all Gulfvision members, including Iraq. North Yemen, which enjoyed a very special relationship with Iraq, was the other country which received the program. The length of the program appeared to be the main constraint for other Arab countries. One would assume that the Maghrib countries would be interested in cultural programs, especially Algeria with its Arabization policy.

These two cultural programs have been the only ones transmitted via ARABSAT since it began to operate on a commercial basis. The Arabian Gulf States receiving the cultural television programs are consistent with the assumption that the Gulf States as a subregional Arab entity tend to exchange television programs with each other more than with the rest of the Arab countries.

**News Programs**

The news is the single television program category which dominated the program exchange via ARABSAT. This is simply because of the nature of the news which required a certain degree of spontaneity between an event and the transmission of this event. To date, this makes satellite technology the most appropriate technology for news exchange in the Arab world.
Table 14 shows that a very high percentage of the ASBU news package was received by participating Arab countries: Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Iraq, and North Yemen. Algeria received the highest percentages of the total news transmission time. This does not indicate a directional flow of information, since Algeria hosted the Exchange Center.

Table 14 also shows that Saudi Arabia was the highest contributor of news transmission time. Regarding reception, however, most Arab countries received very low percentages of Saudi news, with the exception of Algeria. Only Oman received 21.4 percent of the total news transmission time that was contributed by Saudi Arabia via ARABSAT. To some extent the Gulf States received higher percentages of Saudi news than the rest of the Arab countries, as shown in Table 14. It appears that Saudi Arabia almost subsidized in the news exchange scheme via ARABSAT.

The general trend of news exchange in the Arab world was that Arab countries tended to receive, through the ASBU news package, television news that concerned all Arab countries. The rest of the news took a bilateral exchange. This means that if the country was involved in the news item, it would receive it; otherwise it would not. This trend suggests the examination of the news
Table 14

Television News Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
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<th>Tunisia (Tun)</th>
<th>Saudi Arabia (SAr)</th>
<th>Kuwait (Kuw)</th>
<th>Jordan (Jor)</th>
<th>Bahrain (Bah)</th>
<th>Qatar (Qat)</th>
<th>Oman (Oma)</th>
<th>United Arab Emirates (UAE)</th>
<th>Morocco (Mor)</th>
<th>Iraq (Ira)</th>
<th>NATO-Yugoslavia (NYe)</th>
<th>Syria (Sy)</th>
<th>Libya (Lib)</th>
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Table 14 (continued)

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Note. Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oma: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; Dji: Djibouti; Syr: Syria; Lib: Libya; ASBU: ARAB State Broadcasting Union.
value in the Arab world, but is beyond the scope of this study.

**Sports Programs**

Table 15 shows that seven Arab countries contributed sports television programs. Syria contributed the highest percentage of the total sports transmission time during this exchange period (30.8 percent). This was also the only television program that Syria contributed to the exchange scheme since the establishment of ARABSAT. The same trend was exhibited in sports programs. When the games had Arab national characteristics, they were more likely to be received by more than one Arab country, as in the case of Syria. The economic factor also affected the majority of Arab countries that either originated or received sports programs, such as the Arab Gulf States who appeared to carry the games live to their audience.

**Summary**

The introduction of satellite technology motivated Arab countries to adopt a collective approach among themselves toward the television program exchange policies. Specific television program guidelines were adopted, aimed at minimizing the differences that existed between those countries, especially the political differences, which are perceived by media authority to influence almost all aspects of television programming in the Arab
Table 15

**Sport Television Programs Exchanged Between Arab Countries for the Period 3-11-87 to 9-23-87**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Originating Programs in Total Minutes</th>
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<td></td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jor</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syr</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Alg: Algeria; Tun: Tunisia; SAR: Saudi Arabia; Kuw: Kuwait; Jor: Jordan; Bah: Bahrain; Qat: Qatar; Oman: Oman; UAE: United Arab Emirates; Ira: Iraq; NYe: North Yemen; SYe: South Yemen; Mau: Mauritania; Djib: Djibouti; Syr: Syria; Lib: Libya.
world. In addition, a Joint Commission for the utilization of ARABSAT was established to involve many Arab agencies from the media and outside the media establishment. This was done in an attempt to maximize the utilization of ARABSAT by planning and producing educational and cultural programs that would be acceptable to all Arab countries, regardless of Arab differences.

**Three Phases of Program Exchange**

The television programs exchange via ARABSAT underwent three distinct phases during the period under study. The first phase was the free exchange period. The second phase was when the television programs originated from Tunisia with the supervision of ASBU. The third phase was when the television programs originated from Algeria after the establishment of the News and Television Programs Exchange Center.

Tables 16 and 17 reveal that the television programs exchange was influenced by a combination of three important factors: the internal dynamics, inter-Arab relations, and institutional arrangement. During the free exchange period the economic factor as part of the internal dynamics was evident in the case of Jordan. Jordan originated 10.4 percent of the total transmission time during the free exchange period and when ARABSAT began to charge for its service, Jordan's originated television programs decreased to 4.2 percent and
Table 16

Television Programs Originated by Arab Countries During Three Different Time Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>First Period</th>
<th>Second Period</th>
<th>Third Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>7,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>4,632</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>5,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>2,171</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>2,002</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>1,699</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>1,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>3,409</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emirates</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yemen</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yemen</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table 16 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Originating Programs</th>
<th>First Period</th>
<th>Second Period</th>
<th>Third Period</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASBU</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** ASBU is the Arab State Broadcasting Union which originated the Arab news daily package.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Receiving Programs</th>
<th>First Period</th>
<th></th>
<th>Second Period</th>
<th></th>
<th>Third Period</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,454</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>5,306</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>8,748</td>
<td>46.5</td>
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<td>Tunisia</td>
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<td>4,147</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>8,639</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>4,874</td>
<td>25.9</td>
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<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>7,376</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>10,532</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>6,598</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,199</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>12,294</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>6,057</td>
<td>32.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,354</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>7,334</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>4,796</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,657</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>7,534</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>4,922</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>13,486</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>5,595</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,426</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>12,742</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>5,986</td>
<td>31.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>7,287</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>3,533</td>
<td>18.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4,732</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>5,861</td>
<td>31.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,901</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>10,558</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>4,042</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yemen</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,564</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>12,137</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>4,396</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yemen</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Originating Programs</td>
<td>First Period</td>
<td>Second Period</td>
<td>Third Period</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5,839</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>5,909</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>5,060</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.0 percent in the two following exchange periods, as shown in Table 16. Jordan also exhibited the same trend in terms of the amount of transmission time received during the three exchange periods. As indicated in Table 17, Jordan received 39.0 percent of the total available transmission time during the free exchange period. During the two following exchange periods, the percentage of the amount of program time that Jordan received decreased to 30.0 percent and 25.5 percent, respectively.

Djibouti also exhibited a sharp decline in terms of the percentage of television program time that it originated during the free exchange period (7.2 percent), compared to less than 1 percent in the two following periods when ARABSAT began to charge for its services. When it comes to the amount of time that Djibouti received from the television programs available for exchange, the same trend persists, as shown in Table 17. Bahrain and Mauritania showed a similar trend, with the exception of the amount of received television program time for the second period which was dominated by sports programs, mainly the World Cup.

Another major factor that influenced the television programs exchange among Arab countries was the inter-Arab relations. This factor suggests that when an Arab country is isolated from the Arab regional system, it is less likely to participate in Arab cooperation efforts, or at
least the cooperation would be constrained by the country's political relations with other Arab countries. As indicated in Tables 16 and 17, Libya, Syria, and South Yemen "before its unification with North Yemen" contributed the least amount of programs to the television programs exchange among Arab countries. Before its unification with North Yemen, South Yemen was the only Marxist state in the Arab world and therefore had limited interaction with other Arab countries. Syria was isolated because of its stand against Iraq in its war with Iran, which was an unpopular stand among Arab countries at that time. Libya, on the other hand, did not have a consistent policy toward any issue in the Arab world and consequently at any given time, Libya had political differences with the majority of Arab countries in one way or another.

Television Program Types

Program types are a very important aspect of the television programs exchange via ARABSAT, mainly because of the nature of the new information technology which requires the element of simultaneity. News and sports television programs were dominant during the three exchange periods, as shown in Table 18. News and sports programs accounted for 79.9 percent, 89.2 percent, and 87.5 percent, respectively, during the three exchange periods. Thus it appears that the nature of television programs coinciding with the nature of satellite
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>First Period Total (16,306)*</th>
<th>Second Period Total (25,079)**</th>
<th>Third Period Total (18,797)***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1,349</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
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<td>14.30</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>7,647</td>
<td>46.80</td>
<td>14,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>5,390</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>8,156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First period--the free-of-charge period  
**Second period--program originated from Tunisia  
***Third period--programs originated from Algeria
technology influenced the final outcome of the television programs exchange in its totality, regardless of the exchange itself, whether it was free or where it originated. The domination of news and sports television programs, however, did not eliminate the existing differences between individual Arab countries, which was discussed previously in Tables 16 and 17.

Another important finding was the low percentage of cultural programs that were exchanged during the three exchange periods. As a matter of fact, no cultural television programs were exchanged during the second period, which indicated the difficulty of producing cultural programs that were acceptable for the exchange via ARABSAT.

Information and religious programs were also very low. As indicated in Table 18, information and religious television programs that were available for exchange via ARABSAT did not project any real trend in the three exchange periods under examination, mainly because of the availability of these two program types. The information programs were mainly about a given Arab country's national day or certain events such as the Islamic Summit, which was held in Kuwait in January 1987, and resulted in a slight increase in the percentage of the information programs during the second exchange period. Thus the information television programs which were available for
exchange were limited and it appears that there was no real effort to produce information programs, other than those that might be called "diplomatic courtesy."

The religious programs had the same characteristic as the information programs, where specific events are concerned. In the case of religious programs, the events were limited to the holy places, and specifically the Hajj ritual. Saudi Arabia was the only Arab country that originated religious programs, since this is where the holy places are located.

Variety television programs is another example of the lack of Arab countries in producing television programs for the exchange scheme, or at least to insure the continuation of a measurable amount of programs acceptable for exchange. Variety programs take Arab countries a considerable amount of time for planning, but once it comes to implementation, as Table 18 indicates, there was a decline from the first period (14.3 percent) to 3.8 percent and 6.2 percent, respectively, in the two following exchange periods.

In the beginning, when the television exchange was free-of-charge, it was easy for some Arab countries to exchange variety programs, regardless of their quality and "even from their video library." When ARABSAT began to charge for its service, television authorities found it very difficult to sustain high quality programs for a
longer time. This is one of the most serious problems that will face the television programs exchange scheme in the future. Thus, news and sports programs will continue to dominate the television programs exchange via ARABSAT for two reasons: 1) the nature of satellite technology, which demands simultaneity, and 2) the production of these two program types do not require sophisticated production or creativity like other types of television programs.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

The objective of this research was to examine the role of a new information technology, mainly satellite technology (ARABSAT), on the television program exchange among Arab countries. The study looked at the information and television program exchange within the context of the historical, political; and socioeconomic specificity of the Arab world's regional system.

Two important issues emerged while examining the television program exchange in the Arab world. The first issue involved the internal dynamics of the state which mainly consisted of two factors:

1. The economic structure of each individual state
2. The political structure of a given country and the orientation of the political groups who influence, directly or indirectly, the media policy in each individual Arab country.

The other issue consisted of the interregional relations or inter-Arab system which was influenced by four main factors:
1. Intra-state Arab historical formation
2. Intra-state policy and its relation to the Arab regional system
3. Ethnic groups and religious minorities
4. Economic cooperation orientation of each Arab state

The importance of this study lay in its middle ground analysis in examining the television program flow at the regional level as a departure point, in contrast to the vast majority of media imperialism studies that put more emphasis on the external forces that influence the television programs importation issue. The middle ground analysis of this endeavor was based on the interaction of the internal dynamics with regional system dynamics for producing media cooperation policies. The middle ground analysis of this endeavor was based on the interaction of the internal dynamics with regional system dynamics for producing media cooperation policies. ARABSAT's utilization for television program exchange reflects the two dynamics of the state's local policy and its interaction with other Arab states. Three Arab countries—Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia—were examined in terms of their internal dynamics and their relations with the rest of the Arab world.

Arab States' Internal Dynamics

Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia exhibited tremendous differences in terms of their internal sociopolitical
and economic structure. Tunisia projected the most liberal political and social conduct in the Arab world, basing its political legitimacy on the secular value of the Destourian political party. In contrast, Saudi Arabia represented the most conservative political and social conduct in the Arab region. The Saudi government based its legitimacy on a conservative interpretation of Islamic laws. Algeria stood in the middle of Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. The National Liberation Front drew its legitimacy from the Liberation War legacy, while Islamic culture and "Arabization" have always been part of its overall local media policy. These existing political differences led the Arab governments to follow specific television program guidelines for the exchange via ARABSAT in order to avoid, or at least minimize, the local media policy differences.

Saudi Arabia was the only Arab country which contributed religious television programs during the three exchange periods under study. Although these religious programs were mainly of the Hajj ritual, they at least indicated some of what distinguished Saudi Arabia from the rest of the Arab world by the inclusion in its political formula of the significance of its being the host of two holy places in Islam. During the third exchange period, Saudi Arabia also originated an almost equal amount of news programs as that of the ASBU news package, which
included news from all Arab countries. The high percentage of Saudi television news offered in the exchange reflects the country's rentier economic base, where the expenditure does not necessarily correspond to the benefit. This is clear from the low percentage of news received by other Arab countries from Saudi Television. At the same time, this economic base factor was reflected in Saudi Television's tendency to exchange television programs with Arabian Gulf states more than with the rest of the Arab countries, thus reflecting the Saudi Arabian government's overall policy. As this study has indicated, Saudi Arabia had always emphasized its independent sovereign state while maintaining very special cooperative relations with the Arabian Gulf states that share Saudi Arabia's political and socioeconomic structure. At the same time, Saudi Arabia tried to play a major role in the Arab regional system through its Arab solidarity policy.

Algeria's "Arabization" media policy was reflected in television program types that originated during the third exchange period. During this time Algerian Television contributed the highest amount of variety programs and the second highest amount of information and cultural programs among Arab countries. Algeria's ambition to play a dominant role in the Maghrib region, and to a lesser extent in the Arab world in general, was reflected in its insistence on hosting the exchange center. This finding
also explains Algerian Television's potential for contributing high quality television programs, because of its cinema production base. This was due to Algeria's tremendous economic resources of oil and natural gas, in addition to its large population (approximately 21 million compared to Tunisia and Saudi Arabia, which were approximately 7 and 9 million, respectively).

Tunisia's overall contribution to the television program exchange was a reflection of its poor economy, which did not have the base for sophisticated television program production, despite its liberal social and political environment. In the third exchange period after the Program Exchange Center moved from Tunisia to Algeria, Tunisia originated one of the highest percentages of news programs, due to the activities of the Arab League, with Tunisia hosting its headquarters. After the Arab League returned to Cairo following the Arab governments' decision in March 1990, however, even the news declined sharply. The Tunisian contribution to the television program exchange also indicated a reflection of Tunisia's long-standing policy, which did not have a regional ambition, due to its limited economic resources and its relatively small size in comparison to Algeria and Morocco.

**Inter-Arab Relations' Dynamics**

Media cooperation efforts in the Arab countries was a reflection of Arab states' interdependent relations, which
compose the Arab world regional system. Four main factors were identified to examine the inter-Arab relations' dynamics in conducting media cooperation policy in general, and the television program exchange in particular:

1. Arab states' historical formation
2. State policy and its relation to Arab regional system
3. Ethnic groups and religious minorities
4. The economic cooperation orientation of each Arab state

In recognition of these important factors which suggest inherited structural differences between the Arab states, the television program exchange scheme via ARABSAT was designed collectively to exercise more control over the television programs content. It did not allow any major variation between Arab countries that had participated in the exchange project.

In spite of this collective approach, the findings of the study indicated that some differences existed between Arab countries.

1 - Arab States' Historical Formation. The importance of the issue of the independent Arab states' emergence provided an understanding of the sociopolitical circumstances that shaped the existing entity of each individual Arab state and the way it conducted its media cooperation policies. Tunisia has experienced a central
authority for a long time, which allowed the development of a constitution and a more integrated society before French colonization. This stable, integrated society created the condition for exercising the most liberal and social conduct in the Arab world to the extent that the ruling party based its ideology in very radical secular values in comparison to the rest of the Arab world.

Algeria, on the other hand, did not experience a real central authority. With its long history under French occupation, an emphasis on Islamic-Arabic heritage became a necessary unifying force for the emergence of Algeria's identity, and to some extent, an ideological base for the National Liberation Front, the ruling party of Algeria.

In contrast, the Saudi Arabian conservative interpretation of Islamic law was a result of utilizing an indigenous ideology (Islam) in unifying a segmented tribal society which did not experience a real central authority before 1932. The historical circumstantial differences that shaped the identity of these independent sovereign states determined their cooperating orientations. The findings of the study reflected the different identity emphasis during the third period, while Saudi Arabia originated religious programs, Algeria originated cultural television programs. Tunisia originated the least among these three countries, with the exception of news programs, which were mainly about Arab League activities.
Even the institutional arrangement reflected these differences. While the social and political aspects of the television program debate took place in Tunisia's liberal political environment, the headquarters of ASBU, the technical debate about transponders and the services tariff took place in Saudi Arabia, the headquarters of ARABSAT.

2 - Political Relations. Media cooperation efforts reflect a long history of political alignment and realignment in accordance with each individual Arab state's perceived interest. After its independence in 1956, Tunisia tried to develop its own distinct entity as a part of Africa and the Greater Maghrib subregion, which resulted in some forms of cooperation with Algeria and Morocco. After the Arab League moved from Egypt to Tunisia in 1979, Tunisia played an active role in Arab media cooperation to such an extent that it became the Center for Television Program Exchange via ARABSAT in 1985-1986. Algeria, on the other hand, was part of Maghrib Arab subregion. With its long history under French occupation, however, it is only natural that Algeria emphasized its Islamic-Arabic heritage which was manifested in Arabization media policy. Algeria's active role in inter-Arab politics motivated Algerian Television to play a very active role in the television program exchange, either by bilateral exchange or via ARABSAT.
Algeria has been the permanent Center for News and Program Exchange since March 1987.

Saudi Arabia represented a good example of how inter-Arab relations influence media cooperation policy. The Saudi-Egyptian conflict during the 1960s prevented the Saudi Arabian government from participating in the earlier media cooperation schemes. This may appear to be contradictory, however, since the conflict between Nasser of Egypt and Saudi Arabia created the condition for introducing television service in Saudi Arabia. It was only after the change in the Arab political reality in the early mid-1970s that Saudi Arabia began to participate in media cooperation in general, and television program exchange in particular. At that time it became the headquarters of ARABSAT and the highest contributor of its capital. Another important factor of the inter-Arab relations was that Saudi Arabia gave more emphasis to Arab Gulf cooperation due to the similarity of social, political, and economic structure with these Arab states than with others.

The television program exchange via ARABSAT revealed that the countries with the least participation in the television program exchange were Syria, Libya, and South Yemen (before its reunification with North Yemen). These three countries were the most isolated in terms of their relations with the rest of the Arab world during the
television program exchange and this was considered in the study.

Although Libya was the third largest shareholder of ARABSAT's capital, it contributed the least to the television program exchange via ARABSAT among the Arab countries which participated in the exchange scheme. Libya's contribution to the exchange scheme reflected its general policy toward other Arab states—Libya did not have a good relationship with more than one Arab country at any given time. The same trend existed with South Yemen (before its reunification with North Yemen), which was the only Marxist state in the Arab world and was isolated from the Arab regional system. Syria, on the other hand, contributed a larger amount of television programs in comparison to Libya and South Yemen, but it consisted of only one sports television program. This also reflected the Syrian government's general political views in the Iraq-Iran war, its relation with the P.L.O., and its general policy toward Lebanon at the time of the exchange, which isolated Syria from the rest of the Arab world.

3 - Ethnic groups and religious minorities. Saudi Arabia and Tunisia represented very homogenous societies in the Arab world. A very small religious minority existed in Saudi Arabia, the Shiite, which was a Muslim sect. On the other hand, Algeria's minority ethnic group,
the Berber, accounted for approximately 22 percent of the population. The findings of the study indicated that the minorities issue appeared to influence the selectivity of certain television programs that were related to this very sensitive issue in the Arab world. The adoption of a collective approach towards television program exchange was another indication of avoiding this issue in conducting media policies.

4 - Economic cooperation. The economic cooperation between Arab countries was an important indication of their media cooperation policies. Tunisia and Algeria had different economic structural bases. Both countries, however, projected in one way or another their interest in economic cooperation and integration within the Maghrib subregion more than that with the rest of the Arab world. The findings of the study suggested that Algeria and Tunisia utilized their microwave system and other conventional transportation means for television program exchange among the Maghrib subregion, which appeared to be more cost-effective than utilizing ARABSAT. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia engaged in economic cooperation with the Arabian Gulf states mainly through the Gulf Cooperation Council (G.C.C.). The findings of the study indicated that the Gulf states subregion utilized ARABSAT for television program exchange among themselves more than with the rest of the Arab world. This may be due to the
fact that the majority of the Gulf states were oil-producing countries and apparently their Ministries of Information had the economic sources at their disposal, regardless of the exchange cost-effectiveness. The findings of the study suggested an interdependent relationship between a country's economic base, its cooperation orientation, and the distribution means of exchanging television programs.

The findings of the study suggested that the utilization of ARABSAT for television program exchange was a reflection of Arab states' political, social, and economic differences. ARABSAT will provide another opportunity for media cooperation within the existing Arab regional order. The selectivity of television programs for exchange appear to perpetuate the existing differences.

**Pattern of Exchange**

The findings of the study indicate that political relations and the individual state's economy were the most important factors that influenced the television program exchange via ARABSAT. Thus the findings of the study suggested the following pattern of the television program exchange:

1. The better the diplomatic relations between Arab countries, the more likely they will exchange more television programs (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco)
2. The better off a country's economy, the more likely it will utilize ARABSAT for exchange (e.g., Gulf States oil-producing countries)

These major trends were evident in the study of the television program exchange via ARABSAT. In addition, the news and sports programs' domination of the exchange was apparent, which was understandable because of the nature of the distribution vehicle.

**ARABSAT's Role in Program Exchange**

The news and television program exchange between Arab countries became a very important issue as a consequence of establishing ASBU in 1969. To make the exchange more practical, the ASBU divided the Arab world into three subregions, bearing in mind accessibility to satellite technology. The news exchange reached its peak in the mid-1970s, but then began to fall apart for political and technical reasons. The political reasons included the Algerian/Morocco conflict over the western desert in 1976 and the Egypt/Israel treaty. The technical reason for diminished success was that the Eurovision service was gradually substituted for the news exchange between Arab countries (which was the whole purpose of the news exchange).

With the relocation of ASBU headquarters from Cairo to Tunisia, ASBU postponed the multilateral television program exchange until ARABSAT became operational in
April 1985. ARABSAT provided Arab countries with the capability of exchanging news and television programs on a regular basis. The satellite technology, which is jointly owned by Arab countries, introduced the element of urgency to utilize this new information technology. ARABSAT's mere existence encouraged Arab countries to adopt a collective approach by using a guideline for television programs that was acceptable for exchange and by establishing a joint commission for ARABSAT utilization which involved many Arab government agencies. Consequently, the television program exchange between Arab countries became more institutionalized and part of the Arab media establishment at the local and regional level, simply because the television program exchange was conducted on a daily basis.

ARABSAT Underutilization

The study concentrated on one objective of ARABSAT, which was the television program exchange in the Arab world. The study indicated that two major players were in charge of the television program exchange scheme in the Arab world. One was ARABSAT as a distribution vehicle, and the other was ASBU. Both institutions were intergovernmental organizations which had an autonomous status within the framework of the Arab League. In reality, however, ARABSAT was owned by Post, Telegraph and Telephone (P.T.T.) ministries of Arab countries and
consequently, ARABSAT major policies were conducted by P.T.T. ministers who composed the General Assembly of ARABSAT, its highest authority. On the other hand, ASBU was in charge of television program exchange arrangement, which essentially represents the Arab states information ministries' policies.

In the case of the Arab satellite system, two institutions are in charge of the television program exchange—ASBU, which arranges the program exchange, and ARABSAT, which provides the distribution services. Both institutions are interested in more television program exchange, but for different reasons. ASBU wanted less satellite service charge in order to exchange more television programs, and ARABSAT wants more television program exchange to increase revenues. Both institutions, however, represent two different ministries—Information Ministry and P.T.T. Ministry. In this case, the television program exchange expense is subject to budget allocation within each individual Arab state, which makes media cooperation policy a governmental policy and ultimately up to that particular government's priorities and political orientations.

Thus these two intergovernmental institutions represented two different interests. One was the Arab states' collective interest, and the second was the interest of each individual Arab state. Therefore, the
role of ARABSAT in the television program exchange was a byproduct of a compromise between these two different interests—the individual state and the Arab Nation as one identity—which were not necessarily the same. This dilemma in the decision-making process of ARABSAT was different from most other third-world satellite systems, such as India, Brazil, and Mexico. In these cases, one country was in charge of its satellite system and the major actors behind their policy are internal forces. Mody (1987) and Borrego and Mody (1989) provided some important information about the major actors in the Indian and Mexican satellite system "morals." In the case of the Indian satellite, political forces and scientific groups were the main players in the project, and the broadcasting establishment was reluctant in endorsing the satellite system as an alternative distribution system. On the other hand, the broadcasting establishment "Televisa" in Mexico was a major force behind the establishment of the Mexican satellite system, in addition to the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (SCT), which is in charge of telecommunication policies in the country. Thus each satellite system operates in a different political, economic, social, and cultural environment which, no doubt, determines its final outcome.

The underutilization of ARABSAT for television program exchange was evident. Only 10.4 percent of the
one transponder capacity which was allocated for regional television program exchange was used. The transponder that was allocated for community television or "group reception," which was supposed to carry developmental television programs and added 20 percent to ARABSAT's total cost, was not yet utilized by the end of 1989.

The major problem facing ARABSAT is found in the forces behind its utilization, which are the Arab governments with their different policies. In order to understand the dilemma of ARABSAT underutilization, one should consider the time of the establishment of ARABSAT. In 1976 oil revenue was at its highest and about 60 percent of ARABSAT capital was owned by five oil-producing countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Iraq, and Qatar. With the exception of Iraq, all these countries represented a rentier economy base where a cost-effective concept was not part of their economic philosophy. Even in the introduction of the ARABSAT objectives there was no emphasis on the cost-effectiveness of the satellite system. Since the electronic media and telecommunication system in general are owned and operated by Arab governments, it appears that the adoption of satellite technology as an alternate telecommunication service, and consequently the television program exchange policies, was motivated by Arab public sentiment toward Arab cultural cooperation and integration. Without the
emergence of strong private economy sectors that have a genuine interest in Arab economic integration, this ultimately influenced media cooperation policies, the television program exchange utilization of telephone services, including data transmission, and all information associated with Arab integration policy. So far no evidence suggests that Arab media is moving toward privatization or cultural diversification, and consequently, more television program exchange. On the contrary, the Arab states' policies, especially after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, provided evidence toward less cooperation, which was manifested by some Arab countries' position toward relocating the Arab League headquarters in Cairo. This was supposed to take place on November 1, 1990, after they had a consensus for moving the headquarters from Tunis to Cairo in March 1990. More evidence of less cooperation was the cancellation of the ARABSAT Board of Directors meeting, which was supposed to take place in late September 1990, to discuss the proposed second generation of the ARABSAT satellite system.

All these problems facing ARABSAT are a reflection of Arab states' political, economic, and social differences.
Limitations

There are some limitations that should be considered when looking at the findings of this study. First, the study did not include all of the television program exchanged between Arab countries, but only those programs that were transmitted via ARABSAT. Some programs were exchanged bilaterally during the period under study, especially through the utilization of microwave networks within the two subregions, Maghrib and the Gulf States. Although this might have affected the total television program exchange, it did not affect the main thrust of the study which concentrated on the usage of satellite technology.

Second, the study included 20 months of television program exchange. These were the only data released by ARABSAT to the Arab States Broadcasting Union, which is the principal agency coordinating the exchange. Due to the relatively short period, it was very difficult to determine major trends in television program exchange in the Arab world. It did, however, indicate possible trends. The data included the three most important phases that the television program exchange went through, which were the free exchange period, the exchange from Tunisia, and the exchange from Algeria, which became in 1983 the permanent Center for Television Program Exchange.
Third, the study was based on ARABSAT bookkeeping, which is an accurate account for the amount of transmission time via ARABSAT. The amount of time received by Arab countries, however, does not necessarily mean that a particular program received was actually telecast by those individual countries. It is always up to the recipient country to select whatever it chooses to telecast.

All these limitations are related to the availability of certain information which, in some cases, did not exist. One such example is the number of television programs that were bilaterally exchanged or the access of the information in the case of the amount of information that was released by ARABSAT officials.

Implications

The theoretical impetus of this study was the utilization of the media imperialism perspective, which is the domination of the "center," the western media products, over the "peripheries," the developing countries' media outlets. The flow of information between developed and developing countries is one symptom of this phenomena. Most scholars' work dealing with the flow of information and television programs tends to overlook the political, social, and economic factors of the developing countries that influences the flow of television programs. The major conclusion of this study is its opening the
possibility of looking at the issue from a regional perspective, whereby a host of complex factors interact with each other. The state's internal dynamic interaction with the regional system could produce a media cooperation policy that would ultimately reduce the media dependency on foreign media products. The introduction of new information technology—the satellite in this case study—also seems to have changed the media organizational attitude in the Arab world toward more cooperation and institutionalization of television program exchange, in comparison to previous attempts. Most Arab countries have either already established a television program exchange department or are in the process of establishing one. The level of organizational involvement of the Joint Commission of Utilization of ARABSAT is another indication of institutional interests having some input in television program exchange. This was not the case in previous cooperation attempts. The findings of this study suggest that the concept of cultural invasion as an underlying assumption of media imperialism is taken out of context of much more complex indigenous historical and sociopolitical relations which should be considered in any attempt to understand the television program flow phenomena.

Five Levels of Analysis

In order to understand whether the adoption of an information technology by third world countries will
create the conditions of independent development or merely perpetuate the existing information and technological dependency, five levels of analysis should be considered.

**International level.** The developing countries' need for scientific and technological knowledge put the industrial countries in an advantageous position over third world countries who either did not possess such knowledge or did not have the capability of utilizing their scientific knowledge to produce what they needed. In the case of Arab countries acquiring satellite technology, Arab governments were pressured to modify their long-standing policy sanctions against companies that dealt with Israel. The American Congress also opposed the Ford Company participating in a project that included some countries that were considered to be unfriendly toward the United States. Thus, unless Arab countries engage in a serious indigenous scientific and technical advancement program, they will continue to be dependent on the advanced countries' products, and consequently, subject to their pressure.

**Regional level.** This level of analysis is concerned with economic interdependence, political groups' orientation toward this particular region, the level of social development, how the people perceive their role in a regional or subregional system, and whether or not they believe the integration or cooperation is beneficial for
them. In the Arab region, Arab countries share language, religion, and culture, and all Arab countries consider themselves as part of one Arab Nation. At the same time, each state emphasizes its sovereignty, which creates an atmosphere of rivalry rather than cooperation or integration in any joint project. Accordingly, each Arab state has its own political system with its own economic and social development plans. Since the electronic media is owned and operated by these different governments, the information flow and television program exchange is subjected to diplomatic relations rather than genuine cultural integration effort.

This was manifested in the Arab states' suspension of Egypt in the ARABSAT project after the Camp David Agreement. Another example is the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which may result in a deeper division in the Arab world. It appears that with the existing fragile regional system, any joint project like the space industry or media cooperation would be symbolic rather than a real effort toward interdependent development.

Local level. This level of analysis deals with the political system, economic structural base, industrial base, scientific and technological advancement, the development of institutions, and the social forces that influence policies in particular countries. In the Arab world there are different political systems which share
one thing in common—the lack of public participation in the decision-making process and the lack of real freedom of speech. Accordingly, all major policies in any given Arab country represent particular government views on a specific issue with the indirect influence of some interest groups. The private economy is also underdeveloped, so the private sector does not have that much influence on major policies. When it comes to media policy, the Arab governments control the media outlets and decisions should be looked at as political decisions. Therefore, the media cooperation policies in the Arab world reflect each individual Arab state's overall policies toward the Arab regional system as a whole.

Institutions level. This level of analysis looks at the media establishment from micro-level analysis; how the decision-making process is implemented within a particular media establishment hierarchy, and to what extent media bureaucracies are independent from the government's highest authority. In the Arab world, every media establishment has its own regulations and bylaws. In some Arab countries the appearance of a news announcer is controlled by the Minister of Information; in other countries, by the News Department. All these internal factors determine the degree of freedom in which the media can perform.
**Audience level.** Audience input is a very important aspect of any media policy, because these people are directly affected by media performance. What kind of programs does a particular audience prefer to see on their television screens? Do they prefer a certain type of local production? What do they think about the quality of the locally-produced programs in comparison to regional or international programs? All these issues should be addressed in order to help the decision-makers pursue a policy that is congruent with their audience preferences.

Thus understanding these specific levels of analysis would provide a better understanding of the media imperialism perspective rather than that of a conspiracy theory which is hard to operationalize and difficult to prove.

**Future Research**

This study raised some questions about the flow of television programs in the Arab world that requires further research. First, some audience research is needed to determine the perception of the Arab audience toward various television programs that have been exchanged via ARABSAT. Whether these programs are different from what is produced locally, and what kind of television programs need to be more frequently exchanged.

Second, how does the change in Arab interrelations dynamics influence the television program exchange
direction, especially with Egypt returning back to the Arab League and consequently participating in the ARABSAT television program exchange. This change in interregional dynamics is very important when considering Egypt is the most capable television program producing country in the Arab world.

Third, another interesting study question is a comparison study of how the internal dynamics of each individual Arab state influenced the amount of television programs being telecast in various Arab local media. In other words, how much does the local governments' criteria of selecting a certain television program deviate from the collective criteria that is being adopted by all Arab countries that participate in ARABSAT television program exchange scheme.

All these research questions will provide more understanding of the television program exchange in the Arab world and the flow of television program phenomena in general.
APPENDIX A

MEETINGS OF THE JOINT ARAB COMMITTEE
FOR THE UTILIZATION OF ARABSAT

Translated from Arabic (February 1990) by Hezab Al-Saadon
Obtained from ASBU Headquarters in Tunis
First Meeting of the Joint Arab Committee*
for the Utilization of ARABSAT
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
February 28 - March 1, 1983

The committee includes the following organizations:

1. Arab League
2. The Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science
3. Arab Union for Telecommunication
4. Arab Organization for Communication
5. ASBU
6. Arab Union for News Agencies
7. Gulfvision
8. The Union of Arab University

This committee's role is to coordinate the activities of all organizations and unions for the preparation of the utilization of ARABSAT.

The committee affirms that any effort on the national level cannot be successful without the coordination of the committee at the local level. Accordingly, a local satellite committee should be established.

The committee notes that in spite of the terrestrial capability of carrying television connection, it is not being used for this purpose. So the utilization of ARABSAT should be given priority.

Production Scheme

1. Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization had several meetings in regard to illiteracy and adult education.

*Translated by Hezab Al-Saadon, February 1990.
2. It had an agreement with Islamic Broadcasting Union to produce a series about Arab/Islamic civilization, which would be useful for transmission via ARABSAT.

3. It signed an agreement with Syria to produce three pioneering programs for cultural purposes.

4. A discussion with Gulf Joint production established guidelines for producing series of simplified sciences.

5. The Union of Arab News Agencies is working toward establishing a network for transmitting news and photos between Arab news agencies.

6. ASBU proposed the establishment of a news exchange center in Algeria because of the availability of satellite connection with Western and Eastern Europe. The usage of this center for news exchange would better utilize ARABSAT.

7. Possible cooperation between the Arabian Gulf States Joint Program for Production Establishment and the Arab Educational Office for Gulf states was studied for the production of television educational programs for the unified Arab educational curriculum.

   The committee discussed the project and the program for the year 1983-84:

1. The publication of information about some books regarding space technology and ARABSAT for public knowledge.
2. Establishment of the information center concerning satellite and space communication for future researchers.

The Production

1. Formation of a working group to plan strategy and produce television programs, documentaries, cultural, and school curriculum programs will be the responsibility of Gulfvision, the Office of Education for Arab Gulf States, and the General Secretariat of ASBU.

2. The same thing will be done to develop radio programs for information on intercultural development. The General Secretariat of ASBU will be responsible for this project.

Experimental Project

1. In preparation for ARABSAT, a handful of Arab states should experiment with line transmission for one week, by utilizing INTELSAT. The countries who participate in this experiment should prepare television programs and share the cost between themselves. ASBU will be responsible for implementing this project, which will cost $25,000.

2. Participation in the studies and experiments for the utilization of satellite for education in the Arab world will be the responsibility of the Saudi Information Ministry, with the cooperation of ASBU, the
Office of Education in the Gulf States, and Gulfvision.

3. Experimentation with the utilization of the International Satellite Network to connect several Arab universities, either for telecasting lectures or teleconferencing.

Second Meeting of the Joint Arab Committee for the Utilization of ARABSAT
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
April 21-23, 1985

The Saudi Minister of Telecommunication and the Chairman of the committee proposed these points for discussion:

1. Preparation for programs to be transmitted via ARABSAT by creating a clear strategy for utilizing the tremendous capability of ARABSAT for the purposes for which it was established, bearing in mind a responsible and practical approach for implementation.

2. Upgrading the domestic terrestrial network and diffusion to reach rural areas to enable the satellite network to break their isolation.

3. The economic utilization of ARABSAT to guarantee its continuation in the future.

4. Formation of a committee for coordination and follow-up for resolution implementation.

The issues that should be discussed in this meeting:
1. An experimental period for the program and news exchange through ARABSAT is often offered to television authorities free of charge. This period should begin when there is a reasonable number of earth stations participating in this experiment.

2. The tariff that the space segment should charge will take into consideration competitive prices.

3. The exchange center in Algeria supports its role to increase the exchange via ARABSAT.

4. Production of information, cultural, and educational programs for transmission through ARABSAT and the consideration of establishing a national production company for producing television programs especially for ARABSAT transmission and looking for a practical alternative.

5. Community television and its importance for isolated areas and the importance of its utilization.

6. Information exchange between ASBU and all organizations that would utilize ARABSAT. These organizations should submit their proposals and projects to ASBU in order to coordinate them with ARABSAT.

The General Director of ARABSAT

ARABSAT has taken steps to become operational and to implement the process of establishing new earth stations and upgrading the existing ones. It is necessary to take practical steps for utilizing community television and for
the establishment of earth stations that are capable of utilizing this channel.

The meeting emphasized these points:

1. The necessity of building earth stations capable of utilizing ARABSAT in order to insure its usage as soon as possible and the establishment of each segment connection with the telephone, radio, and television centers.

2. The upgrading of domestic networks to enable them to perform their services without obstacles.

3. To set up an aggressive campaign to inform officials in mass media sectors and in education, as well as the general public, about ARABSAT and its capabilities.

4. The reaffirmation of the importance of forming local committees for space communication with defined objectives, which will help unify local efforts and make it easier for national coordination.

**Technical Intercommunication**

1. Those Arab countries who did not complete their earth stations should benefit from those countries who already have earth stations. For news and television program exchange, these terrestrial connections should be a back-up for satellite communication in the future.
The committee praised ARABSAT for providing a free experimental period. Several points should be mentioned which influenced the exchange:

1. The free experimental period that ARABSAT provides.
2. The discount price that the Union of Arab Telecommunication charges for the setup of the ARABSAT exchange tariff.
3. The problem with earth stations only for states which have already completed their earth stations, although some Arab states use microwave for connection with the nearest Arab country's earth station.
4. Community television, which is not utilized yet.
5. Steps have been taken to utilize the data transfer network.

The television program, which was supposed to be produced by the Joint Production for Educational Development in the Gulf to be transmitted via ARABSAT, has never been produced.

ARABSAT Report About the Experimental Period

1. The Arab satellite network is technically capable of various commercial usage.
2. The Arab satellite network capability allows the existing earth stations to use it without modification.

3. In spite of commercial usage of ARABSAT for the last six months, only ten earth stations are operational. The utilization of telephone circuits is very limited. Total telephone usage accounts for 2 percent of the total capacity of the system.

4. The experimental period was successful for reaching its goals because of the high level of coordination and cooperation between many organizations involved in this experiment.

ARABSAT is depending on decisions adopted in this meeting which should result in increased usage of the satellite network.

Arab Union of Telecommunication and Arab Union for Wire and Wireless Transportation Report

There are ten countries who have operational earth stations and already utilize ARABSAT. These countries are: Jordan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Mauritania, and North Yemen. In addition, there are three countries that utilize the system through the use of other Arab countries' earth stations: Iraq through Jordan, Libya through Tunisia, and Morocco through Algeria. All ten Arab countries have
completed their terrestrial connection with their earth station.

Four Arab countries are expected to complete their earth stations this year (1986): United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Morocco, and South Yemen. Other Arab countries will complete their earth stations by the first quarter of next year (1987): Sudan, Syria, Somalia, and Iraq.

The Union has agreed to give a discount (preferred customers) for news and television program exchange. Four Arab news agencies who are willing to use the Arab satellite service will be assigned this status. This tariff rate, charged in accordance with the Joint Committee, will be recommended in its second annual meeting.

The issue of transferring the domestic satellite service from the international satellite "INTELSAT" to ARABSAT was mentioned. Saudi Arabia will be using 1 1/4 transponders starting December 2, 1985. It plans to rent 2 1/2 transponders in the near future. Mauritania and Oman will rent one transponder starting June 1986 for their domestic use.

**ASEBU Report During the Experimental Period**

Fourteen countries participated in the free experimental period which started October 1985: Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, and
North Yemen. The exchange was five days a week, and excluded Friday and Sunday.

Each television authority sends its news items to Tunisia television to be recorded and edited between 12:00-14:20 G.M.T. time. These news items are from participating countries.

Libya, Morocco, and Algeria send their news to Tunisia via microwave, and Iraq sends its news via microwave to Jordan, which is then transmitted via ARABSAT to Tunisia.

The television program exchange was limited to one weekly program of varieties rotated by the television authorities. Each country sends its program via ARABSAT to Tunisia and it is then transmitted back to all participating countries to be recorded and transmitted at the same time the next day in all participant countries through local agencies. The opening ceremony for the television program exchange was produced by Kuwait television, with the participation of the General Secretariat of ASBU on November 11, 1985. By the end of this program, another cultural, educational, or documentary film was sent. This film was produced in local television stations under the supervision and selection of ALECSO and broadcast at their convenience.
The Gulfvision Contribution to ARABSAT

There was a proposal for utilizing one television channel for the Arabian Gulf states, but this project was postponed because some Gulf states had not completed their earth stations. In addition to this delay, Gulfvision could not complete the program for development. The new trend is to rent two hours daily on ARABSAT for news and television program exchange. According to the Director of Gulfvision, all Joint Gulfvision productions are exchanged via ARABSAT, with coordination between Gulfvision and the General Secretariat of ASBU. The television programs are generally sports events transmitted via ARABSAT to other Arab countries.

The News and Program Exchange

Television authorities pay for both uplink and downlink of the microwave cost, and the General Secretariat of ASBU pays the uplink for the news package. Each country pays for the downlink of all they receive. In the case of the Arab variety program, each country pays for its uplink and the receiving countries pay for their downlink. This program's duration is between 60 and 70 minutes a week. Another Arab television program has been proposed, to which every country will contribute an already available program that it considers suitable for program exchange.
The ALECSO Report

1. Preparation is being made for educational scientific programs for students and teachers. These are intended to educate Arab students in science, the environment, mathematics, and the Arabic language in all public school levels. In addition, these programs will educate the general public about the curriculum and educational issues according to Arab national strategies in education and its philosophy.

2. Small production units for educational programs need to be purchased.

3. A study needs to be conducted about the utilization of community television and the benefits derived from a developmental and adult literacy program.

4. Scientific programs should be produced which would raise the consciousness of the Arab society about technology and scientific advancement.

5. A national campaign in a particular subject ought to be carried out.

Fourth Meeting of the Joint Arab Committee for the Utilization of ARABSAT 1988

The Tunisian Transportation Minister pointed out these specific issues:
1. The necessity of renting one transponder from ARABSAT to utilize exclusively for news and program exchange among Arab countries.

2. In order to make the exchange more successful, ASBU should find some way to reduce the cost, while increasing the exchange.

3. Regardless of the benefit that ARABSAT will generate from increasing its usage, the Arab people will gain better cultural and developmental programs.

4. Community television covers all Western Europe, a large part of Africa, and important parts of Asia. This channel is used for cultural information and educational programs via ARABSAT which will help those people to understand Arab societies and the Arabic language.

5. We should look at long-term benefits, not just the immediate benefits.

The Saudi Arabian Minister of Telecommunication states "Are we asking too much when we ask every Information Minister to implement the recommendations? We ask them to use 18 hours a day for television programs. This simply means that every Arab country will contribute one hour a day for the satellite network. Is our demand excessive in this information age?"

He stresses four issues:
1. Effort should be made toward eliminating the terrestrial charges within the local use that Transportation Ministries require television authorities to pay, or at least reduce their charges to a minimum.

2. The Information Ministers should be encouraged to implement immediately the resolutions they adopted in their 23rd annual meeting.

3. This committee should direct the attention of the Information Ministers to the advent of the direct broadcasting satellite in the near future.

4. Other organizations should be encouraged to work more actively with this Joint Committee.

ARABSAT Report to the Joint Committee

Three years after the launching of ARABSAT, there are fifteen countries who have earth stations and are utilizing the network, which denotes an increase of five earth stations since 1986. Completion of Libya's and Syria's earth stations are expected by 1987, and the Iraqi earth station is expected to be completed by 1989.

The telephone circuits have increased from 742 circuits in 1986 to 1,704 circuits presently. The telephone usage is 24 percent of total available capacity.

There are 4 1/2 transponders being used for local services. Negotiation is continuing between ARABSAT and the authorities in Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Sudan for
transferring their local service from international satellite network to ARABSAT.

Six transponders were being rented to private companies for television programs and special services. However, due to financial difficulties these arrangements did not work out and the transponders are no longer being rented.

In accordance with the General Assembly of ARABSAT's decision to allow friendly neighboring countries to use the ARABSAT services, the Turkish government showed some interest in using ARABSAT's communication with Arab countries. The ARABSAT administration is trying to convince other Islamic and African countries to utilize ARABSAT for their communication with Arab countries.

ALECSO's Report to the Joint Committee

There is coordination between ALECSO and ASBU. ALECSO prepares scientific curriculum, which includes a series of instructional television for students in the Arab world. These materials have been given to ASBU for coordination with its members in producing this series.

ALECSO has prepared material for cultural programs, but is still deciding how to allocate the resources for producing these programs. They also produced a complete series of adult illiteracy educational programs, and some other programs which simplify science and technology.
Arab League

In the process of implementing the project for the Arab Information Network, the General Secretariat of the Arab League, with the help of the United Nations, developed a program intended to establish an Arab information exchange network which would facilitate data transfer from one information center to another in the Arab world.

The General Secretariat intends to conduct an experiment for a bilingual information exchange by using the "binet" network. The first step will examine local experience in Tunisia, and then an exchange between information centers in more than one country. The General Secretariat asks Arab countries to allow this experiment to be a direct two-way exchange by using small earth stations not to exceed 80 cm in diameter.

The Arab Union for Telecommunication

Encouragement was expressed for the utilization of ARABSAT for telephone and Telex without connection to foreign satellite service. The tariff that the Arab Union charges encourages the exchange of news and television programs between Arab countries.

ASBU Report

The weekly television program exchange was regular during 1986 and 1987. In addition to the weekly variety program, ASBU is preparing to implement another regular
program exchange called "ARAB television" during 1988. ASBU has overcome the financial problem that prevented this program exchange in 1987.

News exchange continues on a commercial basis as in the experimental period starting April 1, 1986.

In March 1987, the news and program television exchange started from the "Arab center for news and program exchange" in Algeria, with thirteen Arab countries participating.

ASBU is now studying the possibility of a direct news exchange between its members to replace the existing package news. ASBU is also studying the possibility of renting one transponder to be used exclusively for television news and program exchange among its members.

ASBU, in a joint project with UNESCO, is introducing the concepts of development in radio and television programs in the Arab world. They are now in the process of producing four television programs at a total cost of $35,000. Each lasts between 30 and 45 minutes. They will be transmitted via ARABSAT between the producing television organization and the rest of the ASBU members during the second half of 1988.

General Recommendations and Resolutions
1. The committee urges the Arab Ministers of Information to take practical steps in implementing the resolutions that were adopted in their 23rd annual meeting
for the optimal utilization of ARABSAT. The committee also urges the Telecommunication Ministers to eliminate the terrestrial charges that connect the television stations with the satellite earth stations, or at least reduce these charges to the lowest possible rate.

2. The committee recommends that ASBU rent a transponder to be used exclusively for news and program exchange on an annual basis.

3. The committee asked the authorities involved in television production to use the material that ALECSO developed for instructional television in order to transmit it via ARABSAT.

4. The committee recommends the continuous cooperation between ARABSAT, the General Secretariat of the Arab League, and the Union of Arab Telecommunication for implementation of the experiment that was intended to establish the Arab information and data exchange network. The Arab League, with the cooperation of the United Nations, is developing a program to propose the establishment of an Arab information and data exchange network via ARABSAT.

5. The committee recommends the cooperation between ARABSAT and the union of Arab universities to complete the preliminary study for utilizing ARABSAT for lectures and scientific experiments to be exchanged
between Arab universities. This study should include what kind of earth stations should be used, which centers should be connected, and how much this project would cost.

6. The committee urges the Arab Telecommunication Union to complete its study about the feasibility of telecommunication traffic in the Arab world, and to include all the technical and financial obstacles that prevent Arab countries from utilizing ARABSAT. This study should be submitted to the Joint Committee or to any authority that would help in overcoming these obstacles.

7. The committee recommends that ARABSAT, in cooperation with the telecommunication authorities in the Arab states, conduct an evaluation study of the earth stations in order to make them more efficient in their use of ARABSAT. Upon the completion of this study, it should be submitted to this committee or to any other authority that would help to solve the existing problems.

8. The committee affirms its position of transferring Arab Telecommunication's local and regional foreign satellite services to ARABSAT as soon as possible and asks ARABSAT to conduct a study in order to determine what the obstacles are that would prevent such transfer.
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